

Ask an Expert: Dr Sarah Hart, cosmetic doctor at the Skin Institute.

What trends have you noticed emerging in cosmetic medicine recently?

People are more proactive, seeking out a skilled cosmetic medicine practitioner, then forming a long-term relationship with regular visits. Practitioners have become the “go-to” partner for improving ageing skin. Once you find the right practitioner it becomes a partnership. I have patients I’ve treated for more than 15 years now, with small amounts of filler to support sagging, regular micro-needling on platelet-rich plasma to create collagen and tiny amounts of Botox to relax muscles. Add in nourishment with scientifically advanced, doctor-only skincare, prescribed for your skin, and this “little and often” approach can keep your skin looking great as the years pass.

What interesting advances and innovations will we see this year?

I think we'll see a lot more people discovering the benefits of dermal fillers made from hyaluronan. They are hugely versatile; and emerging new products and techniques are changing the way we use them. Rather than using fillers just for fuller lips or cheeks, we can subtly improve sagging. To achieve this we might place filler in unexpected areas, such as in front of the ear or in the temple, to improve your jowls, for example. This newer, holistic approach won't leave you looking "done" – just a fresher version of yourself. It's an international trend, now coming to New Zealand, that I've been teaching in Australia and China. I'm now sharing these techniques with our team of nurses here at Skin Institute. It's exciting.

We are also using lighter, thinner versions of hyaluronan dermal fillers, placed with a special gun into the very top layers of the skin. This is a little like putting a great moisturiser directly under the surface, where it can nourish skin internally. Research shows treatment improves skin hydration, texture and elasticity. The face, neck, décolletage and hands can all be treated. Skin Institute Queenstown is the first in our group to offer the DermaGun treatment and we're seeing exciting results.

