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We Tried the Most Expensive Facial in NYC



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Is a \$1,500 facial worth it?

Written by Lynn Schurnberger

I admit it—when Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank’s office called and offered to let me try their new BRP facial I wasn’t paying attention to the details. So you can imagine my surprise when instead of being bathed in creamy lotions that I’ve come to expect from traditional facials, electrodes were attached to my back and Ria, a licensed laser technician and medical assistant, warned that I should let her know *immediately* if I started feeling too hot. “We don’t want to burn your skin.”

Well, that was reassuring.

Dr. Frank, who, among other things, is the Consultant for Product Development for Madonna's MDNA skin care line, is renown for his cutting edge techniques. But could a facial that took only 30 minutes and combined three different non-invasive techniques really BRP—Build, Repair and Polish my skin? And would it really be worth \$1500?

Ria explained that for the first step she'd be targeting the deep dermis to tighten and tone my skin using a radio frequency device called Exilis. (The electrodes would help the radiofrequency energy stays focused within my body, allowing for greater depth of penetration.) After slathering on cold gel, she passed the device over my face paying careful attention to my forehead chin and around my mouth, calling them "particularly sensitive areas." The Exilis contains a thermometer folks, so really, there was no chance of burning (but I tend to emphasize the dramatic—just ask my husband). And I have to admit that the procedure felt kind of like a hot stone massage—okay a hot, hot stone massage— but it wasn't uncomfortable.

Next, using the Laser Genesis, Ria attacked the superficial dermis (sandwiched between the dermis and the top layer epidermis—the facial also turned out to be a mini lesson in anatomy). This sonic device repairs sun damage, reduces red and brown spots and restores healthy blood flow—and the ten minute procedure was so relaxing that if not for the "popping" sound of the machine I might have fallen asleep.

Next, Ria prepped me with ice bags and a steroid pill for the final step in the BRP facial, the "polish," which, using the Clear & Brilliant laser, Dr. Frank would be performing himself.

"The Clear & Brilliant acts like a vacuum hose, to exfoliate and get rid of excess pigmentation," Dr. Frank explained as I nervously swallowed the pill and he moved the wand across my face. Surely *this* would be the part of the facial that hurt. But if you've ever had Fraxel or big gun ablative lasers which are much more intense, you'll appreciate that the Clear & Brilliant induces not much more than an occasional tingle—and even that is offset by Dr. Frank's witty banter.

But onto the big question: Does it work?

Frankly I'm not a gusher, but I have to say a resounding YES. Afterwards, as predicted, my face was red for about 12 hours and it felt sandpaper to my touch for about 4 days. But the redness was easily covered by makeup, and even my husband (the only person to touch my face during the recovery period) didn't notice the change in texture. So in other words, virtually no downtime. And I saw immediate results. Despite my skepticism, my forehead and jaw were tighter, some pesky brown spots had vanished and my skin glowed. Dr. Frank recommends one treatment for "special occasions," or 2-4 for more permanent results with touch ups every year. Dr. Frank is also working on a device which would combine all three machines into one, which he hopes to bring to market in the near future.

In the meantime, it's a month later and my skin still looks better than ever. My only regret is that I didn't do my chest. Given all the plunging necklines I'm seeing at awards shows this season, that's the next area I'll be targeting for some TLC—I mean BRP.