

COMING CLEAN

a guide to summer-damage detox

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MY NAME IS Erin, and I am a sun worshipper. I have always been one of those girls who, against my better judgment and the foreboding images of wrinkly-skinned women shown to me in health class, just can't seem to skip the sunbathing sessions. The younger version of me spent summer weekdays working outside and weekends lounging at the beach. I've always been the girl who skips the sunscreen and opts for the SPF-nothing tanning oil instead. As far as I know, there is no known cure or 12-step program for this affliction.

But over the past few years, I've become more realistic about the disappearing ozone layer — and more worried about developing crow's feet by the time I hit 30 — so now I slather on facial sunscreen every morning. When it comes to protecting the rest of my body from sun damage, though . . . I don't.

So, like a junkie throwing out her smack, I put together a self-created rehab regimen to undo the havoc I wreaked on my body over the summer months. My mission: sample the treatments that some of the city's beauty havens offer to overhaul sun-damaged hair, skin, and feet. What follows is a sun-addict's detox diary, documented from the top down.



hair

The **Malibu Clarifying Treatment** (\$40) at **Sassoon Salon** (14 Newbury Street, Boston, 617.536.5496) aims to remove chlorine and mineral and product buildup, and it's typically used on hair that's seen a lot of swimming action. I'm not much of a swimmer — I prefer just lying idly by while other people get a workout at the beach — so I receive the hydrating alternative for hair that's dried out from the

sun but not necessarily chlorine-soaked: the **Kérastase Deluxe Treatment** (\$30). It includes gloss, moisture, and protein, and the results should last about a month. "Protein locks in the cuticle to strengthen the hair, the gloss coats it to add shine, and moisture hydrates and makes hair soft," explains assistant creative director Kathleen Sullivan. After a quick shampoo, a salon assistant applies the treatment mixture, wraps a strip of cotton around my hairline, puts a Saran-Wrap-esque hair poncho on my head, and sets me under a dryer for about 25 minutes. After the mixture is rinsed out, I move over to Sullivan's chair for a post-treatment blow-out. The result is bouncy hair that's soft to the touch, with a lot more sheen than my pre-treatment 'do. It's not quite shampoo-commercial hair, but that's probably because my layered bob isn't long enough to magically swing in slow motion from side to side. I have to admit, I do turn some heads walking down Newbury Street after my appointment. Or maybe it's just my head turning to repeatedly check myself out in store windows. Either way, I like it.

Next it's off to enjoy the **Shu Uemura Art of Hair Take [tah-keh] Ceremony** (\$45 to \$120) at **SalonCapri** (31 Lincoln Street, Newton Highlands, 617.969.1970), which includes a scalp-cleansing oil application followed by a customized shampoo (in my case, a hydrating wash with Shu Uemura Moisture Velvet Nourishing Shampoo), two separate scalp massages, and a deep-sea base mask applied to hair in one-inch sections. Clients can choose between two different oils — one with an invigorating effect, the other soothing. I opt for the Fuyu oil to invigorate and energize my exhausted ass. It seems to do the trick — until the first of two 15-minute shiatsu-inspired scalp massages, that is. This process — inspired by Japanese tea ceremonies — is an all-out luxury pampering session for the hair. Nearly two hours later, I step out of the salon with some of the softest, smoothest hair I've felt since I decided to chemically relax my slightly wavy tresses during my junior year of college. I vow to never wash my hair again. (I make it approximately 48 hours.)



face

Aside from my twice-daily cleanse-tone-moisturize routine, I'm a bit of a facial neophyte. So my experience with the **Light Resurfacing Peel** (\$105/30 minutes) at **Mario Russo** (9 Newbury Street, Boston, 617.424.6676) is a big step forward for me. The treatment leaves me amazed at how utterly relaxing it is to have pulsing red and blue lights applied to my face. And what's more surprising is that, despite the treatment's name, nothing is actually peeled off during the Light Resurfacing Peel (am I the only one who didn't know this?). This is an ideal post-sun process, because the gel-like peel works to slough off dead skin, regenerate skin cells, and even the top layer of skin, while the light therapy applied directly to the face stimulates collagen production. This is an about-face for my sun-damaged face, and results should last up to six weeks. Immediately I notice cleaner-feeling skin, unclogged pores, and the subtle radiance that typically comes only from tried-and-true makeup tricks or a good workout.

