



# Women`s Fitness and Health

August, 2017

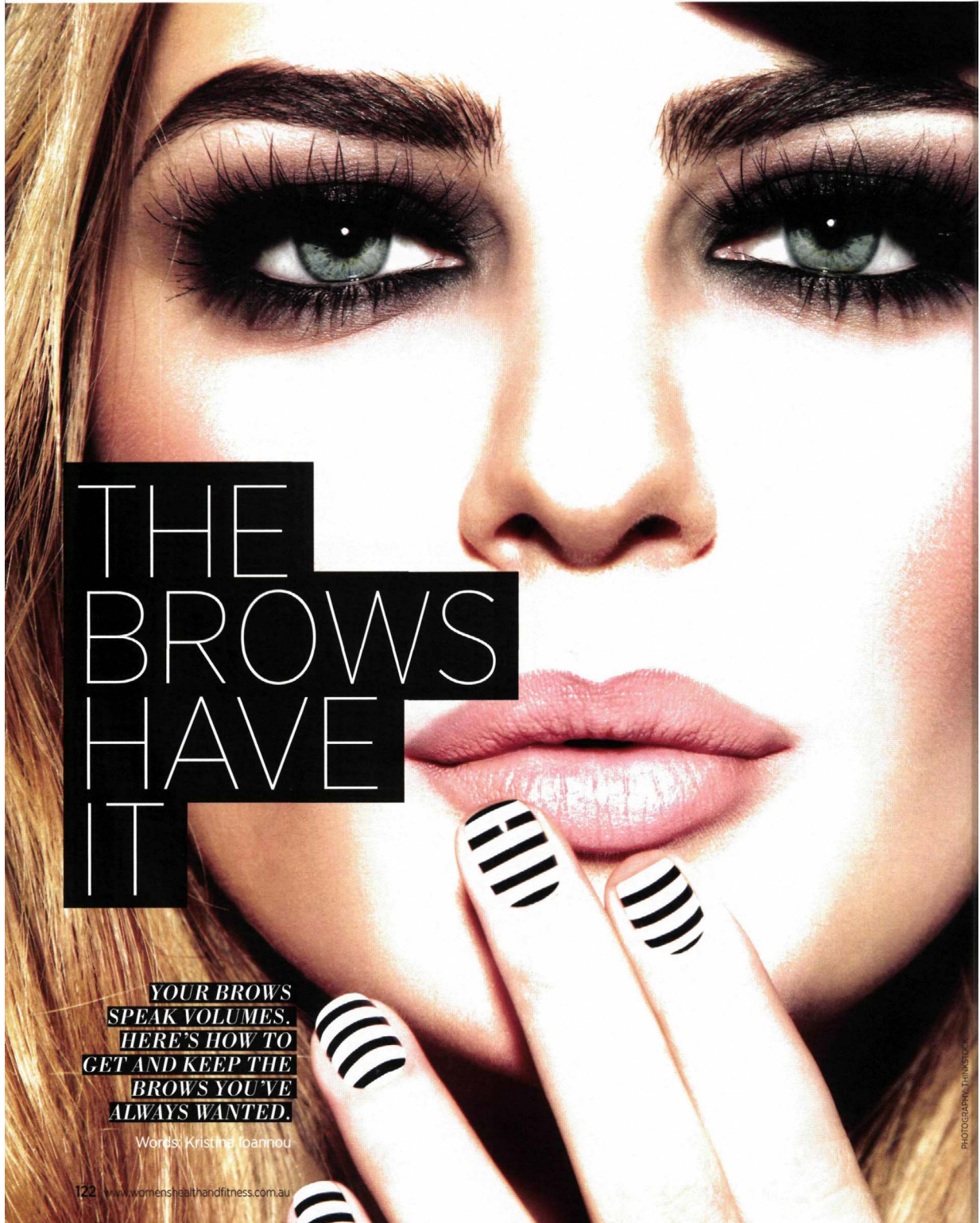
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THE  
BROWS  
HAVE  
IT

**YOUR BROWS  
SPEAK VOLUMES.  
HERE'S HOW TO  
GET AND KEEP THE  
BROWS YOU'VE  
ALWAYS WANTED.**

Words: Kristine Ioannou

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## ARCH ENHANCEMENTS

Long before we swore allegiance to bushy brows, many of us took to our faces with tweezers until there were precious few hairs remaining above our eyeballs. Now, the skinny brow is basically extinct in favour of voluminous arches that help women step out of the door feeling relatively put together. But let's be honest, who has the time?

