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SERIOUS BEAUTY – More than Skin Deep

Best Face Forward at Smooth Synergy: The Cosmedix Purity Peel *Smooth Synergy*

I'm the first one to throw my hat in the ring for a manicure or a pedicure or a pick me up hair trim, but when it comes to "treatments -" deep scrubs, anything potentially painful or time-consuming, I have shied away. You could call me a superficial spa lover. But my recent foray into the land of skin treatments in the form of a face-peel was anything but superficial. Just the term face-peel seemed more serious than what I am used to, but it is a routine upscale treatment and I knew that I would love the results.

I scheduled my appointment at Smooth Synergy for their new Purity Peel, one of the many in a line they offer by Cosmedix. This particular peel was designed to penetrate excess oil to correct skin conditions such as acne and enlarged pores, clear the skin of blemishes and reduce inflammation, and exfoliate the skin. Wow – and I thought a manicure was fancy!

My adventure started with a pleasant conversation with Heather at Smooth Synergy who advised that I do the face-peel "prep-kit" for at least 10 days before my Purity Peel to prepare my skin and improve the results of the peel. Ok, serious right off the bat, but I complied so that I could maximize my results. Heather was friendly and very helpful and gave me instructions about how to prepare for my peel, advising me that my skin might become sensitive as a result and emphasizing that I should be very careful of the sun during this period. As the days went by using the prep kit, my skin did, indeed, become quite sensitive and even started to dry and flake a bit in some areas. Heather had mentioned that this might happen. I reminded myself that this was part of the process with a more serious spa treatment and that my skin was going to look fabulous afterwards.

I arrived at Smooth Synergy for my appointment a bit nervous about the Purity Peel I was going to have. I met the friendly staff in the reception area, including the owner Nicole, who gave me a tour of the immaculate facilities. This was a different kind of spa – a far cry from the superficial spas where I often get my manicures. This was more like a doctor's office meets private pampering suites where they actually administered deep beauty treatments meant to have lasting effects!

There were a handful of fully equipped private treatment rooms and a small cozy waiting area with a trickling waterfall fountain bubbling in the background. I learned that Smooth Synergy, in operation for the past three and half years, is a full service medically-focused spa with an extensive menu of deep beauty treatments. I perused the long list of treatments ranging from laser hair removal to fat reduction and skin treatments, to acupuncture and massage. The owner, Nicole, mentioned they had an onsite medical consultant as well as their most up-to-date technology and treatments. She pointed out some of their impressive equipment as we toured the facility. I was in good and extremely professional hands here.

I met Beth, the aesthetician who would be administering my treatment. She set me up with a cozy gown on a very comfortable heated bed in the treatment room. Low lighting and light music set the relaxing atmosphere as she went to work first cleaning and preparing my skin for the peel. My already sensitive skin was less-than-comfortable when she began the process, though she informed me that this was common. The peel itself was hot-hot-hot and felt like liquid fire on my face. This was also quite common, Beth explained, and handed me a personal fan to cool my face as we let the peel work its magic for the next 4 minutes. The fan cooled me sufficiently and it was no problem to wait out the minutes, especially as Beth gave me a luxurious neck and shoulder massage, one of the great perks of enduring this process! It should be noted that in some cases, depending on skin sensitivity, the peel might be left on for a longer period – your aesthetician will evaluate your skin to determine what is best for you.

When you have this done, let me say that the burning is expected, though I would equally encourage you to stay in communication with your aesthetician, letting her know how you are feeling throughout the process and asking questions as they arise for you. This communication makes the whole thing more comfortable if you are a new at this and want to be sure that what you are experiencing is normal, especially if it seems painful or unusual to you. I might be a beauty wimp, but my motto is that it never hurts to ask questions. These folks are professionals so they won't mind the peanut gallery comments and will certainly try to alleviate any discomfort that you

have if you let them know about it! So after Beth removed the peel she sent me home with a post-treatment kit and some instructions. I was encouraged to call if I had any problems or concerns.

Cut to the next day...Uh oh...I expected some redness and peeling, but wouldn't have imagined the transformation my skin experienced over the next 72 hours.

THE DAY AFTER – EXTREME dryness and tightness; some pain and heat; several large dark brown areas on my face had formed and I deduced that these areas must have been more effected than the rest of my face which was mostly just red and dry. Folks at work asked me if I had a sunburn, as it was pretty obvious to anyone who knew me that something was definitely going on with my face. I could not put on make up (i.e. foundation or powder) as it would have taken on the texture and unevenness of my skin and made it look even worse. I wished I didn't have to work or be seen by anyone that day, but I hadn't planned for this, so I was stuck and tried to make the best of it.

