Skin Needling Treatment Melbourne - Me Clinic

Canonical: https://www.meclinic.com.au/skin/skin-rejuvenation-and-treatments/skin-needling-treatments/

Details:

Skin needling — also called micro-needling or collagen induction therapy — uses a medical-grade device with very fine needles to create controlled microscopic punctures in the skin.

Those tiny injuries trigger the skin's normal wound-healing response, which includes laying down new collagen and elastin. Collagen production continues for months afterwards — in some cases up to twelve — which is why results build gradually rather than appearing the next day.

It is a minimally invasive procedure, not a non-invasive one: it breaks the skin, and that is how it works.

Depth is the dial, and it changes across your face

Every other variable in needling is secondary to how deep the needles go. Depth decides which layer is reached, and therefore what can change — and it is set by the operator, per pass, per area.

Roughly	Reaches	Used for	What you get afterwards
Shallow	Epidermis and the very top of the dermis	Product penetration, brightness, fine texture, tolerance-building first session	Redness for a few hours
Medium	Upper dermis	Fine lines, pore appearance, general skin quality	Redness for a day, mild swelling
Deeper	Mid dermis	Scarring, stretch marks, established texture change	Redness 1–3 days, pinpoint bleeding at the time, sometimes bruising

The skin is not the same thickness everywhere, so the setting should not be either. Skin over the forehead, around the eyes and on the temples is markedly thinner than skin on the cheek, the nose or the chin. A treatment run at one depth across an entire face is either too shallow to do anything useful on the cheeks or too deep for the thin areas. When you are told what depth is being used, it is reasonable to ask whether it changes by area — a considered answer to that question tells you a great deal about who is holding the device.

Home rollers are not the same treatment

Devices sold for home use look like the same idea at a fraction of the price. They are not, and it is worth knowing why before you buy one.

A roller drags; a pen stamps. A rolling drum enters the skin at an angle and leaves at an angle, so each needle cuts a small arc rather than a clean channel. A motorised pen enters and withdraws perpendicular. The tearing is what causes the marks people occasionally end up with.

Anything long enough to help is long enough to harm. Needle lengths short enough to be safe without training barely reach past dead surface cells. Lengths that reach the dermis reach the layer where scarring is possible.

Sterility is not optional and is hard at home. You are making thousands of open channels into skin. A device rinsed and left in a bathroom is not sterile, and infections introduced this way are the commonest serious problem.

Actives after needling behave differently. Substances that are safe on intact skin are being delivered past the barrier. Some of the worst reactions come from applying a normal serum immediately after home needling.

There is no screening. A keloid tendency, a cold sore history, a blood thinner, active acne — all of these change whether needling should happen at all, and none of them are on the box.

If you already own one and have been using it, say so at your assessment rather than leaving it out. It changes what your skin has been through and it is not something anyone will lecture you about.

Factor 4

Needling is often combined with Factor 4 , an autologous serum prepared from your own blood. A blood sample is collected and processed through a patented system that separates and concentrates growth factors and cytokines from the plasma, then filters the result to produce a concentrated serum, which is applied during needling so it reaches the deeper layers through the micro-channels.

Because the serum comes from your own blood, there is no question of rejection or allergy to a foreign substance.

What it is used for

Acne scars , particularly rolling and shallow boxcar scars

Other depressed scars and stretch marks

Uneven skin texture

Fine lines and early wrinkles

Enlarged pores

Pigmentation , including melasma in selected cases

Sun damage and general skin quality

Dry skin and dullness

The neck and décolletage as well as the face

Why some people choose needling over laser

Needling works mechanically rather than by targeting melanin, so it does not carry the same risk of heat-related pigment change. That makes it a reasonable option for people with darker skin types, for whom light-based resurfacing carries a higher risk of post-inflammatory pigmentation.

It is not risk-free in darker skin — any inflammation can trigger pigment — but the risk profile is different, and that difference matters when choosing.

Needling, laser or peel for scarring

	Needling	Fractional laser	Medium peel
How it works	Mechanical micro-injury	Heat energy in columns	Chemical removal of layers
Best at	Rolling and shallow boxcar scars, general texture	Sharper-edged scarring, deeper resurfacing	Surface tone and very superficial marks
Risk in darker skin	Lower, but not nil	Higher — heat and melanin	Moderate, depth-dependent
Downtime	Hours to 3 days	Days to weeks	About a week
Cost per session	Lower	Higher	Lower
Sessions usually needed	Several, 4–6 weeks apart	Fewer	A course

Ice-pick scars — narrow and deep — respond poorly to all three and are usually addressed differently. See acne scar treatments .

