

METRO

Is getting a vampire facial worth the faff?

Ellen Scott Thursday 22 Mar 2018 10:39 am



Ever since [Kim Kardashian](#) shared a photo of her face covered in blood, vampire facials have become the go-to answer when tasked with thinking up strange beauty treatments.

But I've always dismissed it as an entirely pointless, very expensive fad – one of those weird things celebs do purely for the selfie opportunity.

[Is It Worth the Faff](#) is all about trying weird fads, though, and working out if they're worth the time, effort, pain, and embarrassment. So naturally, I have gone ahead and had my blood injected into my face to let everyone else know if they should bother

What is a vampire facial?

A vampire or Dracula facial is the catchy term for a PRP facial, which involves taking a sample of blood from your body (usually from your arm), spinning it in a machine to separate the plasma and the red blood cells, and then injecting or microblading the plasma back into your face.

PRP stands for platelet rich plasma, which is essentially the stem cells extracted from your blood.



(Picture: Instagram/Kim Kardashian)

A machine gets rid of the red blood cells to leave a clear liquid – the platelet rich plasma – which then gets pushed into the skin through tiny injections or microneedling.

Why? Because stem cells or PRP are magical for skin regeneration. They encourage healing and replenishing, meaning that they can be used for everything from reducing scars and stretch marks to getting rid of wrinkles. You'll often hear of stem cell treatments being used for burn victims or those with serious scars – the PRP facial is about taking this advanced medicine and using it for cosmetic benefits.

The treatment is supposed to leave you with increased collagen levels, smoother, fuller skin, and improved skin health, as well as reducing the appearance of scars and fine lines.

Faff involved:

Getting a vampire facial is... intense.

I went to see Dr Ejikeme at the Adonia Clinic, who's got a great reputation and all the medical qualifications to back it up. This is not a treatment you want done on the cheap by a friend of a friend, as there's high tech equipment and, well, your own blood involved.

She started by taking blood from my arm. If you don't like needles, this bit won't be pleasant, but it'll go fairly quickly.

Dr Ejikeme then put my blood sample in what looked like an extremely fancy microwave. This spins the blood so that it separates into platelet rich plasma (a clear fluid) and red blood cells.



My blood. (Picture: Chris Rickett/metro.co.uk)

The red blood cells get chucked away. They're not that useful. It's worth noting this, because, as Dr Ejikeme explains, that means that there's no moment where your face will be smothered in your own very red blood during the facial – if that's the picture opp you're after, you'll need to ask your aesthetician to smear those red blood cells over your face, but there's no benefit to doing this.

So yes, that means that all of those vampire facial selfies you see, with blood dripping all over the place, have been posed up. Social media isn't real. Shocking.

Then it's time for injections.

PRP facials will either involve injecting the plasma into your skin with a very thin needle, or microneedling the skin then massaging in the plasma on top. Dr Ejikeme went for a mix of both, using a thin needle to inject the plasma exactly where I needed it – around the acne scars on the cheeks and chin, my smile lines, and near my eyes.



OH GOD, MY FACE. (Picture: Chris Rickett/metro.co.uk)

I'm not going to lie, it did twinge a bit, despite Dr Ejikeme using anaesthetic. Kim Kardashian recently said she did her vampire facial with no anaesthetic at all, which means she is deserving of all the respect and praise – getting your face injected bloody hurts.

I'd advise against looking in the mirror while this is happening.

It doesn't feel too bad, but the visuals are scary. You might get some blood drippage from where the needle has gone in, and your skin will be bright red. Seeing that will make you think the procedure is worse than it actually is. Close your eyes.



Scary if you hate needles. (Picture: Chris Rickett/metro.co.uk)

Once I was through the scary injection part, the facial was pretty plain sailing. I got covered in a sheet mask, relaxed, and then was on my way.

But heed my warning: While the procedure itself may be fairly faff-free, you're not done the minute you leave the doctor's office.

Dr Ejikeme warned me that for a few days after the vampire facial, my face could be anything from 'a light shade of pink' to 'beetroot red'.

BEETROOT RED. My face could be the actual colour of beetroot for days.

Oh, and you're not allowed to wear any makeup the day after your treatment, or use any products other than super plain cleansers and moisturisers free from active ingredients. So there's no hiding your redness.



Soon I shall emerge, a beautiful butterfly. (Picture: Chris Rickett/metro.co.uk)

I was one of the lucky ones who only saw a slight shade of pink, but I did see – and feel – some bruising. Having to go without my usual foundation and eyeliner made me feel naked and more than a little self-conscious, and there was some significant faff involved in having to put all my skincare treats on the backshelf for a month and buy all new cleansers and moisturisers.

And of course, I have to mention the price, as that's quite a large bit of faff in addition to the pain, the time, the day-long makeup ban, and the new skincare routine.

A PRP facial at the Adonia Clinic costs £450. And it's not a one-time expense – the results fade after three months or so, so to keep seeing the benefits you'd need to invest at least twice a year. The clinic does offer deals for multiple treatments, but at £2,295 for six sessions, it's not a luxury most people can afford.

The results:

I'll be honest: I really, really didn't want the vampire facial to work.

I can't afford to spend hundreds of pounds on my skin every few months, and I worried that if the PRP facial turned out to be a miracle treatment, I'd quickly spiral into debt and skip paying rent.

But I'm afraid to say it does work. It's honestly mindblowing.

In the weeks after the treatment, my skin was noticeably plumper. The lines around my mouth pretty much vanished and my cheeks looked lifted. I'm 25, so I'm not quite ready for full on anti-ageing care, but if one session of getting blood injected into my face can make such a noticeable difference on both deep and fine lines, I imagine that it'd do incredible things for anyone with ageing skin.



This is my face one day later. Ignore the weird expression and focus on my skin. Doesn't it look glowy and smooth? (Picture: Ellen Scott/metro.co.uk)

I noticed a reduction in my acne scars and saw fewer breakouts and blackheads over the coming months. When I did get a spot, it healed more quickly than usual.

And I glowed. I don't think I've ever glowed before.

My skin looked so luminous I actually felt pretty without a scrap of makeup – which is a huge deal for me. I've always been self-conscious of my red, blotchy, acne-prone skin. Actually looking at my bare face and liking it was life-changing.

Now for the bad news: They aren't kidding when they say you need regular treatments.

Three months later, my skin is entirely back to its normal self. I can see the lines around my mouth, I've got dark circles, and my skin is often blotchy.

I'm happy to get back to my skincare products (I missed my toners and peels, pals), but I do miss the time when my skin was smooth, glowy, and plump without daily effort.

Is the vampire facial worth the faff?

It pains me to say it (I truly cannot justify adding this expense into my budget), but yes, the vampire facial is worth the faff.

Yes, it's pricey, but the results are far more impressive than a facial, which will cost you only a little less if it's particularly fancy.

I'm a skeptic at heart and would love to bash something pricey and loved by celebs, but the results did blow my mind. My skin looked completely different, and I can only imagine the benefits the same treatment could have on ageing skin, stretchmarks, or deeper scars.

If you're thinking of spending a lot of money on a cosmetic treatment, I'd honestly recommend getting a PRP facial. It's a natural alternative to fillers that packs a punch (and not just in the sense that it'll leave you bruised).

I'd much rather spend money on this than on fillers or Botox, purely because it has so many unexpected benefits beyond plumping.

Of course, I'm not going to spend money on vampire facials every month, because I am a twenty-something living in London and thus spend all my money on rent and bao, but if I were to suddenly come into a lot of money, PRP facials are where it'd be going.

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