

Health and Beauty Girl

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**Read This Before You Try the Latest Viral Tik Tok
Beauty Trends!**

By Dr. George Bitar



According to recent statistics, the viral app Tik Tok has reached over 1 billion monthly users. (Source: <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/09/27/tiktok-reaches-1-billion-monthly-users.html>)

With several beauty trends going viral on a daily basis, it can be tempting to experiment with these DIY and less expensive solutions than in office cosmetic surgery visits. However, some of these hacks are at best ineffective or downright dangerous.

Board-Certified Washington, DC Plastic Surgeon Dr. George Bitar breaks down the most popular Tik Tok beauty hacks you should avoid.

What is it? Liquid Chlorophyll

It's a liquid tonic that users make at home that purports to be an acne cure-all and improves skin's texture and redness.

Why you should steer clear:

Drinking chlorophyll-infused water to get rid of acne or improve your skin can worsen your skin condition.

What is it? At-Home Hyaluron Pens

The Hyaluron Pen (also known as hyaluronic acid pen) is a small handheld medical device used to administer hyaluronic acid fillers into the face. This "pen" was originally created for diabetic patients to offer a needle-free, pain-free way to deliver insulin into the subcutaneous tissue. The pens took TikTok users by storm for their supposed potential to inject the lips, jawline or nose with hyaluronic acid at home.

Why you should steer clear:

You should never be giving yourself lip procedures or any aesthetic rejuvenation at home. At the advisory of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), "no one should be purchasing a hyaluron pen due to the fact that they can cause bleeding or bruising; infection with bacteria, fungus, or virus from the filler or needle-free device, among several other side effects, including death." Don't ever try this at home. Injectables may cause occlusion of blood vessels leading to skin death and possibly blindness in the most experienced hands, so when someone who is not familiar with facial anatomy injects themselves, they could cause a catastrophe!

What is it? At home nasal tanning spray

These products, showcased on TikTok, aren't strictly self-tanners. Instead, they're inhaled as nasal sprays to boost the effects of sun exposure or a tanning bed.

Why you should steer clear:

You shouldn't be inhaling substances that haven't been studied sufficiently, as using medications nasally can affect your sense of smell. They can also potentially have toxic effects on the cilia of the nose, keeping the nose from moving mucus through it normally. This can lead to mucus buildup throughout the nasal cavity, which thickens and forces you to blow out or postnasal drip. Melanotan is an unregulated synthetic chemical that functions as a hormone and supports melanogenesis, which is the process by which melanin, a black-brown pigment, is produced in the skin. Nasal tanning sprays have a range of different ingredients, but most commonly, they will all contain tyrosine or melanotan as their main active ingredient.

What is it: Sea Salt Acne Spray

A DIY spray consisting of sea salt and water to eradicate acne.

Why you should steer clear:

Sea salt water at best may help with mild skin inflammation and redness. This is not a viable treatment for acne. It could delay proper care and cause hyperpigmentation and potential scarring due to its use.

What is it? At-Home Plasma Pen Treatments

The devices look not so different from a mechanical toothbrush — but instead of a brush head, plasma pens have a needle-like tip. However, the tip never touches the skin — it's merely the means through which an arc of plasma passes. The process is said to make skin firmer and tighter by inducing trauma that triggers skin cells called fibroblasts to produce more collagen.

Why you should steer clear:

You should not be purchasing a plasma pen to achieve "firmer and tighter" skin. The risks associated with using this pen are quite severe. Inflicting pain on the skin with this device removes its proteins, causing the skin to lose its suppleness. It also poses a risk of causing pitting and scars. What's more, the pens are not monitored by the FDA. A more professional version of this pen is used in plastic surgeons' and dermatologists' offices. It requires a lot of training to be able to treat a patient without burning them. If a lay person uses this pen, they are at risk of causing themselves second and third degree burns if used improperly.

What is it? Scraping off Moles At Home

Some people have been using chemicals or even attempting to scrape off moles physically at home. One peculiar method recommends applying eyelash glue to skin.

Why you should steer clear:

All moles be checked by a professional before removal. There is no 'safe' way to remove a mole at home. This needs to be done by a trained qualified doctor or dermatologist. Using chemicals or attempting to 'scrape' off a mole could lead to infections, bleeding, scarring, and deformity.

A more compelling reason to not scrape moles at home is because moles originate in the dermis and therefore scraping the skin will only make them regrow after the endured trauma heals. Another reason to not scrape moles is that some moles can be cancerous, even on teenagers, and by scraping them without a physician examining them, cancer cells will still remain to regrow later.

What it is: Erection cream lip pout

One man caused shockwaves across social media for using erectile dysfunction cream to create plumper lips. These creams designed to boost erections typically rely on alprostadil, a type of vasodilator that widens blood vessels.

Why you should steer clear:

This can cause allergic reactions, blisters and swelling, but it can also cause blood pressure problems if the cream gets into your mouth. The lips are made of

thin and delicate skin with fewer oil glands. Let's just end this by saying that technology is fascinating and adaptable, but just because there is a remote connection between a cosmetic problem and the technology to address it doesn't mean that a non- medically trained lay person should take that leap of faith and self- medicate. The emergency rooms around the world are filled with these people!

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George Bitar, MD, FACS is an award-winning, fellowship-trained, board-certified plastic surgeon who has performed over 20, 000 cosmetic facial and body procedures. He is the founder and Medical Director of the Bitar Cosmetic Surgery Institute with offices in Fairfax, VA that serves a sophisticated national and international patient base. offering state-of-the-art skin care, injectables and cosmetic surgery.

Dr. Bitar obtained his medical degree from the George Washington University School of Medicine in Washington, DC, where he now serves as an Assistant Clinical Professor. He then finished a general surgery residency at the Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia. His plastic surgery residency was completed at the University of Virginia Plastic Surgery Program, which provided him with a strong foundation in reconstructive surgery, for people injured in accidents or who have facial deformities or severe burns, and in hand surgery and microsurgery.

Dr. Bitar later completed an advanced aesthetic surgery fellowship with 10 board certified plastic surgeons where he sharpened his aesthetic surgery skills before founding the Bitar Cosmetic Surgery Institute in 2002 in the metropolitan Washington DC area where he practices currently.

As an assistant clinical professor at the George Washington School University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dr. Bitar is involved in educating upcoming doctors and has lectured about his procedures at national and international

medical conventions. He is also a frequent lecturer at Georgetown University and the University of Virginia's Plastic Surgery Departments. A firm believer in medical research, he has authored several articles in peer-reviewed medical journals and book chapters and co-authored a book for other plastic surgeons about the neck lift technique that he has helped develop, as well as a major study about the safety of cosmetic surgery on 4,470 patients. Dr. Bitar is also a member of the American Society of Bariatric Plastic Surgeons.

As a continued commitment to enhancing the quality of life through plastic surgery, Dr. Bitar has operated on 6 continents and volunteered on medical missions to various countries and operated on children with severe burn, facial and hand deformities. He volunteers on the medical school admissions committee at George Washington University. Dr. Bitar is also fluent in French and Arabic.

Internationally, he trained with prominent cosmetic surgeons, and learned the techniques of Dr. Ivo Pitanguy, the father of Brazilian cosmetic surgery, in Rio de Janeiro, Dr. Marchac in Paris, Dr. Mendelson in Melbourne, and Dr. Widgerow in Johannesburg.

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