

STYLE & FASHION

Beauty, Thy Name Is Frugality

After months in lockdown, women are reconsidering their pricey pre-Covid skin and hair-care regimens

By JESSICA IREDALE

IT'S BEEN 28 weeks since my last haircut, 19 weeks since my last manicure and 25 weeks since I had a facial. I can't remember my last bikini wax, and my usual 8-week interval between highlights sessions looks like it's going to average out to 13 weeks for the foreseeable future.

Over the past four months, New York City, where I live, has been a no-fly zone for professional beauty services, although some, such as hair treatments, have resumed under new safety protocols. For me and other women who've reconfigured their routines, lockdown has resulted in some unexpected epiphanies. My 5-inch roots didn't look great, but the breather improved both my hair health and bank account. The suspension of my normal regimen from March to July has acted as a de facto stimulus check to the tune of \$3,000.

Diana Dixon, 31, estimates she's saved \$5,000-plus during quarantine. As the San Francisco-based head of product development for the skin-care startup Starface, the self-proclaimed "beauty junkie" is fully indoctrinated into the beauty world. She broke down her pre-pandemic

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regimen for me on an Excel spreadsheet: hair-extension removal and replacement every eight weeks (\$560 each time); haircut and color every three months (\$480 for each visit); eyelash extensions every two weeks (\$100 each); a long-lasting dipping-powder manicure and pedicure every two weeks (\$100 each); Botox (\$345 per visit) and filler (\$500 per visit) every three months; three spray tans a month (\$90 for three); Brazilian bikini wax every two weeks (\$60 each).

"This is why I'm poor," said Ms. Dixon without apology. "It's all about me feeling more confident about myself, not trying to impress anyone. It was just my routine that made me happy."

As San Francisco instituted strict lockdown orders, Ms. Dixon has had to make adjustments. She's been styling and curling her own hair, toning it with Oribe "Bright Blond" shampoo, laying out on her roof to get a natural tan and busting out the razor and Lady Suite Botanical Oil

for bikini-line maintenance. Ms. Dixon is sufficiently pleased with the inexpensive self-applied fake eyelashes and press-on nails she's discovered that she plans to commit to them even post-pandemic. She's also rethinking her regular spray tans.

Molly Hall, a New York City marketing adviser in her mid-40s, said her biggest DIY quarantine-beauty breakthrough was deciding to apply Vaseline petroleum jelly (about \$3 at your local corner store) to her hands and nails, which are drier than ever now that she washes dishes daily. In lieu of pricey facials at Dangene:

\$7 vs. \$78

The cost of one box of Sally Hansen One-Step Gel coats vs. one treatment (done now at New York's Salon Spa, \$100 plus 20% tip)

the Institute of Skinnovation, she's adopted Summer Fridays's Jet Lag (\$48) and R+R (\$52) masks, although she plans to return to her more extravagant skin care ways once she's able. She's embraced her naturally wavy hair, and says she's rethinking her pre-Covid commitment to blow-dry: "I sat down and thought, 'Go look at your old American Express bill and see what you spent.'" She found a difference of a few thousand dollars a month.

Virtual consultations with your erstwhile hairdressers and skin technicians can be a way to take primping competently into your own hands while also

supporting your former beauty team. These video sessions, which are almost always less expensive than in-person visits, still offer savings. Laura Kim, the 38-year-old co-creative director of Oscar de la Renta and Monse, traded in her regular pre-Covid facials with Joanna Czech (\$350 to \$850 each) for a \$550 virtual consultation. This is one way beauty providers, whose businesses have been decimated are recouping some of their losses.

With her New York and Dallas studios both operating at reduced capacity, Ms. Czech said that 80% of her virtual consultations in the Covid era are with new clients. She is also developing her first skin-care product line.

Beyond the financial savings, Ms. Kim has enjoyed a cosmetic upside. "Eating at home, not being so stressed, not wearing so much makeup also helped with my skin," she said. "I actually look better now than before, honestly."

While most people might find it takes a lot to reduce stress during a pandemic, skipping beauty procedures is refreshingly simple. And Maddison Cave, a colorist at David Mallett's New York salon, found that the forced break was good for the blondness addicts who were getting highlights every four weeks. "It was definitely a realization that they could let their color go a little bit longer and it helped the health of their hair," she said.



DOUG KUSMAN

Zoom Shirts With Heirloom Appeal

Designers have repurposed granny-ish handkerchiefs for crafty tops that bring (very welcome) charm to the era of waist-up video calls



A laid-back, patched take. Shirt, \$498. Polo Ralph Lauren, 212-606-2165

PHOTOGRAPH BY THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (CLOCK)

A style made from vintage hankies. Bode Shirt, about \$600. bode-paris.com

A prim, feminine version with a removable collar. Tunic, \$498. toryburch.com

CULT BEAUTY



An Answer to Hair Prayers

The lushly locked swear by the **Olaplex system**, including this treatment, which users claim keeps dyed and processed hair looking lustrous

History Olaplex was launched in 2014 by Dean and Darcy Christal, serial entrepreneurs with deep roots in the hair industry. Its haircare system was born humbly. Polymer chemists Dr. Craig J. Hawker and Dr. Eric Pressly crafted the technology for the multistep formula's active ingredient in a surfboard-lined garage in Santa Barbara.

Claims The Olaplex system (in-salon treatments every month supplemented by weekly at-home treatments) aims to address damage accrued during chemical processes. The bestselling No.3 Hair Perfector, however, can be used as a stand-alone product. "It's like hair insurance," said Kathryn Gardner, a stylist and color-

ist at New York's Takamichi Hair Salon. "It protects the bonds of your hair during chemical and heat services which helps maintain its original, beautiful condition."

Fans Jennifer Lopez, Khloé and Kim Kardashian, Gwyneth Paltrow

Cult Moment Drew Barrymore, known for her beauty "real talk" on social media, took to Instagram (her follower count: over 13 million) in 2018 to proclaim her Olaplex loyalty with some dramatic photos of her bleached hair pre- and post-treatment. —Fiorella Valdesolo

No.3 Hair Perfector, \$28. olaplex.com

LUCY HARRIS