Glow like the elite

HOW RED LIGHT THERAPY BECAME THE NEW STATUS SYMBOL IN BEAUTY

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Beauty treatments and cosmetic procedures have long been associated with the world of luxury but as treatments become more technology-focused, it is becoming ever easier to keep a grasp of youthful looks well into old age.

A surgeon's nip and tuck here and there was once sidelined for the rich and famous of Hollywood and the silver screen. But with people now prepared to admit to cosmetic procedures as a status symbol, spending on appearance has become a more acceptable side of modern life.

The benefits of longevity therapies, like stem cell treatments and hyperbaric oxygen chambers, are growing by the day, leading even more of the beauty conscious towards scientific innovation to retain that youthful glow.

Red Light Therapy — a form of infrared technology long associated with muscle recovery and physical benefits — has taken a firm foothold in Dubai's beauty industry as a bonafide, less invasive alternative to cosmetic surgery. Paired with a healthy lifestyle, improved muscle tone, energy boosts and an overall feel-good glow can be delivered from a visit to the many 'red rooms' now popping up across the city at dedicated wellness clinics and resorts.

With potential for improved blood circulation, pain relief and even hair growth stimulated by the powers of low-energy red or near-infrared light, the power-boost delivered to the body's energy cells has the potential for a myriad of health benefits.

An important point, Dr Giuseppe Bellucci, a longevity expert at the Baldan Group, told *KT LUXE*, is the heat delivered by RLT is significantly different to the high environmental temperatures of Dubai's searing summer. "Unlike the ambient heat of the city — especially during heatwaves — which can be quite overwhelming due to the "urban heat island" effect, InfraBaldan 3.0 delivers targeted and adjustable thermotherapy, optimising treatment effectiveness in maximum comfort," he said. "After the session, clients typically experience increased energy and overall wellbeing, thanks to the combination of infrared therapy and gentle physical activity."

InfraBaldan 3.0 uses targeted therapeutic heating to restore optimal body temperature, promoting the reactivation of blood and lymphatic circulation. It also provides an exercise function, with an in-built cycling machine to encourage blood circulation during the therapy to maximise its effect to users who are seated in a small capsule, similar in appearance to the cockpit of a fighter jet.

The result, developers claim, is an improvement in physiological muscle tone and strengthening of the immune system, which is particularly vulnerable to temperature fluctuations. The therapy works by stimulating collagen production, increasing blood circulation, and reducing inflammation, bringing potential benefits to skin conditions and other medical areas.

Meanwhile, better blood flow induced by RLT promotes overall

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tissue health throughout the body. And by stimulating fibroblasts — cells that formulate our connective tissue — red light boosts collagen production, potentially reducing wrinkles, laughter lines and overall skin texture that is more typically ironed out with botox or fillers.

While this kind of therapy is nothing new, its application into the cosmetic industry is proving a growing market for those opting for less invasive procedures.

InfraBaldan was born in the 1990s as a pioneering system for natural weight loss through the use of infrared technology combined with moderate physical activity.

Over time, it has undergone continuous technological evolution, with a renewed focus on enhancing effectiveness, safety and user experience bringing treatments into the surging longevity health space.

The 3.0 next-generation infrared technology utilises specific wavelengths for optimal tissue penetration, targeting basal metabolism and precision lipolysis, or the metabolic breakdown of fat.

The capsule's synergistic cardio system integrates light physical activity, with careful monitoring of heart rate parameters to ensure maximum safety, while treatments can be personalised via a digital interface to track each session and an individual's improvements.

By tracking a user's biometrics, such as heart rate, the therapy becomes more relaxing and effective through each session by reducing the naturally occurring stress hormone, cortisol.

"The key feature of the InfraBaldan 3.0 system is the intelligent synergy between infrared technology and controlled physical activity, made possible by an integrated heart rate sensor," said Dr Bellucci.

This seemingly simple component marks a major leap forward compared to traditional infrared treatments, which are often static and generalised. "Synchronising the action of infrared rays with heart rate introduces an advanced level of bio-adaptation to the treatment, helping to reduce physiological stress, stimulate vagal tone and relaxation, and lower cortisol levels."

By also synchronising breathing patterns, respiratory quality improves, delivering a double-whammy of health benefits to the user. With greater oxygen availability in the tissues, proper oxidation of fatty acids occurs, helping burn fat fast by prioritising it as an energy source.

Infrared technology is clearly having a moment, with hand-held personal devices and at-home red solariums becoming more affordable, and of higher quality, to deliver life-boosting therapies at home.

In-clinic costs for RLT can vary, with sessions in Dubai ranging from Dh50 to Dh270, making it an affordable option for skincare and general wellbeing.

Many clinics offer discounts for multiple visits when compared with a single session, which can last anywhere from five minutes to half an hour, depending on individual requirements and their sensitivity.

From face marks, to hand-held devices and full-body RLT solarium beds and sleeping bags — the treatments available at home are wide-ranging and offer a multitude of personal options.

Improvements in the light wavelength and power delivered by personal devices have also made investments in the technology attractive for some.

Longer wavelengths can be optimised for deeper tissue penetration to power-up the therapeutic benefits for conditions like joint pain and muscle recovery. Increasingly, the technology is utilising the powers of artificial intelligence to track usage and monitor improvements.

The results are adding a growing body of research and data to prove the positive affects of RLT across multiple areas of health and wellbeing, in a booming cosmetic market.

Australia-based Bon Charge is a company looking to expand into the Middle East through its range of infrared sauna blankets and other RLT devices. "People are actually starting to wake up a little bit to the efficacy of red light therapy," said Andy Bant, founder and CEO of Bon Charge. "They're starting to realise not all devices are created equal and are looking for reputable companies, brands and thought leaders out there to educate on this topic a little bit more," he added. "They're probably the reason why we're seeing it moving away from the salons and more into the home."

RLT technology continues to reveal more insights into its positive effects, as well as promoting the natural production of feel-good chemicals into the bloodstream. "If you're looking at something like acne, for instance, chemical pills are quite invasive and abrasive on the skin," said Mr Bant. "But using red light therapy on an ongoing basis, you could actually reduce the appearance of acne. If you're looking at more cosmetic procedures, such as to reduce wrinkles and fine lines, that's also a really big benefit of using a red light face mask or a big red light panel."