DAY TWO – I could have made some serious cash in a remake of Night of the Living Dead cuz I was SCARY and getting progressively SCARIER. As the day went on, my face got browner and tighter and I felt like I was wearing a mask that might crack off. I just wanted it to fall off and be over. I rang Heather at Smooth Synergy to check in as admittedly, I was a getting bit panicky and had pretty much convinced myself that I was going to look this way permanently. She was great on the phone, asking me detailed questions about my face and advising me to liberally apply the balm that had come with the post-treatment kit. She invited me come in for a follow up, but I elected to wait one more day. She said she would call me the next day to check on my progress.

By **DAY THREE** my skin was peeling off in huge hunks – totally gross – but it was at least reassuring that something was happening and that my body was doing its miraculous job of healing me, albeit unsightly. Heather called, as promised and I told her about the peeling...oh that's right...it was a **FACE PEEL** – my skin was SUPPOSED to peel off! Yes, that's right, layers of haggard, weathered, sun-damaged skin was starting to peel off to reveal a brand new baby-skin layer that my body had wondrously created. This treatment had just inspired the skin's process of doing this so I could get a fresh start in one whole-face-she-bang. Heather and I agreed that I should come in the following day so she could have a look and confirm that all was well.

When I arrived at Smooth Synergy on **DAY 4**, everyone there agreed that the peel had been quite effective on me – more than usual – and that I must have sensitive skin. They were equally excited to see how I would look after all the skin had finished peeling as they anticipated that the effects would be quite dramatic. In the mean time, however, they helped me along by giving me a follow up treatment to help me shed some of the unsightly skin that I was carrying around with me. After the treatment I was relaxed and already looked a lot better – the luxurious moisture balm and steam massage I had received along with the micro-current treatment had felt wonderful and had taken off a lot of the peeling skin.

By **DAY 5**, most of the skin was peeled off and I was nearly back to normal. Starting on **DAY 6**, I was well along my journey to looking better than I had before the peel. My skin progressively got more and more beautiful and glowing as the days continued to go by. It is smoother, fresher, softer and, dare I say, gorgeous. I went to work with no make-up on and was talking to a co-worker about the face peel; he agreed I looked great but added that it was probably helped by the foundation I was wearing...he couldn't believe it when I told him I wasn't wearing any!

Bottom line: the results look GREAT! Tomorrow will be 2 weeks since my Purity Peel and I am looking fabulous. I could get used to this. I guess they will have to get someone else for the Night of the Living Dead remake, unless they want to cast me as the ingénue.

Be advised, this is Serious Beauty. Not to be taken lightly - it's a commitment, but the results are amazing. You know what they say – “no pain, no gain!” But that is the difference between a deep treatment and having your nails painted...working out to be in shape vs. wearing a dress you look good in as long as you don't take it off.

If you are going to go for it, be sure to plan well and monitor your skin and progress along the way. My results were very dramatic due to my skin sensitivity so be sure to keep that in mind if you have sensitive skin.

Anne Catherine Hundhausen
Beauty Editor - www.spa-nyc.com

[Learn more about Smooth Synergy](#)

Tips for the Purity Peel at Smooth Synergy:

- Advise Smooth Synergy if you have sensitive skin so that they can be aware of it and/or recommend the appropriate peel for your skin type. They have a whole menu of peels so you might want to kick off your experience with

something mild if you have never had a peel before or if you have sensitive skin.

-Schedule your appointment before a long weekend or several days off so that you can be sure that at the height of your peel you can lay low or alternately, play a zombie in a horror movie. I would try to carve out 3-5 days in hiding just to be safe.

-If you decide to do the prep kit, you might want to also plan this for a time chunk when you don't have to look your best – no first dates or presentations to the board as you might be a little dry, flakey or red as you use the prep products!

-Don't hesitate to ask questions and express concerns along the way and let the professionals at Smooth Synergy know how they can make the experience more comfortable for you. These folks are serious about beauty and they want you to come out looking and feeling your best!

- Remember if you are happy with this or any other spa service tip at least 15 - 20 %.

- Remember to tell them Spa-nyc.com sent you.

Product Note:

I didn't used to know or care that you could actually exfoliate wrinkles, but as time has started to take its toll, I am starting to look beyond my regular regiment of superficial beauty rituals. Hours in the sun and years on this earth can wear on the face and that isn't something that a haircut or manicure can help or even hide. Smooth Synergy has a full line of some of the latest deep beauty treatments worthy of consideration for anyone wanting to venture beyond the superficial for a change. This includes their suite of Cosmedix Face Peels for some serious beauty that is more than skin deep (several layers more)!