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Did you ever wonder where celebrities get that glowing, red-carpet-worthy complexion? The answer lies in oxygen facials, Hollywood's not-so-well-kept secret that has Madonna and other celebs raving about an instant age-defying look.



In response to the O2 fad, spas everywhere are offering everything from oxygen and vitamin "cocktails" sprayed onto the face to pressurized oxygen pushed below the skin's surface.

Dr. Brad Katchen, founder of Manhattan-based SkinCareLab, is a board-certified dermatologist who practiced at Beth Israel Medical Center before opening his downtown office in 2001.

His loyal clientele includes actresses who travel frequently between the East and West Coasts. These jet-setters pop by for an oxygen treatment to get a quick complexion boost.

Katchen began offering the treatment at his spa because he believes it gives tired skin a temporary pickup.

The treatment consists of an infusion of two different serums, he explains.

The first serum consists of atoxelene, which is rich in peptides and antioxidants and stimulates collagen in the skin. The second serum contains hyaluronic acid, one of the best-known hydrators.

Pressurized oxygen from a wandlike applicator pushes the serums below the surface of the skin.

The effects of hydration are immediately apparent, says Katchen. "You definitely look sort of plumped, and it gives you a lifted boost."

Recently, I visited Katchen's SkinCareLab to see if his treatment lived up to the hype.

Once in the chair, my apprehensions about the sterile-looking machine and metal applicator soon dissolved into thin air. I relaxed into cooling, sometimes ticklish sensations as Katchen worked his magic on my skin.

The effects, as Katchen promised, were immediate. My complexion radiated moisture, my skin felt taut and lifted, and under-eye circles from a night of minimal sleep were gone. I regretted only not having made plans that evening to show off my fabulous look.

Katchen recommends the treatments for a hydrating lift after jet lag or winter dehydration or before a photo shoot or red-carpet appearance. "It's a quick pick-me-up," he says.

He has seen an increase in customers who want immediate results, but emphasizes that the treatment doesn't last long. Katchen's treatment takes about an hour and costs \$500.