

Put some fizz in your fizzog with a 'youth-boosting' carbon dioxide jab

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Bored with Botox? Fed up with fillers? Then try some carbon dioxide.

The gas that gives fizzy drinks their pop is the latest weapon in the cosmetic surgeon's armoury.

It is injected below the skin, where it is said to work wonders from melting away fat and stretch marks to tightening jowls and combating dark circles under the eyes.

Clinics charge £100 to £150 per session of carboxytherapy, with up to a dozen treatments needed to tackle the deepest stretch marks or saggiest faces.

Doctors say the jabs dilate blood vessels, boosting the flow of blood and oxygen and nourishing the regeneration of skin cells. Deep injections can kill fat cells, it is claimed.

Carboxytherapy could also come to the aid of the bald, with jabs reopening closed pores, potentially allowing hair to regrow. It has been used in France since the Thirties to treat patients suffering from poor circulation, blocked arteries and heart problems.

More recently, research by the University of Siena in Italy showed it is effective at smoothing skin and reducing fat.

In the study, 48 women had six sessions over three weeks. On average, their thighs reduced by 2cm, and they lost 1cm from each knee and 3cm from their stomach. At the same time their skin became thicker and their cellulite smoother.

Sabine Zenker, a doctor who has pioneered the use of the technique, said: 'This is quick, largely pain-free and a more natural alternative to dermal fillers and Botox.

'It takes four or five minutes. It is not painful at all.'

Patients can suffer bruising and are advised to abstain from vigorous exercise for two hours and baths for four.

Some doctors are reluctant to give carboxytherapy to patients with asthma or breathing difficulties. And Rajiv Grover, secretary of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, said more research was needed into the long-term effects of the treatment.