

## TOOL TIME

Take the DIY route to getting gorgeous. ELLE rates the latest beauty gadgets.

**F**rom zapping wrinkles to scrubbing pores, the newest beauty gadgets promise to replicate dermatologist procedures for a fraction of the cost. But do they get results? We asked Dr. Yves Hébert, a Montreal-based physician specializing in aesthetic medicine, to weigh in—and gave them a test drive ourselves.

### OH, BABY! ●

The “BabyQ,” as it’s dubbed by devotees, uses red and infrared wavelengths of light to target fine lines, blemishes, age spots and rosacea. ● **THE CLAIM** “After six weeks of biweekly treatments, you can expect firmer skin and smaller pores,” says Peter Nesbitt, president of Quasar Light Therapy. “Those with acne will notice less sebum and inflammation and the disappearance of pimples.”

● **THE DERM SAYS** “This is probably good for maintaining results from more professional devices [used by dermatologists],” says Hébert. ● **WE SAY** After a few treatments, our tester’s skin seemed to glow—but since each session takes 30 minutes, upkeep is a commitment.

### HOT FLASH ●

Coming to Canada this summer, this device zaps pimples with thermal energy. ThermaClear delivers a surge of high heat in just two seconds, neutralizing bacteria below the skin’s surface. ● **THE CLAIM** “It clears pimples four times faster,” says Peter Scocimara, CEO of Therative, Inc., the makers of ThermaClear. ● **THE DERM SAYS** “It seems to dry out pimples, but the action doesn’t reach deep enough into pores to destroy acne-causing bacteria,” says Hébert. ● **WE SAY** Our tester’s pimples seemed to dry out much faster than usual.

### ● NO! MO! HAIR!

Touted as an alternative to laser hair removal—which can be painful and not suitable for all skin types—this device heats and destroys hair follicles. It works on large, flat surfaces (like your legs) and can be used on all skin types. ● **THE CLAIM** “When used twice a week for 14 weeks, the results show 60 to 70 percent hair removal, which is comparable to three to five sessions using lasers,” says Dr. Neil Sadick, a New York-based dermatologist and researcher who helped develop the product. ● **THE DERM SAYS** “This could never create the thermal injury needed to destroy hair follicles,” says Hébert. “It probably burns hair below the surface of the skin to create the impression of [permanent] reduction, but the regrowth rate will not decrease.” ● **WE SAY** The burning smell was off-putting, but the device was painless, easy to use and not as messy as waxing.



Baby Quasar (\$449)

no! no! Hair Removal System (\$275)

Tända Skincare System (\$295)

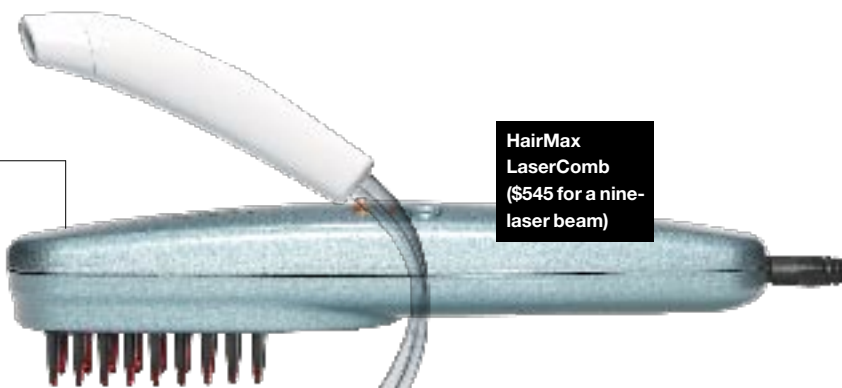
ThermaClear Acne Treatment Device (\$150). For details, see Shopping Guide.

