






Color Guard

We love seeing a celebrity with a glowing high-tech device planted firmly on their face, but do futuristic-looking LED light treatments really work? According to our experts, the answer is a resounding “yes.” —*Tatiana Bido*

LIGHT COLOR	RED	BLUE	AMBER	GREEN
HOW IT WORKS	Although early research surrounding LED therapy shows no conclusive evidence about its benefits, the treatment is still touted by skin experts as a gentle anti-ager. “Red light boosts collagen, which helps reduce lines and wrinkles,” says celebrity aesthetician Shani Darden.	Chillhouse lead face therapist Tomás Glenn says blue light works closer to the surface of your skin. “It’s the go-to for treating acne causing bacteria,” he explains. “Blue light stabilizes sebum production and has anti-inflammatory benefits.”	“Amber LED light has been studied in comparison to red LED in a clinical trial, and both were found to have anti-aging effects on the appearance of facial wrinkles through a process called photobiomodulation,” says Charlotte, NC dermatologist Gilly Munavalli, MD.	While there is some debate on the efficacy of green light—Dr. Gross suggests skipping the color entirely—Glenn says green light can treat hyperpigmentation, sunspots, and dilated or “broken capillaries,” calm sensitivity, and improve the skin’s complexion overall.
WHO IT’S FOR	“In addition to stimulating collagen, it can increase circulation and reduce inflammation. It also diminishes dark spots and improves skin elasticity,” says New York dermatologist Dennis Gross, MD.	Acne sufferers will benefit most from blue light therapy, says Dr. Gross: “Blue LED kills P.acne bacteria to both treat and prevent breakouts. I love blue LED for acne because it will never strip or dry out the skin, unlike some topical ingredients.”	Unlike red LED light therapy, amber light has a shallow penetration. This makes it best suited for those with more surface-level conditions like excess redness, sun damage and hyperpigmentation.	“If you want to reduce pigmentation and achieve a more even-toned complexion, green light is the one to try,” Darden says.
IN-OFFICE TREATMENTS	“I have a full LED Bed at my studio,” says Darden. “LED light for the body has the same anti-aging benefits for the face, like boosting collagen and minimizing fine lines and wrinkles. It can also speed up healing and reduce pain, along with boosting your immune system so you look and feel amazing as well.”	“If you just had a peel or are acne-prone, using a combination of red and blue LED will kill acne-causing bacteria while reducing inflammation and redness,” explains Dr. Gross. “If you have the option to do both red and blue at the same time, it is a great way to get double the benefits in one treatment.”	Like red light therapy, amber lights are great for stimulating collagen and elastin. “For in-office treatments, I recommend every four weeks for basic maintenance to my clients at Chillhouse. For more intensive goals, the suggestion is a series of treatments once per week to achieve optimal results,” advises Glenn.	Green LED light therapy can be combined with chemical peels, microneedling and laser skin resurfacing as part of a treatment plan to discourage excess melanin production, which can help with melasma, dark spots and hyperpigmentation.
AT-HOME DEVICES	<p>Zero Gravity Skin Perfectio Three five-minute sessions per week for one month are recommended to see the benefits of red light therapy with this facial treatment device, which provides both LED light and topical heating to increase blood flow. \$1,499, zerogravityskin.com</p> 	<p>Omnilux CLEAR Use this first-of-its-kind, FDA-cleared blue light mask for just 10 minutes a day to treat active acne. The blue light kills bacteria and reduces the oil production and inflammation that causes acne. \$395, omniluxled.com</p> 	<p>Sunina Skin LED Light Mask The amber LED wavelengths on this three-color system (there’s also a red and blue light setting) are ideal for sensitive skin and promoting even skin tone. Use it over your favorite skin-care products to optimize results. \$119, suninaskin.com</p> 	<p>Dr. Arrivo Zeus The electrodes on this device emit blue, red and green LED light. Just a few minutes of green light therapy a day can help heal pigmentation and accelerate skin cell renewal. \$1,350, us.currentbody.com</p> 

BACKGROUND: THINKHUBSTUDIO/GETTY IMAGES

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To explore more LED devices and their benefits, scan the code.

Some of the LED benefits mentioned in this story are actively under scientific review for effectiveness.