

MARIE CLAIRE mag

LASER WORKS

Recently, I was searching the internet and read about Isolaz, a new procedure developed by scientists in Pleasanton, CA, in which a dermatologist “vacuums” and lasers your skin and, supposedly, banishes your blemishes for good. I became filled with the kind of hope I had when I bought my first tube of benzoyl peroxide, and decide to book an appointment with celebrity dermatologist Dr. Fredric Brandt. The Isolaz is the only FDA approved “photopneumatic” device, meaning it combines pulse light (“photo”) to kill acne-causing bacteria with vacuum suction (“pneumatic”) to physically extract oil and grime from deep in pores. Over time, treatments cause the skin’s sebaceous glands to shrink, which means reduced oil production and tighter, cleaner pores. Results are long-lasting, and the treatment is painless, he tells me. Visions of clear skin dance in my head...the years of being the only grown woman at her dinner party with an erupting volcano on her cheek are over. At \$500 a session, they’d better be.

First a nurse positions a steamer over my face, just as a facialist would. After 20 humid minutes, I’m rosy and sweaty, and Brandt wheels in the Isolaz machine, which look like something you’d use in an alien abduction. He puts on protective goggles and approaches me with a hose that has an attachment very much like the kind I use to suck dust off my drapes. But true to his promise, the procedure doesn’t hurt. It takes less than 10 minutes and feels kind of like little electric hickeys all over my face.

Then one morning, shortly after my third Isolaz session, I look in the mirror and realize something truly amazing: I am pimple-free. Not even an itty-bitty whitehead. Same thing the next day, and the next. I am giddy.