



The ins and outs of skin needling

Medical Skin Needling is the treatment of the moment for skin renewal therapy. Here we discover what is it and why it is effective.

Medical Skin Needling, also known as Collagen Induction Therapy (CIT) or dermarolling, is the latest technique to restore the healthy appearance of the skin at a fraction of the cost of laser treatments and with minimal or zero downtime.

It produces similar results to dermabrasion, lasers and deep chemical peels, but is much less invasive and does not require the removal of the epidermis. As a result, the recovery time is significantly shorter and there is reduced skin sensitivity to UV light post-treatment.

Assure Medispa, Western Australia's only dedicated skincare clinic owned and operated by a team of plastic surgeons, introduced Medical Skin Needling based on its ability to safely deliver dramatic skin renewal results.

Maryann Rowan, senior medical aesthetician at Assure Medispa, says the technique is safe and virtually pain-free.

"We strongly recommend it, as it is a cost-effective treatment and the likelihood of an adverse reaction is so much less than with laser therapies," she says.

What does it treat?

Medical Skin Needling is used to treat:

- Wrinkles and lines
- Lack of skin firmness and elasticity
- Scarring
- Acne and chicken pox scars
- Enlarged or open pores
- Sun damage
- Under-eye bags
- Stretch marks
- Cellulite.

"It is one of the few skin therapies suitable for all skin types, including ethnic skin, and is safe enough to treat the fragile skin around the eyes, mouth and on the neck," Rowan says.

How it works

The technique is based on the skin's natural ability to repair itself whenever it encounters physical damage.

"It works by bypassing the epidermis to reach the dermis, where new collagen and elastin are produced," Rowan says.

Assure Medispa uses a Medik8 Titanium Dermaroller which is gently rolled over the skin to create controlled 'micro-injuries' in the dermis, triggering the healing and repair process. The thousands of miniscule pin-prick wounds in the targeted skin tissue result in new collagen and elastin being laid down in the skin's upper dermal layer.

"Part of the body's natural healing process is the making of collagen or 'collagen synthesis'. Triggering the healing process means triggering the production of collagen.

"A single microneedle injury would not trigger noticeable collagen formation, but collectively, thousands of minute injuries can produce collagen layers on a scale similar to laser therapies," Rowan says.

A Medical Skin Needling treatment takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes per session.

A topical anaesthetic or local block is applied before the procedure to numb the skin, which ensures a virtually painless experience.

After the treatment, the skin may appear red and flushed, similar to mild sunburn, but this fades within hours, and after 48 hours is usually completely healed. Some mild flaking may be noticeable during this 48 hours.

Expected results

Visible improvement can be seen after six to eight weeks following a Medical Skin Needling procedure and continues for up to a year.

Consecutive treatments produce new collagen progressively until indented scars and deep lines are filled. A course of three sessions, at six to eight week intervals, is usually recommended to achieve optimum results, however noticeable improvements can be expected after just one treatment.

A take-home dermaroller and sterilising solution are recommended to clients for use themselves at home for up to three months or in between professional treatment sessions.

Advantages over other skin therapies

"Because Medical Skin Needling only pin-pricks the dermis of the skin, it does not involve the removal of the healthy epidermis, unlike other resurfacing treatments. This means the healing time is rapid and pain is minimal," Rowan says.

"There is no skin damage, no skin sensitivity to UV light and no risk of permanent skin discolouration."

Advantages over other skin therapies:

- Suitable for all skin types
- Suitable for thin skin
- Short healing time
- Minimal downtime (48 hours)
- Minimal discomfort post-treatment
- Cost effective alternative to laser treatments
- Painless (topical anaesthetics can be used)
- Minimal or no side effects.

Words of warning

Rowan says ensuring the most effective outcome for clients relied on high-level staff training and the use of a top quality dermaroller.

"A quality dermaroller, used correctly by someone with the right training, will provide the desired results.

"A titanium dermaroller is recommended over a stainless steel roller, as the titanium gives the microneedles a much finer and more durable edge, resulting in less pain and irritation."

Gold-plating of the needles in the Medik8 Titanium Dermaroller maintains sterility and prevents oxidation and pitting of the surface.

"This is particularly important for repeat use products such as this that penetrate the skin's

surface," Rowan says.

Skin needling origins

Medical Skin Needling is a relatively new technology, combining ancient Chinese acupuncture techniques with contemporary mesotherapy practice. Since the late 1990s, Medical Skin Needling has been used by dermatologists in the form of CIT, as an anti-ageing treatment and to fade scars.

More recently, smaller sizes of microneedles were developed after being recognised for their capacity to dramatically increase absorption, at the dermal level, of topical treatments such as serums. This has the potential to make topical treatments both more effective and more affordable, in addition to reducing the appearance of wrinkles and scars and independently stimulating new collagen production.

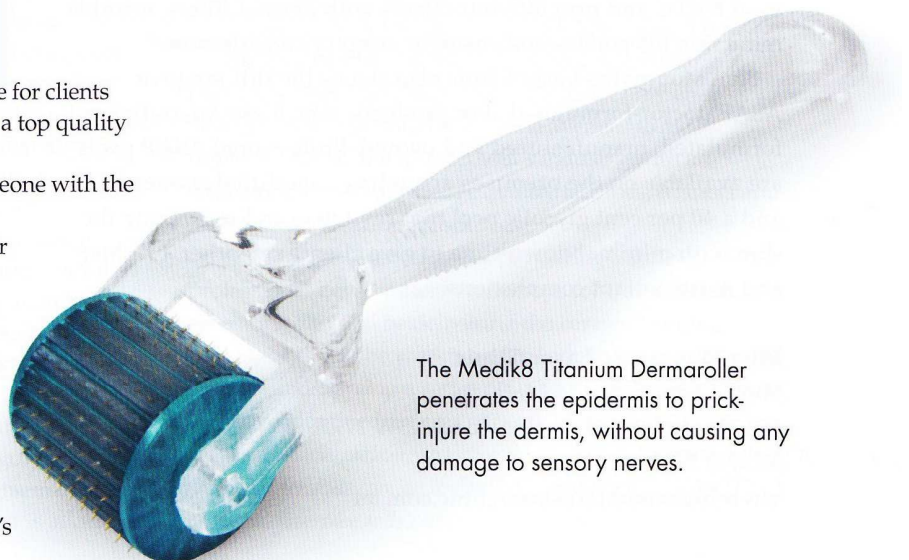
Treatment cost

Prices for Medical Skin Needling at Assure Medispa start from \$175 for a single introductory treatment (using a roller that can be taken home with steriliser solution), to packages of three treatments (including accompanying home care products and personal roller) for \$1,076, and up to more comprehensive treatment programs designed to address pitted acne-scarring and stretch marks.

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Maryann Rowan



The Medik8 Titanium Dermaroller penetrates the epidermis to prick-injure the dermis, without causing any damage to sensory nerves.