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TAKE ON FAKE

In this age of reinventions and enhancements, treat yourself to a head-to-toe makeover with these popular beauty fixes

By Devyani Srivastava | Sub Editor

A long time ago, beauty enhancers available to women were few and far between — the average woman's arsenal comprised cold cream, powder, blush and perhaps some kohl. Gradually, advancing technology changed the face of beauty, revolutionising it into a high-tech industry, with the effect that now, perfection is more attainable than ever before.

MANE MANIA

So, where do you begin when you decide to reinvent yourself? "Women believe that it's their hair that makes the biggest difference to how they look," says Julie Powell, owner of The Gold Salon, the region's first dedicated hair extension studio. At salons such as these, you can fake your way to straighter, wavier, curlier and longer tresses (extensions). "Depending on what you want and your budget, you can have a full head of extensions or just a few strands. Highlighted extensions add volume without adding chemicals to your hair. You can get even extensions with Swarovski crystals," says Powell. Extensions last about four to six months.

PRETTY PEEPERS

Do you want the colour of your eyes to be blue one day and green or brown the next? A pair of contact lens will do the trick. Freshlook, sold commonly by opticians across the UAE, offer a wide range. Of course, eye makeovers don't just end there — you can tint your eyebrows and eyelashes. Or you can sport false eyelashes; Boots outlets stock Girls With Attitude False Lashes, which are adhesive inclusive and easy to apply. Brows and lashes are also made more prominent through the application of eyebrow and eyelash extensions. Here, aestheticians attach individual hairs to the real ones, using surgical-grade adhesive.

If you want something more permanent, try dermapigmentation (permanent make-up), a cosmetic procedure for the eyebrows, eyelids and lips. "The procedure is more accurately a semi-permanent application based on tattooing techniques," says Sophie Bilardello, a French dermagraphic artist with nearly 15 years experience. "Unlike traditional tattooing, permanent make-up pigment is only applied to the epidermis," says Bilardello, who works at Version Francaise Beauty Salon, Dubai. The results last for up to three years.

POUT PERFECT

Full, pouty lips are always in fashion and the best way to get them is by applying lip plumper. Stores such as Sephora

stock plumpers by brands such as Too Faced cosmetics and Benefit. Alessandro International's Lip Volume Booster can be purchased at salons such as Beauty Within.

DAZZLE 'EM

Your teeth can also be made flawless. "Right now, among non-invasive and painless cosmetic dental procedures, the most popular in Dubai are permanent teeth whitening and lumineers," says Dr. Amer, DDS, MSc — Cosmetic, High Tech, Laser and General Dentist, The Dental Spa, Dubai. During permanent whitening, the teeth are covered with laminates and the darkest of teeth can be lightened to a whiter-than-white shade. "The results can last up to 20 years and the process has no side-effects," says Dr. Amer.

Lumineers are contact lens-thin veneers that are applied to the teeth without removing any tooth structure. "Lumineers are a permanent cosmetic solution for stained, chipped, discoloured or misaligned teeth," says Dr. Amer.

You can also create a Hollywood smile at home by using a teeth whitening kit sold at Boots outlets. Or pick up an iWhite Teeth Whitening kit from a pharmacy.

BODY BEAUTIFUL

Shapewear or slimwear is your quick-fix to a flat tummy and flattering contours. These are undergarments designed to change the wearer's shape so that the figure appears slim. Pieces include bodysuits, brassieres, control slips, camisoles, briefs, hip slips and waist shapers that are completely invisible under any garment.

In Dubai, Boots outlets and leading pharmacies stock several kinds of shapewear by France-based Lytess, a reputed creator of 'smart' shapewear. These undergarments — divided into categories such as 'slimming', 'corrective', 'micro massager' and 'hydration' — promise real results. Another part of a woman's body that is commonly enhanced is the bust. Most cosmetic giants now sell over-the-counter enhancement creams. For example, Clarins Bust Beauty Extra Lift Gel gives an 'immediate lift effect', while Clarins Bust Beauty Firming Lotion restores tone, leaving the décolleté firm. You can also wear brassieres that firm the bust, such as the Bodykind Bust Firming Bra, from Marks & Spencer. The company also sells minimising bras, designed to make the bust look smaller.

TERRIFIC TAN

For a sun-kissed look all year round, try fake tanning. Boots outlets stock the ever-popular self-tanning brand, St. Tropez, and Soltan, and many others. Instead of using a DIY kit, you can get into a tanning machine. The Gold Salon has vertical tanning machines. "Nine minutes of high-powered tanning is equal to being in the sun for five hours," says Powell.

NAILING IT

One of the first fashion enhancements to hit the market were fake nails and the industry continues to grow. Women who want their tips and toes to look perfect for a long time now opt for the Bio Sculpture Gel treatment, which has been available internatibnally for 15 years but arrived in Dubai only last year. Bio Sculpture Gel is a chip- and smudge-resistant treatment, says Shabana Karim, CEO, Bio Sculpture ME. "A gel is used to cover the nail. The treatment lasts up to six weeks, so it's semi-permanent. This is the solution for those who want durable nails," she says.

From head to toe, there's little you can't modify, non-invasively and painlessly, for a new, improved you. All you've got to do is keep an open mind and fake it. ■