"So many women over-plucked in the '90s and their brows have not grown back, leaving them with the burden of having to draw them in everyday, which is why more and more women are turning to semi-permanent options," says Melbourne-based celebrity brow aesthetician Suzie McIntosh (suziemcintosh.com).

Indeed, there's no denying that great eyebrows can completely transform your features, swipe years off your face and act as the perfect antidote to a no-make-up look (we're looking at you Kim K). For some, a pencil, gel or pomade will cut it. For others, cosmetic tattooing is the name of the game. So the question remains: how far would you go to achieve #browsonfleek?

Semi-permanent may sound intimidating, but recent advancements in technology just might change that. While there are many areas of your body you can get cosmetically tattooed or enhanced, the brow business is undeniably booming, with no signs of slowing down. If you're suffering from over-zealous tweezing, age or illness has gotten the better of your brows, or you just want to give your arches an Insta-worthy update, these cosmetic enhancements may be for you:

**EYEBROW EXTENSIONS** – the process is very similar to lash extensions; the individual brow hairs (which are made from synthetic hair fibres) are attached to your natural brow hair or skin by a brow technician who will carefully beef up your brows and fill in any noticeable gaps. **LONGEVITY:** one to two weeks, depending on how careful you are with upkeep. **COST:** \$30-\$80 depending on how many hairs need to be applied.

**EYEBROW TRANSPLANTS** – an appealing option for people who have lost their eyebrows due to illness, medical treatment, alopecia, stress and hormonal changes, this surgery involves removing donor follicles

from the back of the patient's head and transplanting them back into the eyebrows. **LONGEVITY:** the transplanted hairs fall out at around two weeks, and then start to regrow at three months, where they will continue to grow for a lifetime. **COST:** \$2500 - \$3000 depending on the nature of the surgery.

**MICROBLADING** – a painless eyebrow enhancing procedure using multiple needles to deposit pigment underneath the dermis to give the appearance of thicker, bolder arches in an instant. **LONGEVITY:** up to 12 months, with touch-ups in between. **COST:** \$700 - \$1000 depending on the technician's skill and experience.

**POWDER FILL BROW TATTOO** – a more permanent cosmetic brow technique that implants the brow pigment much deeper than microblading and fades minimally. This method involves the application of thousands of tiny little dots of pigment, inserted into the skin, gradually building up in colour and a defined shape. **LONGEVITY:** Up to 24 months, though this is dependent on environmental, health and cosmetic factors. **COST:** \$600 - \$1000 depending on the type of tattoo you require.

## ALL EYES ON MICROBLADING

In the last couple of decades, eyebrow artistry has certainly evolved. But in recent years, leading the way as the most commonly requested cosmetic brow treatment is none other than microblading – also known as feathering, eyebrow embroidery or etching.

The trend has particularly taken over Instagram – it's impossible to have missed the countless videos of flawless brows created with short, precise strokes streaming across your feed.

"Feathering allows women to wake-up in the morning with perfectly shaped, symmetrical, smudge proof and water proof natural looking brows that last," says McIntosh.

Perfect for those who want to reshape, define and cover bald spots, the best part is that it can render an eyebrow pencil irrelevant for up to twelve months.

### THE PROCESS

Suitable to anyone over the age of 18 who isn't pregnant, breastfeeding, or undergoing radiation or chemotherapy,

the method uses an iron oxide base that gradually fades to eventual disappearance of the shading unless, of course, topped up.

