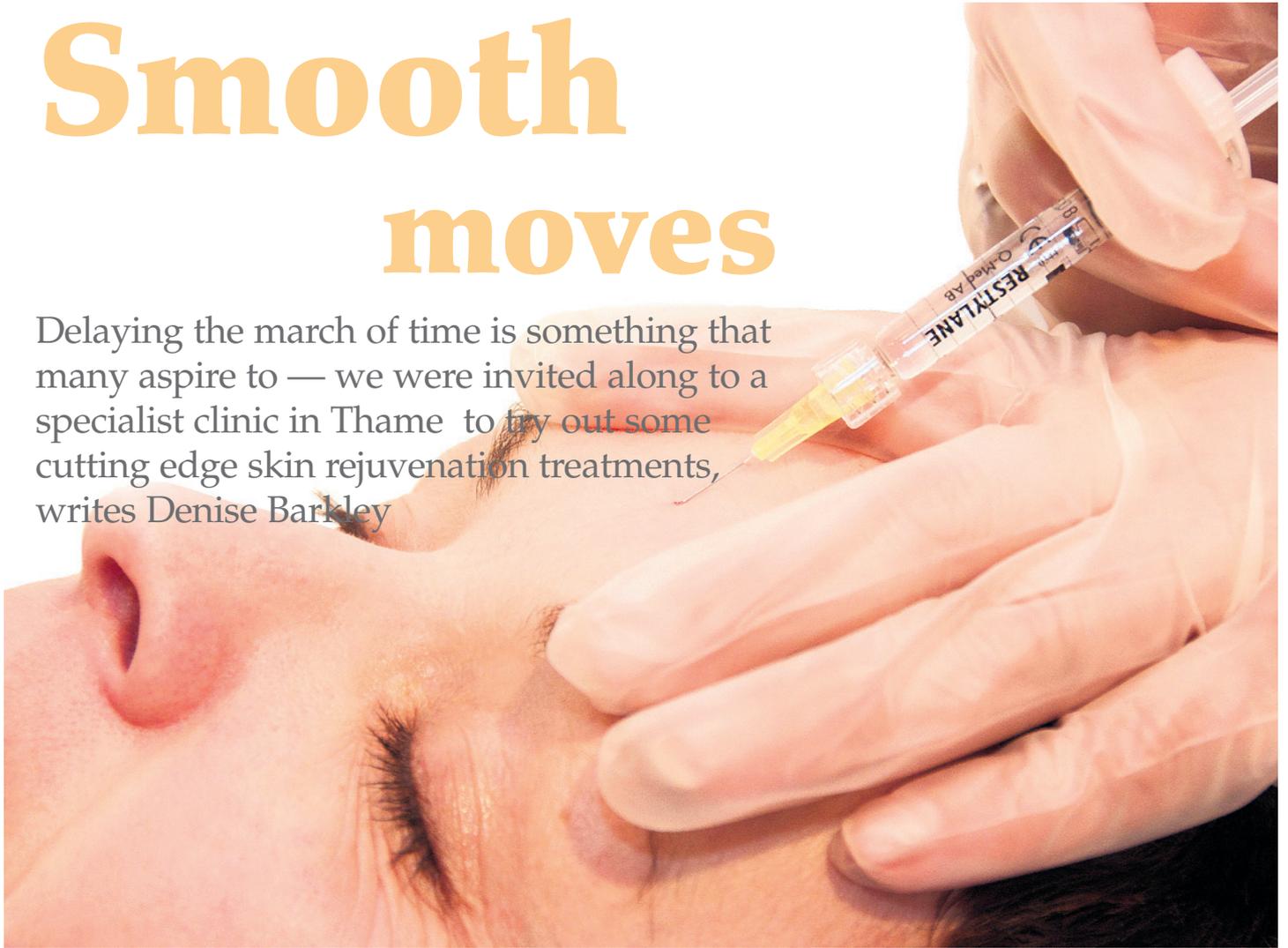


Smooth moves

Delaying the march of time is something that many aspire to — we were invited along to a specialist clinic in Thame to try out some cutting edge skin rejuvenation treatments, writes Denise Barkley



In the competitive and continually evolving world of cosmetic medicine, it can be a confusing minefield for anyone considering rejuvenating their appearance.

In Oxfordshire, the MBNS Clinic (Medico Beauty Nurse Services), located in a lovely rambling old building in Thame, has been proudly treating clients for the past ten years — and they invited me along to look round and, along with a couple of volunteers, try some treatments.

The clinic directors, registered nurses Marea Brennan Thorns and Stephanie Green, who with Paula Shurrock are all aesthetic nurse specialists, each have 25 years of specialist experience. Marea has chaired the Royal College of Nursing's forum for nurses working in aesthetic medicine, is a qualified nurse independent prescriber and is now studying for an MSc in healthcare and advanced nursing practice.

Marea told me they had built the clinic on the principles of their nursing profession and she believed this, and their high standards of treatment and after-care, gave clients extra peace of mind when opting for skin rejuvenation.

The clinic provides a wide range of treatments, from wrinkle reduction and dermal fillers to collagen-stimulating injections, intense pulsed light (IPL) hair removal, photorejuvenation (improves the appearance of such things as rosacea and age spots), skin peels and thread vein removal.