The problem: red and hypersensitive skin due to a few too many hours in the sun. The cure: **Cold Marine Treatment** (\$90) at **Chuan Body + Soul** (Langham Hotel, 250 Franklin Street, Boston, 617.451.1900). The path to the facial room at this hotel spa is through the gym area, where a few guys are mid-workout as I waddle by in an enormous robe and slippers that look like skis. Awesome. But I forget about that as soon as I enter the dimly-lit room and slide under the soft sheet. This treatment is cool and soothing — like putting an ice cube on an enormous mosquito bite. The facial includes the basic steps of any good skin-

care regimen — cleanse, tone, exfoliate, extract — punctuated with a thick-as-mud clay mask, cold towels, and a hand massage with shea-butter lotion. I leave feeling just a tiny bit greasy, but totally relaxed and refreshed.



body

Anne-Cecile Curot, spa director at **Marc Harris** (125 Broad Street, Boston, 617.443.8633), is one of those striking women whose skin is so glowing and flawless that I can't guess her age — which reassures me that I'm in trustworthy hands when I head into the spa for a **Pumpkin Ritual** (\$75). "Women need to invest more into our skin — face and body — because it's the last thing that people see. And unfortunately, when you die you don't take your Manolo Blahnik shoes with you, or your Yves Saint Laurent bag," Curot says. "Someone else from your family will get those. That's reality!" She's certainly got a point. After explaining to Curot that I have a wedding to attend just a few days after this treatment, she assures me that my skin shouldn't peel or flake, so not to worry about the strapless dress I'll be wearing. About 45 minutes later, I saunter out of the salon feeling fabulous after Curot works over my upper arms and décolleté (also

known as the area where my cleavage is supposed to be) with a sweetly scented cleanser, smooths on a pasty pumpkin enzyme containing lactic acid, cinnamon, and clove, and finishes things off with a pumpkin cream essence that's a whipped antioxidant moisturizer — think of it as a crème fraîche for the body. The treatment is a success both as a recipe and a skin-renewing treatment: the skin on the back of my upper arms is smooth with a slight shine, and the bit of discoloration left over from a minor sunburn on my chest is gone. As much as I hate to see the summer go, this treatment reminds me that there are some very delicious things to love about fall.

It turns out that many sunbathers (including me) have a common problem: skin so dry you could sand your floors with it. So when I arrive for a **Back Facial** (\$85) at the **Carriage House Salon and Spa** (33 Church Street, Cambridge, 617.868.7800), esthetician Anne Roche takes a look at my skin and decides hydration is the answer. An hour and a half later — after being cleansed, lightly exfoliated, steamed, moisturized, and massaged — my back is ready to kick some strapless-dress ass. It feels cleaner, clearer, and a lot smoother than when I started. As for how it looks? You'll have to ask the wedding guest in the pew behind me.



feet

As hard as I am on my skin, I'm much worse on my feet. The torture isn't season-specific, either: I perpetually teeter on the highest heels, squeeze my toes into pointed pumps, and buckle my feet into shoes that defy the laws of

physics. And even bare feet can take a beating in sweltering heat. The **Focus Pedicure** (\$45) at **Pyara Spa and Salon** (104 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge, 617.497.9300) is one solution for dry, cracked heels and feet. The exfoliating scrub and follow-up cream pack a one-two punch on the calloused (so not cute) balls of my feet, and the pale pink polish perfectly complements my metallic leather sandals. Closed-toe shoes won't be making a cameo for at least a few more weeks.

So the jury's still out on whether or not I've made a total recovery. But after being scrubbed, sloughed, smoothed, primped, and polished, I think I might have actually kicked my nasty little habit. At least until next summer. @

more options
for overhauling
and healing

The **Men's Fall Fix Facial** (\$50) at **Barbershop Lounge** (245 Newbury Street, Boston, 617.450.0021) is a guys-only treatment that preps the skin for seasonal changes.

The **Hyper-Shine Conditioning Gloss by Matrix** (\$40) at the **Loft Salon and Day Spa** (207 Newbury Street, Boston, 617.536.5638) conditions locks and helps bring back your hair's luster.

Aqua Polish (\$100) at **Pyara Salon and Spa** (104 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge, 617.497.9300) is a full-body treatment featuring Dead Sea salts to buff and condition.

The **Pomegranate and Fig Pedicure** (\$40) at the **Carriage House Salon and Spa** (33 Church Street, Cambridge, 617.868.7800) combines aloe leaf juice, pomegranate oil, fig extract, marigold, and vitamin E to cool and soothe your soles.

— Erin Souza