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BANISH SUNSPOTS ON THE NECK AND CHEST

“Sun damage is so prevalent here because the skin is thin and has less ability to repair itself than skin on the face,” explains Wexler, noting that damage may appear as early as your 20s. Noninvasive options performed in a dermatologist’s office, such as lasers and light treatments, are the most cutting-edge choices because they’re quick (each session is typically an hour or less), require no downtime, and are practically pain-free (the zaps feel like a rubber band snapping against you). Laser and light devices, such as Vbeam, LightSheer Diode, Q-switched, and Intense Pulsed Light (known as IPL), are best. These systems deliver rapid pulses of light that break up melanin clusters without affecting the surrounding skin (though they’re best suited to lighter skin because they work by targeting and destroying dark pigment). One to three treatments spaced a month apart are recommended, and results are visible within a week. The cost: \$350 to \$700 per session.

AT HOME: Patricia Wexler M.D. Dermatology Spot Damage Lightening Serum (\$25) contains 2 percent hydroquinone to gently and gradually fade sunspots.

DEWRINKLE THE DÉCOLLETÉ

For those afflicted with sunspots *and* lines (which may start in your 40s), the Fraxel laser delivers an all-in-one punch. “It improves the overall texture of skin by minimizing spots, fine lines, and crêpiness,” says Paul M. Friedman, M.D. (713-791-9966), a Houston dermatologist. Fraxel uses heat to make micro-

injuries to the deep layer of skin, encouraging the production of new collagen. Each session takes 60 to 90 minutes, and you’ll experience mild redness, swelling, and peeling for a few days. Three to five treatments performed every two to four weeks are suggested. The cost: \$600 to \$750 per session. (Some say that Fraxel also reduces the appearance of stretch marks by 50 percent or more. The cost is \$500 to \$800 per treatment, with two to five sessions spaced four to five weeks apart.)

AT HOME: Elemis Pro-Collagen Lifting Treatment for Neck and Bust (\$116) contains marine algae to firm skin and increase cellular activity and collagen production.

CLEAR UP BACK BREAKOUTS

To treat chronic acne, which can happen at any age, the Smoothbeam laser targets overactive sebaceous glands, the root cause of acne, by shrinking them so they produce less oil. It also stimulates collagen production, which helps to reduce the appearance of acne scars. “There seems to be long-term remission of acne with Smoothbeam,” observes Friedman. Says Stephanie, 37, who came to Friedman after even Accutane didn’t resolve her frequent breakouts, “I saw immediate results after one session with Smoothbeam.” The course of treatment is three monthly \$500 sessions. For less persistent acne, there’s ClearLight, which uses blue-light waves to reduce bacteria. It’s not as aggressive as Smoothbeam, but there is no pain involved and the course of treatment is shorter (typically twice a week for one month). The cost: \$70 to \$150 per session.

TOP PRODUCTS

HIDE FLAWS

Cover FX Total Coverage Cream Foundation, \$37, and Foundation Brush, \$32

NECK LIFT

Elemis Pro-Collagen Lifting Treatment for Neck and Bust, \$116

HELP FOR HANDS

StriVectin-HC Ultra-Concentrate Cream for the Hands, \$38

GET THE GLOW

Dior Bronze Natural Glow Self-Tanner, \$27