

What is HIFU?

High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU), more widely known as the new “non-surgical facelift” is a highly effective way to treat skin laxity, fine lines, wrinkles and a natural alternative to rejuvenating the skin and face.

As we age, particularly after 30, the amount of collagen, fat and elastin in the skin decreases markedly. The result is a loss of volume, the appearance of fine lines and a general dulling of the skin. HIFU can combat these signs of skin ageing.

They can be used to treat the face and around the eyes, but it can also be used to rejuvenate the neck, décolletage, hands, arms and rest of the body that need tightening and firming up.

How does HIFU work?

HIFU uses High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound to heat targeted areas, creating a coagulating effect to the deeper layers of the skin, called the SMAS. These are the layers that a surgeon would usually work on in a surgical facelift procedure, and HIFU is able to target these areas without the risks and downtime associated with surgery.

Acoustic energy is applied to the area that you would like to improve, this reaches the deeper layers of the skin – dermis, subcutaneous & SMAS layers (depending on the settings). The highly focused acoustic energy creates thermal coagulation zones at the three different depths followed by a wound healing response, resulting in new collagen production, and therefore longer-term tightening and firming of the skin.

Whom is HIFU for?

HIFU treatments are recommended for adults who feel their skin has begun to lose overall elasticity, plumpness and hydration. They can be used on the face, delicate eye areas, neck, décolletage, hands, arms and knees to refresh and rejuvenate skin.

Who is HIFU NOT suitable for?

They are not suitable for those who are wanting to replace lost volume in specific parts of their face, or those who want to alter the shape of their face or features.

HIFU is not suitable if:

- you are known to be allergic (a patch test will be needed)
- you have an active skin infection, disease or inflammation in the area to be treated
- you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- you are immunocompromised
- you have a blood disorder If you have a history of cold sores, or fever blisters around the mouth/lip area, treatment may result in break outs. In this case, your practitioner may recommend that you take a course of anti-viral medicine before treatment.

How do you prepare for HIFU treatments?

As with facial treatments, avoid retinoids or alcohol prior to your treatment. Leave a two-week gap between other skin treatments such as microdermabrasion, hydrafacial or laser hair removal. Other than this, you do not need to take any particular steps in preparation for your treatment as this is a non-invasive treatment with zero downtime.

What happens during a HIFU treatment?

- Your practitioner will remove any makeup from your face and use a sterile wipe/solution to prepare the area to be treated.
- Your practitioner may apply topical numbing cream to the treatment area.
- They will mark the treatment sites with a white pencil.
- Your practitioner will then begin to treat the areas with the HIFU probe, which resembles an ultrasound probe that doctors use for pregnancy scans.



- The acoustic energy is delivered through the treatment probe. You will feel a warm sensation and slight discomfort, but this will not be unbearable. Everyone's comfort level is different – the feelings you encounter are a positive sign that the process is working.
- Once your treatment is complete, you are able to carry on with your day as normal. There may be some redness and warmth around the treatment areas, these are generally very well tolerated and are temporary.

Some clients may enjoy immediate initial benefits, but the ultimate lifting and toning results will be apparent over the following 2 to 6 months.

Most people only need one treatment. Touch-up treatments can be performed 9 months after your first treatment, although they are usually not needed until 12-18 months. This depends on the degree of lifting and tightening required.

What should you do after a HIFU treatment?

Do:

- Keep hydrated
- Avoid sun exposure, alcohol and cigarettes
- Use SPF 30 daily

Don't:

- Use make up for 24-48 hours after treatment
- Do strenuous exercise for 24 hours
- Take hot showers or baths, or use saunas for 48 hours after your treatment.

What are the side effects and risks of HIFU?

Redness, oedema (swelling), tenderness and slight bruising may follow up to 10 days post-procedure. All these reactions are linked to the procedure itself, and are temporary.

What are alternatives to HIFU treatments?

There are many alternatives to HIFU treatments, depending on your particular aesthetic concerns and reasons for seeking treatment. Alternatives include, but are not limited to, medical grade skincare, chemical peels, microneedling, skin booster treatments, device-based skin tightening (e.g. RF, IPL), laser resurfacing, cosmetic surgery or no treatment.

Your practitioner will be able to discuss alternative treatments with you during your consultation.

