


WOMAN & HOME

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Light is vital to life; it exerts a powerful influence on how we look and feel. On a sunny day everything seems brighter – our hair shines, our skin glows and we radiate youthful optimism. When the weather is dull, however, it's a different story. Gloomy days sap energy and *joie de vivre* – even our complexion greys in sympathy. Artificial light plays tricks on our skin too. Who hasn't stepped into a lift and felt their confidence plunge under the cruel overhead illumination which highlights bags and furrows? Flickering candlelight may be a girl's best, wrinkle-smoothing friend for a glamorous night out, but when it comes to putting on your make-up you need daylight to achieve perfection.

These days, light is on our side. With the latest cosmetic technology, creams and foundations are being developed that not only bring back dewy freshness to dull-looking skin, but adapt to all lighting conditions to make sure you keep on glowing.



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Go with
the
glow

Too much exposure to light – especially strong sunlight – can hasten ageing, as we know. But harnessed as a beauty booster in new skin products, treatments and the latest make-up, light can work wonders, as **Vicci Bentley** explains

Beauty beams

Ancient manuscripts from China, Egypt and India confirm that for over 2,000 years, light has been used with colour to rejuvenate and heal skin. Today, research shows that coloured lights affect the nervous system, stimulating the production of hormones that regulate the body's chemical balance. Each colour has a different "wavelength", so they can be targeted to various layers of body tissue, reaching the underlying causes of problems that show up in the skin.

O-Lys Light Therapy system uses fibre-optic probes to stroke, massage and bathe the skin in light. Working with specific creams and serums – according to the condition being treated – they stimulate repair enzymes, activate lymph drainage, boost circulation and oxygen uptake, and encourage cell production, to combat lines, stretch marks, cellulite and acne.

Unlike lasers, these lights are cold and penetrate without burning or irritating the skin. They are also ultraviolet-free, so won't age or burn your skin. If you keep your eyes open during the treatment, you will benefit from a mood-boost – blue light calms the mind and soothes acne inflammation, while yellow light lifts depression and strengthens connective tissue.

"This is the most versatile treatment I've found," says beauty therapist Malvina Fraser at Geno Ventti. "It covers such a vast area of problems. One client's eczema cleared up after a single treatment," she claims. It also promises anti-ageing benefits, making skin look plumper, and lines – especially from the nose to the mouth – smoother. Treatments cost around £45 for the body, and between £50 and £60 for the face. A course of ten treatments, each lasting one hour, is recommended (call 01948-830665 for salons).