I went along to MBNS to experience a skin peel, and two volunteers tried wrinkle reduction and thread vein treatments. We were all impressed with the warm welcome we received at the clinic. It was a thoroughly professional experience, though not intimidating. Here is what we thought:

Wrinkle reduction

The highly experienced nurses at MBNS treat about 30 patients each week with wrinkle relaxant, which provides a temporary reduction of facial lines. It must be injected in the correct amount and in precisely the right places to block the nerve impulses, which reduces the movement of the muscles that cause wrinkles. The skin gradually smoothes out and the frown lines begin to fade. It takes two to 14 days for the

full effect to be achieved after treatment, and the results last from three to six months. With repeated treatments before the effect has worn off, most people find that results last longer. MBNS treat three facial areas — across the brow, between the eyebrows, and the crows' feet at either side of the eyes. This costs £375 and includes a follow-up 14 days later to make sure everything is perfect. After that, you must wait three months for a further treatment as the body may build up immunity if it is done any more frequently.

Janet Morris tried the **wrinkle reduction treatment**. (She is pictured before and after treatment, above left)

"When you get into your 50s and you look in the mirror and don't like the lined face looking back at you, then you start to think what you can do to stop the march of time. I was beginning to notice my facial lines and wrinkles more and more, so I decided to investigate the ins and outs of wrinkle relaxants. I did it for myself, not for anyone else — it was me who was unhappy with the way I looked. Having read about wrinkle relaxants, researched it on the Internet, and spoken to people who had had it, I went along to the MBNS clinic. The clinic is warm and welcoming. All the staff are absolutely lovely and professional, and put me completely at ease. I had a full consultation,

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with the opportunity to ask questions, with senior clinical nurse practitioner Marea Brennan-Thorns. At no time did I feel rushed, I felt Marea gave me all the time in the world to decide whether I wanted to go ahead.

“I can honestly say I felt no pain at all from the tiny injections into my forehead and around my eyes. Marea said I might get a headache or numbness, or that I might get some tiny bruises — which is the only side-effect that I suffered. The bruises were minute, and soon disappeared.

“MBNS are very hot on after-care and I was given a leaflet and Marea’s number in case I was worried about anything.

“The wrinkle relaxant kicked in within a few days, and the results were fairly good. Marea said she strives for a natural look, not a frozen face. My face looked brighter, and more wide-eyed.

“Marea said that the aim was for people to notice something different about how you look, but not to know why. A few people told me I looked well and asked whether I had new glasses or had had my hair done.

“After a few weeks I had a follow-up visit to Marea and she also treated the lines on either side of my mouth. This wasn’t as successful, but Marea had warned me of this, and told that me fillers were a much better option for mouth lines.

“Three months after the first treatment, I feel that the effects are beginning to wear off. I would probably have the treatment again. It is the kind of thing that you can have done in your lunch hour.”

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Fire and Ice medical facial

The Fire and Ice facial peel is described as as ‘powerful, anti-ageing, smoothing, softening and hydrating’ — it can be performed weekly initially, and then monthly to maintain a clear complexion. This is a medical facial, so it peels at a microscopic level. MBNS recommend using iS Clinical products daily after the peel to get optimum results. The cost is £100 per treatment.

Intuition editor Denise Barkley tried the **Fire and Ice medical facial**

“I have read a lot about the rejuvenating effects of intensive facial peels so thought I would try one. MBNS therapist Anne Devenport was welcoming and helpful, explaining the peel process and making sure I was comfortable on the couch. She began with a pleasant cleansing of my face. The next part was the clinical deep exfoliation — when the masque was applied it was, shall we say, a bit more than tingly. Quite uncomfortable, in fact, but it only had to stay on for a few minutes. After another cleanse with nice warm flannel mitts, the cooling rejuvenating masque is applied, and this is followed by a variety of iS Clinical serums and cremes. It is worth mentioning that after the

peel your face will be red, so this is not a treatment to be done in your lunch hour, or if you have plans for the evening. My face was red and quite sore for the rest of the day, and my eyes were puffy the next morning. It all wore off within 24 hours, thankfully, and my skin did look and feel absolutely brilliant. Very soft and clear, it certainly made me feel good and it is something worth considering prior to a special occasion.”

I asked Anne about my reaction to the treatment, and she told me: “Your reaction around the eyes, although strong and unusual, was still a positive one — not an allergic one. I am glad your skin looked very good — this is the result we have come to expect from this treatment. This is a medical facial, so it peels at a microscopic level — because of this you would expect to have a stronger reaction to it than with any normal facial. Your skin was not used to using such potent products, so an adjustment time was needed for you. We do normally suggest to our clients a course of these medical facials in conjunction with using the iS Clinical products daily. This fast-forwards the skin to get optimal results. The skin after a course of five treatments is wonderful.”

Sclerotherapy

On the legs, small spidery veins are treated by sclerotherapy, which is a medicine injected directly into the veins. The cost is £250 per treatment, and it can take several sessions to sort out the problem, depending on the severity. Sclerotherapy is not suitable for large, raised knotty veins.

William Tate tried **sclerotherapy**

“What started as just a few blue thread veins on the inner part of my knees had started to get worse and they were really noticeable. Although I am in my mid-50s, I was very conscious and embarrassed about them in the summer, when I wore shorts or went swimming. I went along to MBNS where I had a consultation with aesthetic nurse specialist Paula Shurrock, who was confident that sclerotherapy could improve things. She said it could take a few sessions, spread out over several months as it takes around six to eight weeks each time for the injectable solution to do its work and break down the unwanted veins. On my first visit, Paula injected the veins individually on just one leg, which really wasn’t that painful, and sent me home wearing an elasticated bandage, which I had to keep on for a day. Apart from initial itching, there was no other discomfort. I returned a couple of weeks later to have the other leg treated. Over the next eight weeks some of the veins have gone, some leaving what looks like light brown bruising which Paula says will fade. But there are still quite a few left. On my third visit, Paula was pleased with the results so far. She injected the remaining veins — which was quite a few injections! — on both legs, and I am hoping that will do the trick.



Before



After first treatment