

Spas to get you circulating The secret to sparkling eyes
The kit list for squash **Online personal trainers**

Plus points

Kate Shapland revels in the rejuvenating effect of facial acupuncture

A few years ago I wrote about my experience with cosmetic acupuncture, which I feel is the most rejuvenating face treatment you can have; its de-ageing effects really are exceptional. To be clear, it is not the treatment for those hoping to wipe away all signs of age, but this is exactly what makes it so special: facial acupuncture gives a face the kind of natural renaissance that can never be attained with a knife or injection.

The method involves having fine needles inserted into key points (sometimes they are tapped directly into wrinkles) and manipulated to stimulate blood and energy flow. The effects are instant because blood rushes to the surface tissues and gives skin a fresh tone. Over time, acupuncture encourages collagen regeneration – for cushiony skin – and prolonged tightening: jawline and eyelids are lifted, pores and muscles tightened, even puffiness – a problem for those with a lazy lymph – is dispersed. The benefits are inclusive: no one feature is singled out for improvement, which is why the results are more convincing than surgery or Botox, and never look overdone.

Cosmetic acupuncture is one of the best things you can do for your face. In 2003 my acupuncturist (now retired) was one of a rare breed. But since then Virginia Doran has raised the profile of cosmetic acupuncture (she has been instrumental in introducing it to western culture) so the community has developed.

Three practitioners that I rate:

- Jennifer Ratnayake at Float. £60, 020-7727 7133.
- Yvette Masure at Balance the Clinic. From £110, 020-7565 0333.
- Dermot O'Connor at the Hale Clinic (0791-052 8108) and in Dublin (00 353 1 667 2222). From £120.

Illustration by Autumn Whitehurst