### ● LIGHT SHOW

Plagued by acne and wrinkles? Consider this phototherapy treatment, which comes with changeable heads that deliver specific wavelengths of light: The red light stimulates collagen production, while the blue light destroys acne-causing bacteria. ● **THE CLAIM** “The results are nearly clinical: It’s the adjunct between topical skin care and a medical procedure,” says Daniel Thompson, a medical aesthetician and skin-care consultant for Pharos Life Corporation, the makers of Tända. ● **THE DERM SAYS** “It’s probably good for superficial improvement,” says Hébert. ● **WE SAY** Our tester’s skin seemed plumper after the treatment. >

## HAIR REPAIR ●

Laser energy finds another application in this device designed to stimulate hair follicles. The resulting increased blood flow encourages hair to grow thicker and healthier. ● **THE CLAIM** "With continued use, hair growth becomes noticeable," says David Michaels, managing director of Lexington International, the developers and manufacturers of the HairMax LaserComb. "This thickening leads to a significant improvement in hair's strength and appearance." ● **THE DERM SAYS** "The technology seems to work at providing some thickness," says Hébert. ● **WE SAY** Our tester didn't notice new hair growth, but her hair looked thicker on the days she used it.



**HairMax LaserComb**  
(\$545 for a nine-laser beam)

## ● CRYSTAL CLEAR

Like professional micro-dermabrasion treatments, Crystalift vacuums away dead skin cells with exfoliating crystals. ● **THE CLAIM** "After the first treatment, you'll see improvement in skin tone and texture," says developer Jonathan David. "As weekly treatments continue, it minimizes pores and reduces the appearance of fine lines and age spots. The most dramatic results are typically seen in six to eight weeks." ● **THE DERM SAYS** "Micro-dermabrasion is a good way to cleanse the skin," says Hébert. ● **WE SAY** After using the gadget, our tester went out with friends; despite having a late night, she had clear skin the next day.



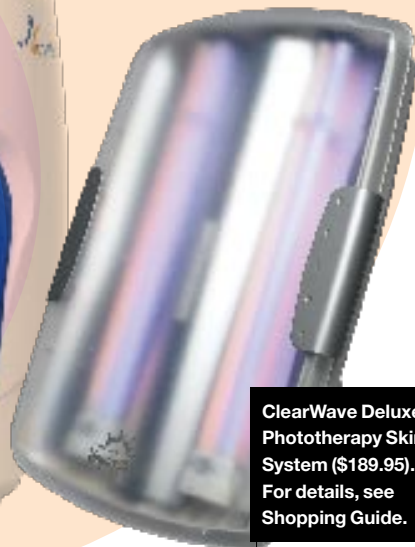
**Crystalift Dermatologist Vacuum Micro-dermabrasion**  
(\$199)



**Clarisonic Skin Care System**  
(\$195)

## CLEAN SWEEP ●

If your electric toothbrush works magic on your smile, imagine what it could do for your complexion. That's the idea behind this oscillating sonic face brush that cleanses and exfoliates the skin. ● **THE CLAIM** "It removes six times more makeup than you can by hand," says Dr. Robb Akridge, vice-president of research for Pacific Bioscience Laboratories, Inc., the makers of Clarisonic. "The sweeping action of the bristles opens up pores and gets rid of clogged makeup and dirt. With continued use, wrinkles look less pronounced." ● **THE DERM SAYS** "It's probably an excellent device for deep cleansing," says Hébert, "but it will never actually make wrinkles disappear." ● **WE SAY** The brush seemed abrasive at first, but our tester's skin felt baby-soft after just one treatment.



**ClearWave Deluxe Phototherapy Skincare System**  
(\$189.95).  
For details, see Shopping Guide.

## ● HEAT WAVE

If you suffer from acne, you may notice that your skin looks better after you've been in the sun. This device (which users sit in front of instead of holding on the skin) uses the same blue and red wavelengths of light that are found in natural sunlight—minus the UV damage and sunburn. ● **THE CLAIM** "ClearWave is comparable to systems used by dermatologists and can provide the same benefits," says Nicholas Harmon, president and CEO of Verilux, Inc., the makers of ClearWave. "Normally, it takes about two weeks to a month to see marked results." ● **THE DERM SAYS** "The blue and red wavelengths of light will likely yield discreet results on mild acne," says Hébert. ● **WE SAY** Our tester didn't notice any reduction in breakouts. And, because of the device's flat surface, the light didn't seem to target the sides of the face as well as the front. □