The untold truth of vampire facials

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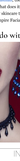
While Vampire Facials sound scary, they are really anything but. They do, however, involve blood. First made popular by none other than Kim Kardashian, the Vampire Facial has gone mainstream. But what exactly is a Vampire Facial and what does it have to do with vampires anyway? Is it ready for Kardashian of youth or just another skincare trend du jour? I asked dermatologists to give us the untold truth behind the untold truth of Vampire Facials.

Vampire facials have nothing to do with vampires

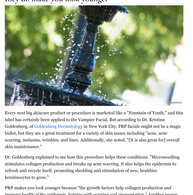


According to Dr. Sal Sadkara, who is known as Dr. Sal, the Vampire Facial describes an aesthetic procedure using the patient's own blood. Originally coined and trademarked by Dr. Charles Runels, a plastic surgeon from outside of Mobile, Alabama, the medical term for this procedure is a *Platelet Rich Plasma* or *PRP* facial. However, the terms are often used interchangeably.

"Platelets contain a large number of growth factors, which can lead to tissue regeneration," said Dr. Sal. Platelets are cells that are removed from the plasma, which is the cellular component of blood, and re-injected back into the skin, the growth factors in the platelets can cause tissue regeneration, leading to increased collagen production in facial skin."

He explained the *PRP* procedure itself "involves drawing up a couple vials of the patient's own blood, spinning the blood in a centrifuge to separate each cellular component, removing the platelet component from the plasma, and then re-injecting the platelets back into the face."

Vampire Facials aren't the 'Fountain of Youth' but they do make you look younger



Every need big skincare product or procedure is marketed as a "Fountain of Youth," and this label has certainly been applied to the Vampire Facial. But according to Dr. Kristina Goldenberg, of Goldenberg Dermatology in New York City, *PRP* facials might not be a magic bullet, but they are a great treatment for a variety of skin issues including "acne, acne scarring, melasma, wrinkles, and fines. Additionally, she noted, "It's also great for[ ] overall skin maintenance."

Dr. Goldenberg explained to me how this procedure helps these conditions. "Microneedling stimulates collagen production and breaks up acne scarring. It also helps the epidermis to refresh and recycle itself, promoting shedding and elimination of new, healthier keratinocytes to grow."

PRP makes you look younger because "the growth factors help collagen production and improve health of the epidermis, helping with scarring and pigmentation." Another reason why *PRP* is so popular is that for Dr. Goldenberg's patients, "it has little down time and virtually no pain."

They require your doctor to have very specific equipment