Dani Wylie from Cosmetic Tattooing by Dani, explains that the procedure of microblading can be anywhere from 1.5-2.5 hours, and it is entirely safe providing it's performed by an experienced technician.

"Numbing cream is applied to the area for thirty minutes followed by measuring and drawing on the brows until the desired thickness and shape is achieved," says Wylie. Consider this step a 'template' for your desired brow shape.

"It is important to liaise with the client when doing this so that you can get an idea of their expectations of what they are hoping to achieve from their session," she says.

Then, a carefully selected fine grade pigment – which is chosen based on the client's overall appearance, skin tone, eye colour and hair colour – is implanted into the skin using a fine needle.

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In order to create definition and dimension, the specialist uses a microblade machine, which creates small, fine strokes in the direction of hair growth in combination with a larger needle.

One, two or even three different shades of pigment can be used, creating a single, double or even triple layer brow tattoo, giving a 3D brow effect.

Wylie points out the importance of following the natural hair growth of the brow for a more natural result.

### RECOVERY

The tattooed area will appear dark and bold in colour for up to two weeks, while the healing process (which lasts six to eight weeks) takes place. Some swelling and redness may occur, but this usually lasts no more than 48 hours.

An obvious bonus is that there is minimal down-time and natural hair does not need to be removed to achieve a fabulous set of fuzzies – your new set of arches are selfie-ready immediately after the procedure.

To combat inflammation and damage to the skin, technicians usually supply clients with Bepanthen cream, best applied three to four times per day until the area is healed.

“There may be a stage where you peel, or your brows appear to have completely disappeared – this is a normal part of the healing process,” says Wylie.

### MAINTENANCE

According to Wylie, a follow up perfecting session is recommended six weeks after the initial session to go over any hair strokes that have faded, become patchy or have fallen out.

“This also gives the client an opportunity to enhance the brows some more by going thicker or darker in colour,” she says.

As with most cosmetic procedures, it is recommended you do not wet the area or wear make-up for seven days, but “you can wear your everyday foundation - just don't put it directly onto the tattooed area.”

### RISK FACTORS

» **Infection can occur:** if proper aftercare is not followed and your technician does not adhere to correct hygiene, there is risk of an infection. A reliable practitioner will have



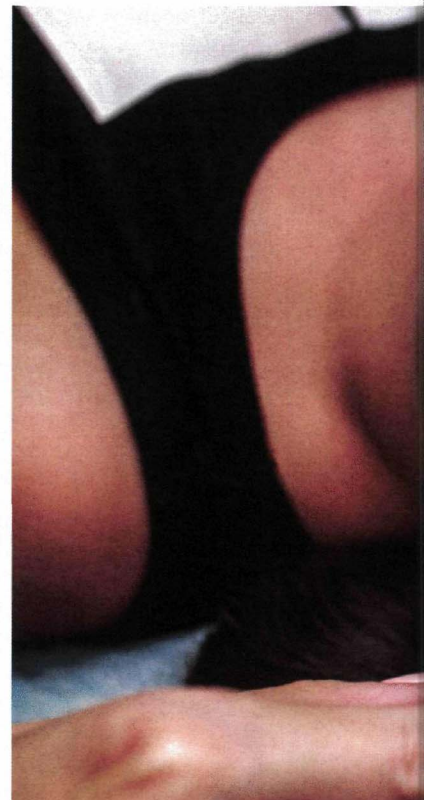
sterilised all needles, hand tools and any other equipment used should be disposed of after the procedure.

» **You may have an allergic reaction:** if you are concerned about allergic reactions, Wylie recommends doing a test patch behind the ear or somewhere that is not visible to see how your skin reacts to the numbing cream and pigment.

» **Results may vary:** while some may walk away from their appointment feeling as royal as Queen Cara D herself, others may not be overly happy with the end result. Thankfully laser removal offers respite.

