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THE “LIQUID face-lift” was supposed to change everything. Using filler to rescaffold sagging skin seemed like a bright idea: It was cheaper and less invasive than surgery. The problem is, “fillers don’t actually lift the skin; they just push it outward,” says Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D., a New York dermatologist. Keep filling, “and that’s how people end up looking like Cabbage Patch Dolls.” The answer? Less invasive procedures that can buy you time (and cost a fraction of the price). Here, experts explain some of the newest options.

THE NEW THREAD LIFTS

Thread lifts made a splash when they hit the scene about 15 years ago but quickly waned in popularity. The procedure—in which sutures were used to temporarily lift the skin and stimulate the body’s own collagen production—often used permanent threads that led to inflammation and scarring. (The FDA pulled some early versions off the market.) They’ve since been replaced by biodegradable threads that are safer and more effective, says Sachin Shridharani, M.D., a New York plastic surgeon. He’s partial to Silhouette InstaLift, which uses absorbable threads dotted with flexible cones “to lift and anchor the skin without any telltale marks,” he says. (Cost: \$5,500–\$7,500.) After a few days of downtime, expect to see results, which get better over the next six months as collagen production ramps up. Shereene Idriss, M.D., of Union Square Laser Dermatology in New York, believes this lift works best for those with a higher BMI, since the skin is thicker,

“so there’s less risk of a bump or divot.” A subtler option? NovaThreads. These “raise the jowl and tighten the jawline,” says Francesca Fusco, M.D., of Wexler Dermatology in New York. The whole procedure takes less than an hour, and “you can even go right back to the office.” Results last for about a year. (Cost: \$3,000–\$7,500, depending on how many you need.)

HOT TREATMENTS When it comes to tightening, derms love Ultherapy, which uses ultrasound energy to gently heat

the deep layers of tissue to create microwounds that, as they heal, cause the skin to lift and tighten without disrupting the outer layer. “It won’t work immediately, but the results look amazing after a few months,” says Idriss, who recommends patients get a top-up every other year. (Cost: \$3,500.) For faces that need more sculpting, Frank is excited about FaceTite and AccuTite. Performed under local anesthesia, both procedures use a radio frequency wand that goes beneath the skin to remodel tissue, destroy fat, and tighten skin. (Each treatment clocks in at about an hour and costs around \$7,500.) FaceTite is better for larger areas: It can resculpt a full neck or a sagging jawline, which more of Frank’s patients are paying attention to (and can’t be addressed with filler). AccuTite is great for detail work, such as targeting fat pads above the nasolabial folds or a droopy eye area, he says. “Think of it like micro liposuction for the face.”



HOW TO CHEAT A FACE-LIFT

Doctors are finding new ways to help you fight gravity—without going under the knife. By Jessica Matlin

Shaped like a wireless computer mouse, this gadget syncs to an app that has nine spa-like protocols, such as the new Lymph & Lift treatment. After applying the conductor gel, select the program on your app, and follow the instructional video as the ZIIP emits a series of nanocurrents (which cofounder and aesthetician Melanie Simon finds produces longer-lasting results than microcurrents). So do these types of products actually work? “You’ll see a benefit, but you have to do the heavy work and be religious about sticking to their protocol,” says Idriss. ■

AT-HOME DEVICES There isn’t an at-home gadget on earth that is going to replicate the results of a medical treatment, but some beauty brands are trying their hardest to create one that comes close. Two that have gained traction: The NuFace Trinity (\$325) uses microcurrents (low-level electrical currents) to stimulate the production of ATP (adenosine triphosphate), which is instrumental in the creation of collagen and elastin, and energizes your facial muscles. And then there’s the ZIIP (\$480). (Jennifer Aniston and Margot Robbie are fans.)