



Make this the year that you...

Tackle those unsightly, painful afflictions and start looking and feeling your best. Our writers tried some remedies

Try acupuncture

What's the problem?

An achy, run-down body.

What's the solution?

My first encounter with acupuncture a decade ago did not leave me feeling any different. Roll on ten years and the birth of a baby, a late miscarriage and the trials of juggling life as a working mother have taken their toll. I'm in dire need of a boost, particularly after being laid low with a month-long cold that won't shift, so I visit acupuncturist Ross Barr. Fashion and beauty editors have him on speed dial.

For the sceptics among you, acupuncture, which has been practised for more than 3,000 years, is officially recognised by the World Health Organisation. It's a treatment that involves inserting and manipulating fine, sterile, single-use needles into specific points on the body (or meridians) along which Qi, a kind of energy, flows. This technique helps to alleviate whatever form of pain has occurred, be it mental or physical, by redressing any imbalance in this Qi. Having acupuncture is supposed to help to restore balance and allow the body's own healing to take place.

Did it work?

Like most women, I don't have the time to follow complicated diets or exercise regimens. Bi-monthly sessions with Ross, however, have helped enormously. On a recent visit I walked in with the slumped body and resigned expression of a 90-year-old and left, 45 minutes later, with a spring in my step and feeling as if I had napped all afternoon. I feel the calmest I have in years. Far from the sensation being painful, it is comparable to feeling tiny pin pricks. A mother's little helper like no other.

Details: the first session with Ross Barr is £55, subsequent sessions are £50. 44 Portland Place, London W1 (07836 205076; rossbarr.com)

Rachel Cliff

Lose that cellulite

What's the problem?

Many of us can breathe a sigh of relief at the start of winter when the thought of baring all in a bikini feels a reassuringly long way off. But don't rest on your laurels because now is the time to start tackling those lumps and bulges so that you are svelte in time for spring.

What's the solution?

There are many lotions and non-invasive therapies that promise to break down fat but none of them is as effective as lipomassage. LPG Endermologie was developed in France as a clinical treatment to stimulate the deep skin tissue of burns victims and, as an added bonus, it was shown to break down fat in particularly stubborn places, such as the thighs, back and even the face.