» **Not everyone is the perfect candidate:** a downside for those with mature skin or skin that has been aged prematurely from sun exposure, is that the hair strokes may not appear as well defined as in younger, more elastic skin. If this is the case, a powder fill cosmetic tattoo, or hair strokes over an initial powder fill treatment, may produce a better result.

» **It's costly:** the initial cost coupled with touch-up fees can set you back quite a bit of dosh, but if the social media hype is anything to go by, it's worth it. Plus, there are loads of technicians and clinics that offer great deals and offers.







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## FAKE IT 'TIL YOU MICRO-BLADE IT

If semi-permanent isn't your thing or you're saving up to undergo the procedure, a DIY job is your next best beauty bet.

Arch expert Ursula Cervellone from Feather Brow Couture says that the shape of your brow has the power to make or break your overall look, so it pays to know a thing or two about mastering the perfect brow game.

"Brows should be shaped according to your face shape whether it be square, round, oval or heart," says Cervellone.

- » **HEART SHAPED** – add volume and width to detract focus from the wider portions of the face.
- » **DIAMOND SHAPED** – keep your edges soft and follow the natural curves of the brow.
- » **OVAL SHAPED** – keep your arch slightly sharp to lift the shape without leaving your brows too flat.
- » **SQUARE SHAPED** – balance with a peaked arch and statement brow.
- » **ROUND SHAPED** – evenly balance the eye shape by keeping plenty of length in the tail portion.

## ARCH ENEMIES

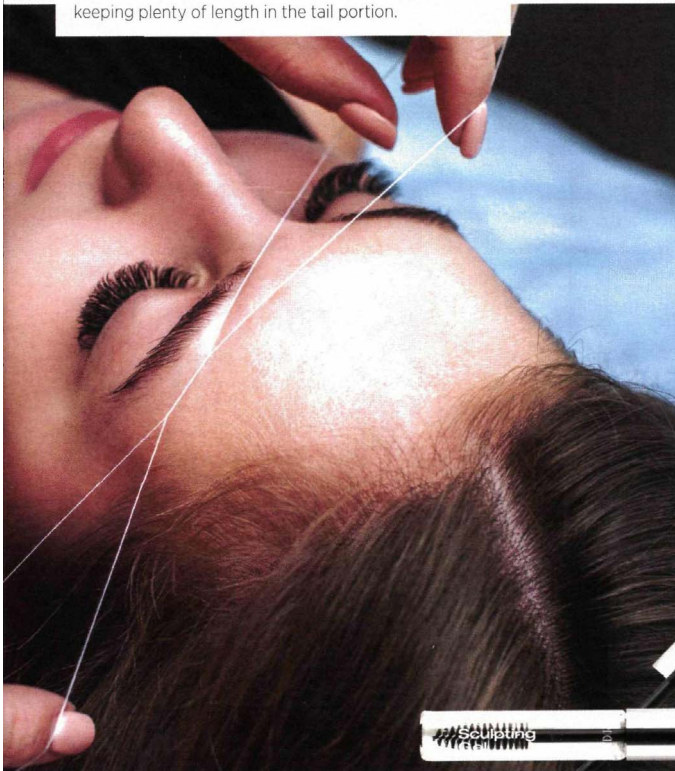
When it comes to choosing a service technique – threading, tweezing, or waxing – things can get a little bit tricky (or, depending on your prior salon experiences, downright scary). Nerves can particularly escalate if you're attempting an at-home job. Here are some common blunders to avoid:

- » **Avoid over-plucking:** thin brows can tend to make you look older and give a harsh or unflattering look to any face, so go easy on the tweezers and think in terms of facial proportions and balance.
- » **Don't 'under-arch':** keeping your brow arches too low will give you a 'tired' or 'sad' look, so opt for a nice flattering gradual arch and tail

to open the eye area and achieve a youthful appearance.

» **Try not to overdo it:** use a light touch when filling in the brows to avoid adding unnecessary drama to your facial features. Sometimes it's better to be under-stated than over-stated.

