

## A few pointers for a new face

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### Facial acupuncture is the Hollywood star's shortcut to younger looking skin. Precious Williams tries it



Treatment: 'my stuck qi circulates around my tired face'

Who wouldn't want to look 10 years younger in just 20 minutes? In America, you can - as long as you don't mind lying in a darkened room with needles protruding from your face, eyes and ears. The rich, the vain and the famous (reportedly Madonna, Gwyneth Paltrow and Cher) are having weekly "acupuncture facelifts" to ward off their wrinkles. The "facelift" is administered by a doctor of Oriental Medicine (or OMD), who spikes your face with disposable, hair-thin needles that - allegedly - turn back time and halt the physical manifestations of ageing.

The needles are inserted into wrinkles and frown lines, eventually making them vanish. The stimulation brings blood rushing to the face, which makes it look flushed. Apparently, after a few sessions, eyes brighten, skin feels firmer, lips become plumper and blemishes vanish. "Facial acupuncture stimulates the cells to lay down

new collagen fibres under wrinkles, thereby filling them in," says New York acupuncturist Billy Villano. "And the needles relax muscles, which combats sagging in facial areas. The results are amazing." Determined to find out just how "amazing" facial acupuncture might be, I made an appointment with Clarence Lu, a New York-based OMD.

*"Why do you want facial acupuncture?" he asks, peering at my skin. "I've heard it's popular with celebrities and I want to try it for myself," I say.*

Lu looks unimpressed. "I suppose it's a better option than Botox injections," he says. "The facial acupuncture works by making energy circulate properly around your face, but energy needs to circulate properly around your whole body, not just your face." Lu offers to give me traditional acupuncture but refuses to administer facial acupuncture, saying he doesn't see the point.



Madonna: said to be an acupuncture fan