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THE LUNCHTIME LIFT

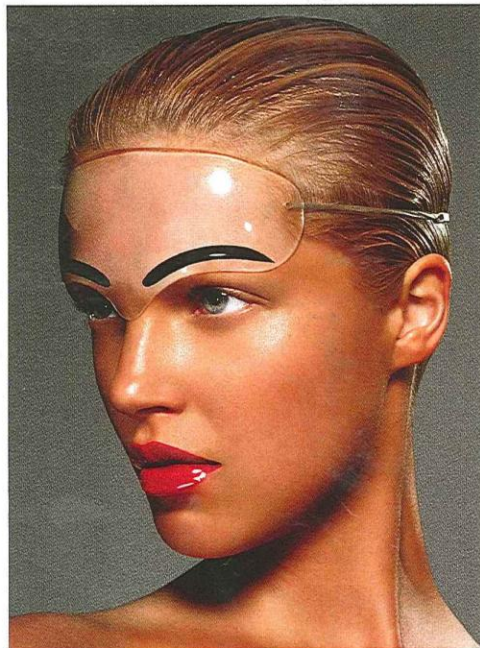
A new high-tech treatment—no knives, NO NEEDLES—claims to lift a sagging brow and make you look younger in less than an hour. Wendy Schmid investigates.

Few things are as inevitable as gravity's toll on your skin. One day, all of a sudden, the reality stares you square in the face. I didn't sleep enough last night, you tell yourself, before realizing that this newly haggard aspect isn't the kind to be cured by a long afternoon nap. It is bona fide eyebrow droop.

What are the options? Many top doctors are currently excited about Ultherapy, a new FDA-cleared ultrasound procedure, which lifts the brow to its formerly perky perch in a single visit with no scalpels, needles, or downtime spent swathed in a head scarf. The investment: \$1,000 to \$4,000.

DEFYING GRAVITY The idea that a wandlike device could glide over your forehead, tightening and raising it in about half an hour, sounds rather sci-fi. But that's essentially what Ultherapy does, using ultrasound heat to set collagen production into overdrive deep below the skin's surface. As it kicks in, the brow firms. As your doctor works, a form of ultrasound imaging lets her see where the treatment is needed below your skin. "It's the first time we can deliver energy at this depth and see exactly where we're delivering it," says Nashville dermatologist Michael Gold. "This really is a lunchtime lift without the surgery."

What's alluring about Ultherapy is that you see an immediate smoothing effect and, since the collagen continues to grow, results actually get better over the course of months.



"A patient sees a measurable improvement right away and is even more excited with the results in three months," says New York dermatologist Patricia Wexler. For most, those results last, though patients over the age of 60 could need a follow-up in a year.

YOU, ONLY BETTER Susan Layman, 53, from Laguna Beach, California, had Ultherapy and saw the effects get better three and six months later. "Now my deep wrinkles are just fine lines and my eyes are more open," she says. "It rolled the clock back 10 years."

That rewind effect is, of course, the consummate result for any antiaging treatment. "Ultherapy works in a natural-looking way because it regenerates structural collagen and elastin," explains New York plastic surgeon Haideh Hirmand.

Though traditional brow surgery can pull up droopy eyelids, it can't address loss of tone. "If thin skin is pulled over a bony forehead, it doesn't look natural," says Hirmand.

THE BOTTOM LINE Of course, every procedure has risks and side effects. A burn is possible if the machine is used incorrectly, and the heat could make you wince. Layman says it's not a deterrent: "I'd do it again in a heartbeat." Says Hirmand, "I believe that if you create new structural collagen with Ultherapy, you can actually slow down the aging process." Just think: Ponce de León was only about 500 years off in discovering the Fountain of Youth. ■