» **Spacing is everything:** the gap between your brows should be the same width as your nose point; any bigger and your face will look out of proportion. Cervellone's golden rule is no matter what the face shape, the head of the brow should always start at the bridge of your nose. She says you can find this point by vertically holding your brow pencil up to either side of your nose.



## DIY BROWS

If you're after a seamless application technique, model and beauty expert, Elyse Knowles, knows a thing or two.

"I think good looking eyebrows amp up your make-up cred and can really lift your eye look. Throughout my career, the model advice I've been given is to rock your natural brow shape and simply tidy, colour and define," says Knowles. Here are some of her quick tips to achieving the perfect set of face-framers:

- » **STEP ONE:** add depth with **ulta3 Eyebrow Pencil (\$2.95, [ulta3.com.au](http://ulta3.com.au))**, using small natural upward strokes to look like hair.
- » **STEP TWO:** using the built-in brow brush, gently comb the beginning of the brow in its natural direction, moving up and out to help blend product.
- » **STEP THREE:** to complete the perfect brow, add a sweep of **Ardell Brow Sculpting Clear Gel (\$8.99, [ardellashes.com](http://ardellashes.com))** to keep everything smooth and perfectly placed throughout the day.



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# THE ROAD TEST

WH&F editor Katelyn Swallow took cosmetically tattooed brows for a test-drive to achieve the arches of her beauty dreams

#### THE TECHNICIAN:

Dani Wylie //  
@cosmetictattooingbydani

**THE EXPERIENCE:** Tucked away in little old Berwick, Victoria, I met the friendly and immaculately presented Dani Wylie at the door of her at-home salon. Considering I had never had a serious cosmetic procedure (unless an ear piercing counts?), let alone a tattoo, nerves were definitely a factor; but Wylie's friendly demeanor, white-washed homely salon and numerous certifications plastering the wall helped to put me at ease.

To be honest, I'd never been someone who cared much for my brows; they naturally balanced that thin line between bushy and sparse – with a boring yet not horrendous looking shape – so a pluck, thread or wax every two months was about all the maintenance time I allowed. I'd never even thought about owning a brow pencil and I rarely even brushed. That said, I'd had more than one jealousy-tinged moment looking at the arches of my favorite Instagram fitspos. So when this road test came up and Wylie said jump, I answered with 'how high?'

After signing all the relevant consent forms and explaining the crux of the procedure, Wylie applied the numbing cream to my brows and, after twenty minutes, we were ready to go. I'm not going to lie – it hurt; and the longer it went, the more the pain seemed to increase. While the numbing cream dampened any sharp sense of pain, there was still a serious scratching sensation that lasted two seconds at a time as scalpel-like instrument hit brow, which was more annoying than anything else; the kind of pain that makes your eyes water and makes you seriously consider slapping her hand away.

Thankfully, after about 20 minutes (10 per brow) it was all over and I could take a nervous squiz in the mirror.

**THE RESULT:** The great thing about this procedure is you have a pretty good sense of control and you can easily imagine the shape before it's permanently inked: Wylie used a number of nifty tools to draw the outline of my new brows before commencing, meaning I could make adjustments where I felt necessary. My greatest concern was colouring – being a blonde, I was cautious of drastically contrasting dark brows (Sesame Street's Oscar the Grouch came to mind), so I asked for the lightest brown possible.

I have to admit, the first glance in the mirror was a shock: while I liked the shape, my new arches seemed strange and foreign

on a face I'd known for the last 25 years, and oh-so-dark. Even with Wylie's assurances they would fade, I spend the next week paranoid that people were staring and rolling my eyes as I tried to shower without getting them wet. The things we do.

**THE VERDICT:** I absolutely love my new brows. It took less than a week for them to fade to a completely natural tone and I love the way they now frame my face, making me look and feel 'cleaner' and more defined. Given the outline is now clear, plucking is a cinch (I haven't even bothered to book a waxing appointment since) and I've even begun experimenting with a brow pencil on special nights out. A simple procedure, but one that I now couldn't imagine going without. ■

