

Kate Winslet recently revealed she starts every day by sticking her face into a washbasin filled with cold water. And she may well be onto something, because even Harley Brown is creating his own cold snap this summer, using intense temperatures to eliminate fat wrinkles and, quite possibly, the need for needles. But can these new freezing technologies really stop time, as Botox claims to, or reshape your body in the way that liposuction does?

FOR THE FACE

Noelle Kildman says she has quit for good. Julia Roberts won't touch the stuff. Cindy Crawford went cold rather young. Whether it's the Oscar-impeding lack of expression, the pain or the influx of critics, Botox has lost a few fans. Even Botox — or, better, as it's affectionately known — the conservative way to disable the wrinkle-forming muscles. Developed by MyoScience, a California-based medical technology group, Botox uses focused cold therapy temporarily to freeze the nerves in the forehead. A small, handheld device, called a cryoprobe, channels liquid nitrogen through a sealed needle to the facial nerves at the temples. At the tip, it changes into gas in up to eight 30-second bursts, temporarily silencing the nerve. In a clinical trial of 130 people, conducted by MyoScience, 90% of subjects saw an improvement in the appearance of dynamic lines — those that appear as you make facial expressions.

In America, where Botox is more commonly used for pain management, the Food and Drug Administration hasn't yet approved its use as a wrinkle treatment. But in Britain, we have two Mr. Frosts on hand. Dr. Vincent Wong, a cosmetic doctor, launched the service in April at La Maison de l'Esthétique (there's already a three-week waiting list), while Dr. Yannis Alexandrides officially launched in June.

The appeal is clear no toxin. And, unlike Botox, which can take up to a week to take effect, the effect of Frost is instant. "It doesn't give you that frozen look you often get with Botox, either," says Wong, "and it can prevent deeper lines forming, so has a younger feel home." — some as young as 25" Botox isn't without its limitations, though. "It only treats the forehead and between the brows right now," the American plastic-surgery adviser Wendy Lewis cautions, "and it only usually lasts between 90 and 120 days, so just as long as Botox." The "no needles, no pain" claim is also up for debate, as local anesthetics is first injected, and some experience the "brain freeze" that ice cream can trigger, as well as sensitive gums. Finally, there's the cost — from £300 for the forehead alone, compared with £240 for Botox across two areas — and it is expected to rise later in the year at demand increases.

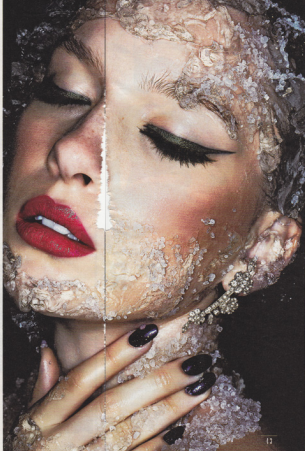
Some argue against a frozen future. "It certainly has a place in contemporary appearance-maintenance treatment for patients who are resistant or hypersensitive to Botox," says the cosmetic doctor Dr. Jean-Louis Schlegel. "But for the time being, it doesn't offer the same degree of finesse."

Wong, who also offers Botox at his clinic, concurs. "Only about 20% of my new patients are former Botox users — it's a unique treatment with a very different mechanism of action. I don't think it will replace Botox." Then there's the 6% of patients who have reported disappointing results. Wong is no the case, though, with a new technique. Rather than freezing the nerve with a Tins machine (the success of which depends on the doctor's skill and the curvature of the patient's temple), he adds extra shots of cold along each temple, targeting every single branch of the nerve. He also uses a topical numbing cream, unlike aesthesic, a won't temporarily freeze the forehead or thicken the treatment area, which can hamper the efforts of Botox. Meanwhile,

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PROTOX HAS A PLACE IF YOU ARE RESISTANT TO BOTOX, BUT IT DOESN'T OFFER THE SAME DEGREE OF FINESSE

THE BIG CHILL

DON'T WANT BOTOX BECAUSE OF THE TOXINS, OR LIPOSUCTION BECAUSE OF THE NEEDLES? THEN CRYOTECHNOLOGY MAY BE THE PROCEDURE FOR YOU. GRACE TIMOTHY REPORTS



MyoScience plans to explore treating additional areas in the future.

FOR THE BODY

Another cold therapy that's growing in popularity is fat-freezing cryolipolysis, a treatment that freezes and kills fat cells. There are two brands — Zeltiq CoolSculpting and Cooltech — but they work in the same way: a gel membrane is applied to the area, and a device with a cup-shaped or ribbing head sucks the nubb of fat up into a vacuum, cooling it to low temperatures for an hour. Fat cells freeze at a higher temperature than the surrounding tissue, so a promoter not to offer other cells. The dead fat cells are ingested by white blood cells and naturally excreted. Clinical trials have shown a 20%-30% reduction in fat after just one treatment, and the only known side effects — bruising, tingling, swelling and numbness — are rare. Most patients return to normal activities straight afterwards.

Not every fat fighter will be a candidate — known as "the fat treatment for thin people," you have to be fairly slim to benefit, admits Jill Zander, an aesthetologist who runs a skin rejuvenation clinic in Baber, Surrey. "Ideally, you'll have a BMI between 18 and 24, with localized fat deposits such as the muffs, upper thighs or back." It's proving especially popular with women struggling to get rid of residual baby weight. Lisa Wilson, from nearby Hereford, is a 31-year-old mother of two. "I'm fit and healthy, but I just couldn't shift the extra fat around my stomach and under my pregnancy," she says. "After the treatment, I lost 25 pounds my waist."

Does it hurt? "The initial sucking sensation is a bit uncomfortable, but you get used to it," says Tina Radley, 39, a business development consultant from London, who underwent Cooltech on her stomach. "You do end up with a big lump, as your skin is frozen solid, but it goes down within minutes. It's worth it — in just six weeks, my tummy was fat less again."

However, as with Botox, it's not for everyone who might have previously signed up for more established procedures such as laser or liposuction. As well as being the required shape, you have to have the bank balance to wait. Treatment costs from £1,000 per session of Cooltech and from £800 for CoolSculpting. A single session covers just one small area, so you'd need to return for the second free handle, for example, unless you go to Dr. Shrey Montford, medical director of the Cosmetic Skin Clinic, who has a second CoolSculpting machine. The often CoolSculpting to tackle two areas in half the time for £1,600. While there's no downtime, it's by no means instant, either — results become apparent between two and six months after treatment. Finally, you can't expect to wave goodbye to the visible altogether. Legs wobble, as it won't firm up skin.

For now, even Dr. Alan Kerdin, the cosmetic doctor and Cooltech pro, admits that surgical liposuction procedures — including liposuction — are still the gold standard for spot-reduction. When you're the one sitting in the waiting room, however, the patients, noninvasive option might win out. ♦