Who needling suits

It is usually a good fit if:

your scarring is rolling or shallow, with soft edges rather than sharp ones

you have a darker skin type and want dermal change without heat

your concern is overall skin quality — texture, tone, pore appearance — rather than one specific mark

you can commit to a course over several months rather than wanting one appointment

you can take a day or two of looking flushed, several times

Look elsewhere if:

your acne is currently active — needling through inflamed skin can spread bacteria through the channels it creates and worsen the very scarring you are trying to prevent. Treat the acne first. See acne treatments .

your concern is redness or visible vessels — needling does not target vessels. See capillaries and skin redness .

your concern is laxity — needling improves skin quality; it does not lift. See lax and sagging skin .

you want a single dramatic change — needling is cumulative by nature and one session will disappoint you.

Who it does not suit

Despite what is often claimed, skin needling is not suitable for everyone. It is generally avoided where there is:

Active eczema, psoriasis or dermatitis in the treatment area

An open wound, active infection or active cold sore

Active inflammatory acne in the area being treated

A history of keloid scarring

A bleeding disorder or current blood-thinning medication

Pregnancy

Recent use of oral acne medication

Recent radiotherapy to the area

Tell your practitioner your full history, including everything you take.

How it goes, step by step

Skin assessment ($50) , and a Cosmetic Doctor consultation ($150) where one is required — including for Factor 4, which involves taking blood. History, skin type and photographs are recorded.

Preparation. Actives and retinoids are stopped as advised; sun exposure, laser, IPL and waxing in the area are avoided beforehand.

On the day. Arrive with clean skin and no make-up. Topical anaesthetic is applied and left to work, usually 20 to 30 minutes.

Treatment. Depth is set per area. A serum is applied during the pass. The needling itself typically takes 20 to 30 minutes for a face; with Factor 4 the appointment is longer because the blood is drawn and processed first.

Immediately after. Redness like mild sunburn, sometimes pinpoint bleeding. Most people drive themselves home.

The next 48 hours. Redness settles, skin feels tight and dry. No make-up on day one.

Weeks and months. Texture and brightness change within a few weeks; the collagen work continues for six to twelve months.

Repeat at four to six weeks. That spacing is not arbitrary — it is roughly how long the skin takes to complete one round of remodelling. Treating sooner adds inflammation without adding collagen.

Before your treatment

Avoid sun exposure; wear SPF if you are outdoors

No laser, IPL or waxing in the area beforehand

Stop abrasive products, exfoliants and retinoids for at least 48 hours

Tell your practitioner about any antibiotics or other medication

Arrive with clean skin and no make-up

Afterwards

Expect redness and mild irritation, similar to mild sunburn. For gentle treatments this usually settles within a few hours; deeper treatments produce redness for a day or two, and sometimes pinpoint bleeding or bruising at the time.

For the first 48 hours:

No sun exposure, hot showers, saunas or strenuous exercise

Gentle cleanser only, plenty of hydration, and any post-treatment balm provided

No harsh or active skincare in the treated area

No make-up for the first day

Some dryness and light flaking as the skin heals is normal. Do not exfoliate it. Use sunscreen daily once the skin has settled — freshly treated skin is more sun-sensitive.

Different skin, different plan

Darker skin types

The main reason people in this group are offered needling rather than laser. Inflammation can still trigger pigment, so depth is moderated and the course is longer rather than more aggressive.

Acne scarring after the acne has settled

The classic indication. Timing matters: the acne needs to be controlled first, and there is usually a waiting period after oral acne medication before skin is needled.

Stretch marks

Needling can improve their texture and to some degree their appearance, more reliably on older white marks than on new red ones. Expect modest improvement and a longer course than for the face. This is the group most often oversold to.

Neck and décolletage

Thinner skin with fewer oil glands and slower healing than the face. Depths are lower and recovery is often slightly longer — treating this area at face settings is a mistake.

Mature skin with fine lines

Good for crepiness and skin quality, limited on deep static lines. If the lines were the whole reason for coming, read deep lines and wrinkles before booking a course.

Melasma

Used selectively and conservatively. Because needling does not rely on heat, it avoids one of melasma's triggers — but inflammation is a trigger too, so this is a careful, low-depth, slow approach combined with topicals.

