

Precious little use



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FRESH AND FLUSHED

A facial aids blood circulation and gives the face a flushed look. It also exfoliates and cleans the skin

Beauty salons and cosmetic companies have them on their 'must-try' lists. But do diamond, gold, pearl and silver facials really deliver what they promise: glowing 'white' skin?

by Parul Khanna

IT'S WELL known that we have a fondness for gold – and for other precious metals and gems like silver, pearls and diamonds. So the idea of using such exotic substances in face creams, facials and other skincare products is tempting for many women. But though gold and silver look good as jewellery, do they help our skin to glow as well?

So if there is no scientific evidence for the benefits of such exotic substances, why are companies promoting them?



'A GOLD FACIAL CAN MAKE THE FACE LOOK BETTER BY 30 PER CENT'

The second claim that gold reduces fine lines and wrinkles is false, claim experts. Dr Mohan Thomas, senior cosmetic surgeon, Breach Candy Hospital, says that gold doesn't have a role to play in either lymphatic drainage or collagen regeneration. "It has been shown that massage aids lymphatic drainage in cases of women with breast cancer. Massaging any part of the body might improve the drainage to a degree, but it doesn't lead to a delay in the ageing process." He adds, "After spending Rs 1,000, any change you notice might be the result of a feel-good factor."

According to Dr Mohan Thomas, senior cosmetic surgeon, Breach Candy Hospital, Mumbai, "Cosmeceutical (products that possess dermatological and pharmaceutical properties) companies, unlike pharmaceuticals, do not have to undergo three or four stages of studies to get a license. They can simply claim to have done some research and then market and sell such products."

Both doctors add that these precious metals and substances do not have any positive effect on the skin. "If you have had such a facial, the improvement in your skin is perhaps more the result of the massage you received, or the other ingredients used in the facial, rather than the gold or silver used," says Dr Thomas.