

# BEAUTY HEALTH & FITNESS

## laser revolution

Therapy (Deka)—inflict anything close to the harrowing collateral damage of their prehistoric predecessors. “In most cases, we’re talking about four to seven days of what looks like a very bad sunburn,” says Goldberg. “And don’t forget, it’s usually a one-shot deal.”

### THE NEW FRONTIER

The innovations don’t stop there. Like the keypad on your gym’s elliptical machine, the fractional CO<sub>2</sub> allows derms to tailor the intensity of its pitch pattern—the distance between each little dot as well as its depth—with the push of a button. Sarnoff might set the device “closer together for a more aggressive treatment around the mouth or crow’s-feet,” farther apart “on sensitive areas like the jawline.”

When I drop by dermatologist Fredric Brandt, M.D.’s Manhattan office, he shows me the Lumenis ActiveFX’s newly customized handpiece. As I peer at its lens, he flips through an assortment of tiny dancing geometric CO<sub>2</sub> light patterns—circles, parallelograms, hexagons, and triangles—that, when projected onto the skin, access “the hard-to-reach angles around the nose or mouth.” Putting an end to “a 40-year-old face floating above

a 50-year-old chest,” the new CO<sub>2</sub>s also treat “the neck, forearms, and tops of the hands”—fragile areas that were prone to scarring and discoloration under the reign of the old CO<sub>2</sub>.

To combat the first signs of aging, dermatologists like Manhattan’s Patricia Wexler, M.D., are sticking with gentler resurfacers, like the original Fraxel (now called Fraxel Re:store). However, there are instances where Wexler feels the potency of fractional carbon dioxide is appropriate for younger skin—for example, to treat

acne scars in patients as young as their 20s.

Roy Geronemus, M.D., a dermatologist in New York, is using his Fraxel Re:pair to diminish telltale plastic-surgery scars around the face and breasts, and is even using it around some patients’ eyes as

a substitute for surgery. One look at the before and after pictures he recently presented at the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery conference in Orlando, and I can see why: Droopy corners, hooded eyelids, and stubborn crow’s-feet virtually disappear after a single blast. At approximately \$2,000 a session, “it’s a fraction of what you’d pay for an eye-lift,” he says. (A full face may cost upwards of \$4,000.)

Lasers, says Goldberg, “are like laptops—your new model is constantly being updated”

New York plastic surgeon Sam S. Rizk, M.D., sends patients for fractional CO<sub>2</sub> as a skin-tightening “complement” to the muscle-lifting effects of his endoscopic face- and neck-lifts.

In some cases—lip and forehead lines, cracks at the corner of the mouth—Wexler is using fractional CO<sub>2</sub> in place of fillers like Cosmoderm. As she points out, “you don’t have to come back every eight weeks to have it touched up.” The new CO<sub>2</sub>’s effects last, by most estimates, between five and eight years.

### WHAT’S NEXT

Like any emerging technology, the first generation of fractional CO<sub>2</sub>s are works in progress. Lasers, says Goldberg, “are like laptops—your new model is constantly being updated.” If the old CO<sub>2</sub> was the truck-size monitor on your first Macintosh, the fractional CO<sub>2</sub> is your new MacBook Air: fabulous but soon to be tweaked in exciting new ways.