What sits outside this treatment

We do not needle over an undiagnosed lesion or mole. Anything raised, changing or unexplained is assessed first.

We do not needle active acne. It is treated first; needling is what comes afterwards.

We do not sell needling courses in advance. Each session follows a review of the last.

We do not claim needling lifts skin. It improves quality; descent is a different problem with different answers.

What results are realistic

Skin needling is a course treatment, typically several sessions spaced four to six weeks apart. Most people notice improved texture and brightness within a few weeks; collagen-driven changes to scarring and lines continue over six to twelve months.

Depressed scarring improves; it does not disappear. Fine lines soften; deep static lines respond less. Results vary with age, skin type, the condition treated and how many sessions are completed — and maintenance sessions are usually needed to hold the result.

Judge it against photographs, not memory, and not before the course is finished. Because the change is gradual and you see your face daily, needling is the treatment people most often conclude has done nothing when a side-by-side photograph shows otherwise. Take the baseline photograph before the first session even if you feel silly doing it.

Risks

Redness, swelling and pinpoint bleeding after treatment

Bruising

Dryness, flaking and temporary sensitivity

A temporary breakout

Post-inflammatory pigmentation, more likely in darker skin types

Infection, including reactivation of cold sores

Scarring — uncommon, but possible with over-aggressive treatment or in keloid-prone skin

Allergic or irritant reaction to products applied during or after treatment

Incomplete improvement, and the need for further sessions

See risks of cosmetic treatments .

Expected, versus call us

Expected: redness like sunburn, tightness, mild swelling for a day, pinpoint bleeding at the time, dryness and light flaking over the following days, and sometimes a short-lived breakout.

Call us: increasing rather than decreasing pain after the first day, spreading redness or swelling, pus, fever, blistering, a cold sore outbreak, or tracks or marks that are still visible after a week.

What you receive

A skin assessment naming the condition being treated and recording your skin type

Baseline photographs in standard conditions

A plan stating how many sessions are expected and at what spacing

A quote for the full course, and separately for maintenance

Written aftercare and post-treatment products where they are part of the plan

A review before each repeat

Cost

As at September 2024 and including GST, a skin assessment is $50 and a Cosmetic Doctor consultation is $150. Dermal skin treatments start from $130; needling with Factor 4 costs more than needling alone. Because this is a course, ask for the cost of the full plan. Not covered by Medicare.

The figure that matters is the course, not the session — needling is a treatment where one appointment does very little and the value is in completing the series. We are not a no-gap provider.

Booking

Me Clinic, 4 Burke Road, Malvern East VIC 3145. Phone 1300 852 050 or (03) 9569 3511, or use the online consultation form .

Related: Factor 4 , acne scar treatments , all skin treatments .

Common questions about skin needling

What is skin needling?

A medical-grade device with very fine needles creates controlled microscopic punctures in the skin. Those tiny injuries trigger the normal wound-healing response, which includes laying down new collagen and elastin.

Is it non-invasive?

No. It is minimally invasive: it breaks the skin, and that is how it works.

How long does the collagen response last?

Collagen production continues for months afterwards — in some cases up to twelve — which is why results build gradually rather than appearing the next day.

What is the most important variable?

Depth. It decides which layer is reached and therefore what can change, and it is set by the operator for each area and each pass.

Should the depth be the same across my whole face?

No. Skin over the forehead, eyes and temples is much thinner than on the cheek, nose or chin. One setting across a whole face is either too shallow for the cheeks or too deep for the thin areas.

Are home dermarollers the same thing?

No. A roller enters and leaves the skin at an angle, so each needle cuts a small arc rather than a clean channel; a motorised pen enters perpendicular. Home devices are also hard to keep sterile, come with no screening for the things that make needling unsafe, and any length long enough to reach the dermis is long enough to scar.

I have already been using one. Should I mention it?

Yes. It changes what your skin has been through, and it is useful information rather than something to be embarrassed about.

What is Factor 4?

An autologous serum prepared from your own blood. The sample is processed to separate and concentrate growth factors and cytokines from the plasma, then filtered, and applied during needling so it reaches deeper layers through the micro-channels.

Can I be allergic to Factor 4?

Because the serum comes from your own blood, there is no question of rejection or allergy to a foreign substance.

What is needling used for?

