

TRENDING DOWN

Why Microdermabrasion Treatments Are on the Decline, According to Dermatologists

BY MACAELA MACKENZIE

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Sinclair et al v. HydraFacial
IPR2025-00145
HydraFacial Ex. 2139



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Microdermabrasion has helped take the exfoliation game to another level — even inspiring a wave of at-home devices to help you get a professional-grade scrub on your own. But according to the latest survey from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, microdermabrasion treatments are becoming less popular.



By using a pressurized jet filled with superfine exfoliating particles, skin-care pros can use microdermabrasion to blast gunk and dead skin cells to reveal a cleaner, glowier complexion. "[After the treatment], whatever products you're using on your skin work more effectively because they're getting right into the dermis rather than having to penetrate through a layer of dead skin cells," Heather Furnas, a board-certified plastic surgeon in Santa Rosa California, tells *Allure*.

Skin Check

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Despite the glow-giving results, the ASPS annual report on plastic surgery statistics found that microdermabrasion treatments became less popular in 2017, dropping 4 percent from the previous year.

We asked the experts to weigh in on why microdermabrasion has fallen out of favor. "One issue is people want longer-term results," Michele Shermak, a board-certified plastic surgeon in Baltimore, Maryland, tells *Allure*. "It's good for getting a short-term glow, but microdermabrasion is not terribly impactful over the long term."

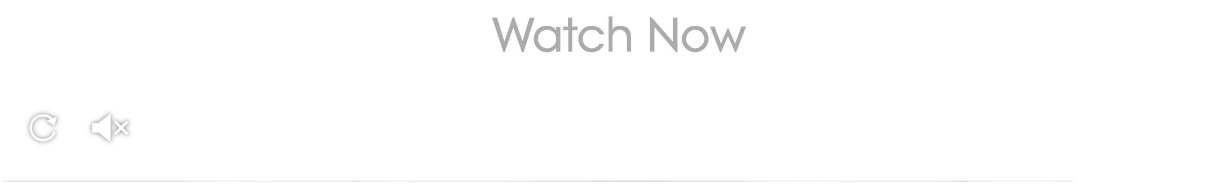
Beyond that, the experts we spoke to said there might be a bigger reason for the drop: Advances in other exfoliation treatments are simply leaving microdermabrasion in the dust. "The field is really evolving and leaving microdermabrasion in the past," Furnas says. "Microdermabrasion has almost become outdated compared to all the other advances in exfoliation." "It's been surpassed by better options," adds Shermak.

The new guard of exfoliation alternatives

So, what's replacing microdermabrasion for exfoliation lovers? "Peels seem to be taking off more," says Furnas. She specifically calls out the wide variety of chemical peels that allow you and your doc to pick exactly the right exfoliating cocktail for your skin. In other words, more control over the strength and ingredients. "I certainly think that peels are more impactful and longer lasting than microdermabrasion," says Shermak.

According to the ASPS 2017 data, chemical peels are indeed on the rise, if only slightly — the popularity of the treatment grew 1 percent in 2017 and over 600,000 more chemical peels than microdermabrasion treatments were reportedly performed.

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Furnas also suggests that newer takes on microdermabrasion, such as the HydraFacial, are rendering the traditional treatment outdated. HydraFacial works similarly to a traditional microdermabrasion treatment but rather than using abrasive particles, it uses a skin-loving serum followed by glycolic and salicylic acids to blast dead skin cells.

"It has various levels of aggressiveness so you can get strong exfoliation — you can even pinpoint lips and eyes," explains Furnas. "Microdermabrasion certainly has benefits but I'd say there's been such a great evolution in peels and treatments like the HydraFacial, that I wouldn't go back to it and recommend it over other options."

What to do with your at-home microdermabrasion device

So, does this mean your at-home microdermabrasion tool is totally useless? Definitely not, although "home devices are generally not as powerful as professional treatments," Sejal Shah, a board-certified dermatologist in New York City, tells *Allure*. There's certainly nothing wrong with microdermabrasion — if you're a fan, there's no reason to stop the treatment, whether at-home or with a dermatologist.

Before choosing any at-home exfoliation treatment that uses a tool, it's a good idea to check in with a pro, says Shah. "When you choose a device, ensure that you understand how to use it, are comfortable using it, and using it appropriately for your skin type and concerns," she says. "Lastly, if you feel that you might be developing any adverse effects, stop immediately and see a board-certified dermatologist."

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