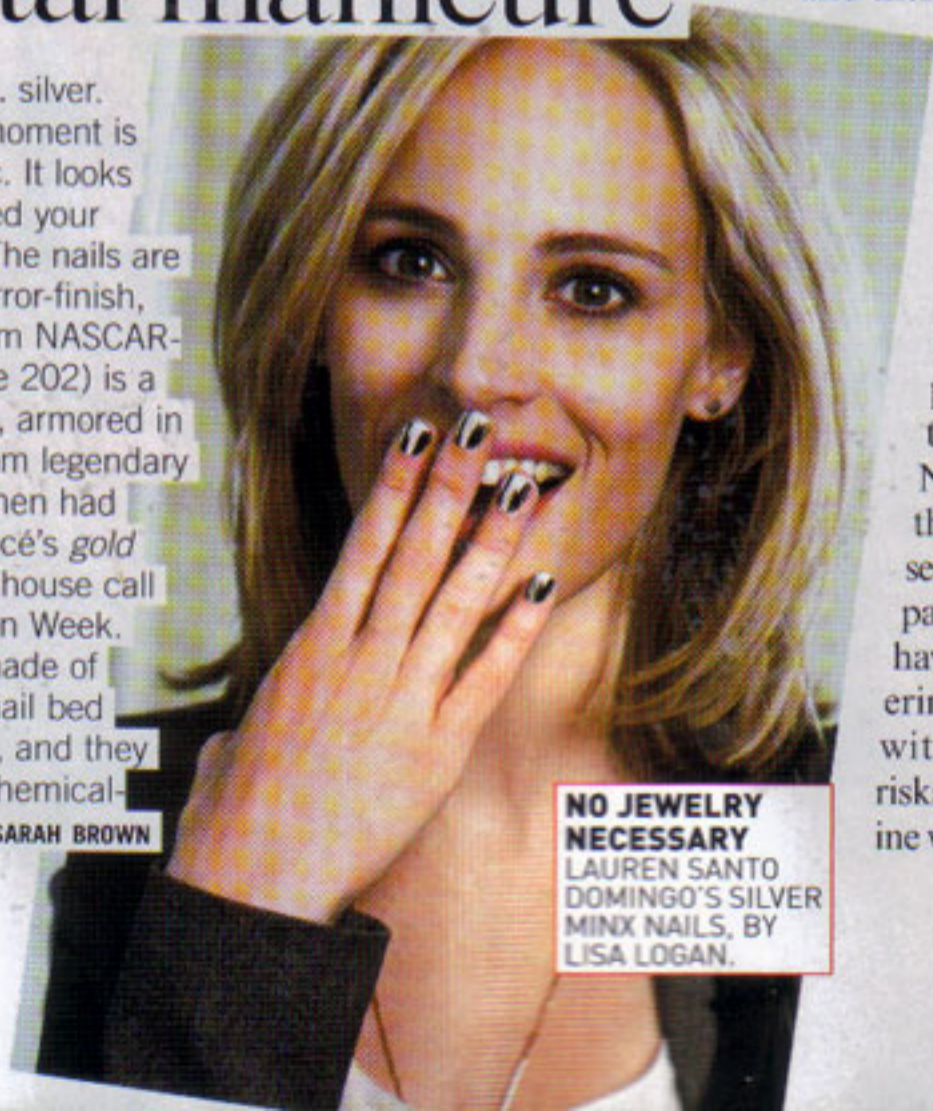
Though they remain unsuitable for darker skins, which may be prone to heat-related scarring, the new CO<sub>2</sub>s have slightly more range than their predecessors, extending from fair to light-olive and, in some cases, light Hispanic and Asian skin tones. As for hypopigmentation (small, permanently colorless patches of skin that appeared in patients up to a year after the old CO<sub>2</sub> procedures were performed), “fractional technology seems to have virtually eliminated the risk,” says Alexiades, who is currently conducting the FDA trials for Deka’s DOT Therapy device. “But it’s still early, and there may be limits to how close

together each little dot can be placed without causing a similar effect.”

Not unlike the feeling one might experience while looking at *Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, Georges Seurat’s pointillist painting from 1884, with its tiny pixelated dots and early Neo-Impressionist overtones, the significance of the new CO<sub>2</sub> seems greater than the sum of its parts. “Ten years ago, I couldn’t have guessed that we’d be delivering carbon-dioxide laser light without the downtime or the risks,” says Goldberg. “Just imagine what’s next.” □

## heavy-metal manicure

Goodbye black, hello . . . silver. The manicure of this moment is futuristic, coolly robotic. It looks as though you’ve dipped your fingertips in mercury. The nails are by Minx, and they are metallic, mirror-finish, foil-like “coverings” descended from NASCAR-decal technology. Zoë Kravitz (page 202) is a fan. Lauren Santo Domingo—RIGHT, armored in silver—first learned about them from legendary New York manicurist Honey. She then had Lisa Logan—the pro behind Beyoncé’s gold Minx mani—over for a last-minute house call before kicking off New York Fashion Week. They won’t chip because they’re made of film, not polish, pressed onto the nail bed with heat (no drying time: brilliant), and they won’t damage nails since they’re chemical-free. For salons, [minxnails.com](http://minxnails.com).—SARAH BROWN



NO JEWELRY  
NECESSARY  
LAUREN SANTO  
DOMINGO'S SILVER  
MINX NAILS, BY  
LISA LOGAN.