

Anti-aging treatments – are they still available without cosmetic devices?

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Using modern skin care devices in cosmetic institutes becomes more and more popular, above all if it is a matter of anti-aging treatments. Frequently the clients ask for visible results and book skin care treatments with cosmetic devices.

It is extremely rare that skin care devices are used without administering skin care preparations. Exceptions are physical-physiological treatments such as ultrasound or infrared lamp treatments to stimulate microcirculation and metabolism in the epidermis. Needling techniques and microdermabrasion require skin care preparations for the pre- and after-treatment. Skin care devices usually serve for both the energy-supported penetration of active agents but also for boosting their specific effects. The required energy is supplied by electromagnetic waves such as light-, infrared-, ultraviolet- and radio frequency radiation including collimated forms as for instance laser and IPL, or alternatively by mechanical energy such as ultrasound and shock waves. LED- and infrared radiation rather target at a selective stimulation of biochemical processes than at a nonspecific heating. [Mesotherapy, medical needling and abrasive techniques such as microdermabrasion, grinding- or micro water jet technology all work without energy transfer.](#) The fact is that there is no need for cosmetic devices – on condition that the active agents are optimized in order to boost the penetration. In the case of conventional, non-optimized preparations however the effects can be accelerated by using the respective devices.

Hands – the most important equipment

With or without technical equipment – any treatment that is not aimed at preventing premature aging processes is not in line with the basic principle of skin care. Conditions are different in the field of decorative cosmetics. The repeated application and removal of make-up, particularly for persons who appear in public (theater, TV, politics), may lead to signs of aging and hence to counterproductive effects. Without makeup these persons then often appear visibly aged. All the more important it is to use a rapidly penetrating base care also in these specific cases. Skin care devices seem less appropriate for their daily skin care routine.

No matter what, cosmeticians still can apply all the techniques they used to learn during their professional education. In combination with modern preparations with protective, recovering and regenerative active agents as well as cosmeceuticals with high bioavailability due to carrier systems (liposome- and nano-technology), the beauty institute can be as successful on the medium and long term as it would be with all kinds of devices. When it comes to publicity the technical equipment may score points though. It should however be kept in mind that the hands are the most important utensil. There is another point: hands communicate a very individual and personal competence that cannot be achieved with technical equipment. Skin care devices make the institute depending on certain manufacturers – and possibly also on preparations. If the competing institute in the neighborhood then upgrades its equipment, the unique selling point concept all of a sudden will be lost. Particularly smaller institutes should be aware of this issue before they spend a lot of money for devices that shortly after are available for less money on the Asian market or even are replaced by another novel technology. [As experience teaches, innovation cycles are growing shorter. Intelligent masks, packs, massages, elaborate manual techniques and creative treatment processes will always be needed and never lose topicality.](#)

The skin analysis determines the treatment

What is the difference between anti-aging and normal skin care? There is no difference since skin care treatments in cosmetic institutes start with competent skin analysis routines which then determine the following specific treatments as for instance in the case of a measurable disposition to barrier-, cornification-, connective tissue-, vascular-, pigment disorders or light damage. Custom-tailored treatments with respective active agents and routines can be offered for hormonal changes, adverse effects of medical drugs and last but not least counterproductive eating habits and athletic absti-

nence. Customized treatments of course come at a price. Home skin care and treatments in the institute should be well adjusted and the used preparations should be sustainable. An excellent base here is Kligman's corneo-therapy concept that shows clinically significant results without the use of technical equipment. In searching for active agents cosmeceuticals can serve as a landmark. It should be mentioned in this context that each and every potent antioxidant still is far from being a cosmeceutical and far less from being an active agent against skin aging. Personal expertise is an important factor for choosing the appropriate active agent and successful treatment. Longstanding experience and adequate research in independent reliable sources can be helpful. Besides all high tech concepts care has to be taken that institutes do not neglect the personal wellbeing during the treatment. Practically all studies on device-supported anti-aging effects are short term analyses. Long term studies are hard to find though. Electromagnetic wave-induced radical formation is a controversial issue. What some consider as harmful still others consider as triggers for repair and protection processes. Technical equipment involves the danger of miscalculating the energy input. Resulting are adverse effects such as overheating and tissue damage with associated liability risks. Similar problems can occur without using any technical devices, for instance subsequent to long term fruit acid treatments which can support rosacea and perioral dermatitis.

Dr. Hans Lautenschläger

Blue: Not in the original publication.