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surface." Dr. Colbert is a fan after a recent gua sha treatment helped smooth wrinkles on his face. Meanwhile, improving blood and lymph flow along with releasing blocked chi—a person's life force energy in traditional Chinese healing—helps deliver oxygen and nutrients to the surface and the bright, healthy glow that comes with it, Plug says. The stone is key. "There are ways I can access the tissue with the tool that I can't with my fingertips," Plug explains. Although gua sha can leave red scrapes or bruises on patients' backs and shoulders, the facial version is much gentler. "Skin tissue firms up and de-puffs, and people look as if they're lit from within," she says. "When I do one side of a face and compare it with the other side, it's like two different faces." Gua sha treatments, which often include skin care, LED light therapy, and other add-ons, are 75 to 90 minutes, half of which is massaging. Cost: \$180 for a 45-minute treatment. For long-term results, Plug recommends an at-home gua sha ritual three to five times a week.

Cosmetic Acupuncture

BEST FOR: dull, tired, aging, and hormonal skin.

Facial acupuncture is a lot like regular acupuncture: Ultrafine needles are inserted into the skin and left for about 30 minutes to unblock chi and stimulate blood and lymph flow. Even though your goal may be cosmetic, acupuncture is based on the idea that parts of the body are connected. So expect your practitioner to do a full health assessment, to analyze your pulse,

tongue, and face, and to place needles all over your body. "Whatever is going on with facial skin is tied into your organs," De La Torre says. "For example, lines on your forehead signal liver chi stagnation, and acne happening on your

chin is related to the endocrine system." The treatment works to address those underlying issues, plus the skin directly, by stimulating blood, lymph, and chi flow to and from the face. As for results, "it makes your entire face brighter," De La Torre says. "You'll see plumping, toning, and firming." Because acupuncture is known to reduce stress, people feel better too—which also helps your appearance. "Clients might first come for how they look, but they keep coming back for how they feel inside," she says. Indeed, acupuncture has been

"People say that they look like a better version of themselves after a treatment."

—acupuncturist Gianna De La Torre



1. Follow gua sha tutorials with the **Wildling Empress Stone** (\$65, wildling.com) on its website. 2. Use the firming **NuFace Mini Facial Toning Device** (\$199, mynuface.com) for five minutes each day. 3. Keep **Colbert MD Illumino Anti-Aging Brightening Mask** (\$110 for 5, colbertmd.com) in the fridge for cryotherapy-inspired results. 4. Safely remove peach fuzz with the vibrating **DermaFlash Luxe** (\$200, ultra.com) device.

proved to reduce stress and help many other conditions. And preliminary studies on cosmetic effects specifically are promising: A review of seven studies in the *Journal of Cosmetic Medicine* noted positive results for wrinkles, skin hydration, blood circulation, and general improvement. For best results, De La Torre recommends a series of twice-weekly treatments for six weeks, then maintenance every few weeks. Cost: \$185 to \$325 for an initial session.

Dermaplaning

BEST FOR: a quick glow-up, smoother skin, and flawless makeup

Simply put, dermaplaning is the professional version of a close shave: An aesthetician runs a scalpel blade across the surface of your skin to remove "peach fuzz" hair and dead cells. "Even if those vellus hairs are light, they cast a slight shadow, so removing them instantly brightens your complexion," says Crystal Koro, an aesthetician in Beverly Hills, California. Removing hair and cells also helps topicals absorb better (oil planing is like dermaplaning, except oil is applied first so it can absorb immediately), and it preps a smooth canvas for makeup. "Celebrity makeup artists often require clients to get it done before an event or a shoot," Koro says. If you're worried hair will grow back thicker or darker, don't be. Dermaplaning doesn't change the follicle or how the hair grows, Dr. Colbert says. Adds Koro: "Because vellus hairs are so fine, you usually don't feel or notice their growth." It's a good idea to see a licensed, experienced pro because the blade is crazy sharp. Even a seasoned pro can cause a tiny nick, Koro says. You usually can't feel or even see it, but that's why your aesthetician should use a sterile, disposable blade. Koro recommends treatment every three to four weeks, and although dermaplaning is typically done as an add-on to a skin-care facial, you can get the service on its own. Cost: \$65 to \$100. (Continued on page 50)