Acne scars, particularly rolling and shallow boxcar scars; other depressed scars and stretch marks; uneven texture; fine lines and early wrinkles; enlarged pores; pigmentation including melasma in selected cases; sun damage and general skin quality; and dryness and dullness — on the neck and décolletage as well as the face.

Why choose needling over laser?

Needling works mechanically rather than by targeting melanin, so it does not carry the same risk of heat-related pigment change. That matters for darker skin types, where light-based resurfacing carries a higher risk of post-inflammatory pigmentation.

Is it risk-free in darker skin?

No. Any inflammation can trigger pigment. The risk profile is different, not absent, and that difference is what makes it a reasonable choice.

Which scars respond best?

Rolling and shallow boxcar scars, with soft edges. Ice-pick scars — narrow and deep — respond poorly to needling, laser and peels alike and are usually addressed differently.

Can I have needling while my acne is active?

No. Needling through inflamed skin can spread bacteria through the channels it creates and worsen the scarring you are trying to prevent. The acne is treated first.

Who else should avoid it?

Anyone with active eczema, psoriasis or dermatitis in the area, an open wound, active infection or cold sore, a history of keloid scarring, a bleeding disorder or blood-thinning medication, pregnancy, recent oral acne medication, or recent radiotherapy to the area.

Does it hurt?

Topical anaesthetic is applied and left to work for 20 to 30 minutes first. Most people describe it as tolerable — a scratchy vibration — with the bonier areas least comfortable.

How long does the appointment take?

The needling itself is usually 20 to 30 minutes for a face, plus the anaesthetic time. With Factor 4 the appointment is longer, because blood is drawn and processed first.

What should I do before?

Avoid sun exposure and wear SPF outdoors; no laser, IPL or waxing in the area; stop abrasive products, exfoliants and retinoids for at least 48 hours; tell your practitioner about antibiotics and other medication; and arrive with clean skin and no make-up.

What happens afterwards?

Redness and mild irritation like mild sunburn — a few hours for gentle treatments, a day or two for deeper ones, sometimes with pinpoint bleeding or bruising at the time.

What are the rules for the first 48 hours?

No sun exposure, hot showers, saunas or strenuous exercise; gentle cleanser only with plenty of hydration and any balm provided; no harsh or active skincare; and no make-up on the first day.

Is flaking normal?

Yes, some dryness and light flaking as the skin heals. Do not exfoliate it, and use sunscreen daily once the skin has settled — freshly treated skin is more sun-sensitive.

Why four to six weeks between sessions?

That is roughly how long the skin takes to complete one round of remodelling. Treating sooner adds inflammation without adding collagen.

How many sessions will I need?

Typically several, and the number depends on what is being treated. It is stated in the plan before you start rather than open-ended.

Does it work on stretch marks?

It can improve their texture and to a degree their appearance, more reliably on older white marks than new red ones. Expect modest improvement over a longer course — this is the use most often oversold.

Can it be done on the neck?

Yes, but at lower depths. Neck and décolletage skin is thinner, has fewer oil glands and heals more slowly, and treating it at face settings is a mistake.

Will it lift sagging skin?

No. It improves skin quality. Descent is a different problem with different answers.

Will my scars disappear?

Depressed scarring improves; it does not disappear. Fine lines soften; deep static lines respond less.

Why do people think it has not worked?

Because the change is gradual and you see your own face every day. Needling is the treatment most often judged as ineffective when a side-by-side photograph shows otherwise. Take a baseline photograph before the first session.

What are the risks?

Redness, swelling and pinpoint bleeding; bruising; dryness, flaking and temporary sensitivity; a temporary breakout; post-inflammatory pigmentation, more likely in darker skin; infection including cold sore reactivation; scarring, uncommon but possible with over-aggressive treatment or keloid-prone skin; allergic or irritant reaction to products applied; and incomplete improvement needing further sessions.

When should I call us?

Pain increasing rather than decreasing after the first day, spreading redness or swelling, pus, fever, blistering, a cold sore outbreak, or visible tracks or marks after a week.

What does it cost?

As at September 2024 and including GST, a skin assessment is $50 and a Cosmetic Doctor consultation is $150. Dermal skin treatments start from $130, and needling with Factor 4 costs more than needling alone. Ask for the cost of the full course, not the session. Not covered by Medicare, and we are not a no-gap provider.

Individual results may vary. Any surgical or invasive procedure carries risks. Before proceeding you should seek a second opinion from an appropriately qualified health practitioner.