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The Oxygen Facial: Fact, Fiction, Fabulous

By Marie Bargas

Just a stone's throw away from Beverly Hills, off the 405 in Encino, celebrity traffic to Rashel Pouri's Medi Spa, has reached a near fever pitch since this spa added the Oxygen Facial to its repertoire of beauty treatments. In fact the furor over Madonna's personal endorsement has raised this particular facial to near mythic proportions. Since Madonna revealed to Harper's Bazaar that she has become so fond of her Oxygen Facials that she keeps an oxygen machine in each of her homes, literally every spa in Beverly Hills, the West Side, all the way to Pacific Palisades and Malibu is scrambling to add this facial to their beauty menu – so much for the power of celebrity. But Oxygen Therapy is certainly not an overnight phenomenon.



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The Facts:

You see, hyperbaric oxygen treatment has been evolving since the 1940's. More recently it was used to accelerate skin rejuvenation for burn victims. You may recall that Michael Jackson was one of the first high profile celebs to sleep in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber. Hyperbaric oxygen is simply oxygen at a pressure that is above one atmosphere or high-pressure oxygen. Doctors know that adjunctive hyperbaric oxygen therapy has been shown to limit the progression of burn injury, reduce swelling, may reduce the need for surgical intervention, diminish lung damage and shorten the time of hospitalization because it accelerates the production of collagen.

Today, hyperbaric oxygen administered topically which, means directly on those lines and creases on your face, is shot through what looks like an airbrush in the hands of your facialist. Madonna's Oxygen Facial is in fact the O2 Intraceutical Treatment administered by Michelle Peck, who did a brisk business before the Oscars in Los Angeles. BNLA was fortunate to catch Michelle at home shortly before fashion week for a facial and an interview.

At first glance Michelle is an amazing woman who reminds us of a living, breathing Botticelli's Venus. Her flowing hair and smooth, flawless skin are at first shocking and then ethereal. It's as you've met an angel on earth. When it comes to the Oxygen Facial, Michelle is clearly the foremost expert on celebrity complexions on both coasts. When she's not working on Madonna in any one of her three homes, Michelle often goes on the road to give her clients facials before they go before the cameras either on set or on location.

Clearly, the reason why so many celebrities rely on Michelle to keep their faces smooth and firm is because the O2 Intraceutical Treatment works. While only the very wealthy can afford the luxury of a "house call" many women and men are flocking to salons nationwide for an initial series of at least 6 weekly treatments followed by monthly and then yearly touch-ups. "I see cosmetic surgery procedures decreasing and non-invasive treatments increasing over the next 10 years." Michelle forecasted confidently.

Fiction:

It's no surprise that in the wake of this much-publicized beauty treatment that an outpouring of oxygen based products have hit the market. But, buyer beware. Not all oxygen products are created equal. The original O2 Intraceutical Oxygen machine is sold for thousands of dollars. It's somewhat unlikely that the \$60.00 at home units sold on the internet or at discount stores are comparable. According to Michelle, the O2 Intraceutical System delivers a potent combo of oxygen and hyaluronic acid that has the lowest molecular weight available on the market. A lower molecular weight means that the serum is easily absorbed through the skin pores and directly into the tissue. It is this small detail that makes the O2 Intraceutical Treatment superior to the cheaper home versions in leaps and bounds. It is literally the difference between driving a Bentley instead of a Hyundai. The more oxygen and serum absorbed, the better the facial. In fact Michelle reports that it's after the actual facial that the real process begins. Moisture molecules continuously bond to the tissues plumping up the skin for days after the treatment, so you get what you're paying for.

Fabulous:

After a weekend of swimming and surf fishing in Manhattan Beach, I regularly take the quick jaunt up to Medi Spa to luxuriate under the soothing touch of Mayra, my Oxygen Facialist. Breathless from a busy LA Awards Season, Mayra is fast becoming a celebrity herself, and regularly works on the likes of the stars of DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES and was recently spotted rubbing elbows with Oscar nominees Felicity Huffman & William H. Macy. Viveca Fox is a regular when she's in town and then there's Anne Heche, Hilary Clinton and Betty White, who stills looks as perky as she did on THE GOLDEN GIRLS.

Unlike most facials, where you can expect a myriad of uncomfortable processes including: extractions, exfoliations and cosmetic peeling solutions that burn, the Oxygen Facial is a luxuriously soothing process wherein cool streams of oxygen and serum are sprayed gently onto your face. The results are instant. Within seconds of the application I always see a visible plumping of the skin around my eyes, mouth and forehead. I watch the years literally melt away without pain or discomfort and thank God and my lucky stars that I don't have to opt for surgery at this point. But, for me the Oxygen Facial is simply the crowning jewel of the new beauty regime that I've implemented since my visit to Michelle. I drink at least 8 glasses of water a day, have quit smoking, and am making sure that I get a lot of rest. As Michelle pointed out very frankly, common sense is perhaps the most important factor in any beauty regime. Thanks for the wake-up call dahlink.

What's New:

For those of us who don't have the budget for a home O2 Intraceutical Machine, the Atoxylene Wand promises to be a must-have. Check back with us for a review of this portable, take anywhere, anytime pen.

For more information please log on to: www.intraceuticals.com & www.thisismedispa.com