



I Got A \$1,300 Vampire Facial Like Kim Kardashian — & It Was So Intense

By Rachel Lubitz | November 6, 2018



Five years ago, Kim Kardashian blessed Instagram with a selfie that featured her face covered in blood. No, the look wasn't for a Halloween costume: The reality star was simply showing off the stages of her own "vampire facial." It's an experience she says she regrets now, but the moment nonetheless helped bring a new awareness of vampire facials to the people — Krystina Christiansen included. Christiansen, a freelance video producer based in Los Angeles, has been battling acne for the past few years, and she started looking into a vampire facial to give her skin a needed boost.

"I would love to be that person that can go out without any makeup on, but I'm not there yet," Christiansen says. "I think this procedure will help me get a reset going into my thirties with skin that's clearer." So she met with Beverly Hills-based dermatologist [Ava Shamban, MD](#), to learn more about what the so-called vampire facial really entails, and if it would be right for her skin.

For Dr. Shamban, who's been in practice since 1989, her version of a vampire facial refers to a deep microdermabrasion or micro-needling, followed by the skin being covered in a PRP (platelet-rich plasma) serum made from the patient's own blood to promote the healthy activity of skin cells. While some vampire facials have been known to be pretty brutal all in the name of better, brighter skin, Dr. Shamban is known for her gentler technique.

Christiansen was game, and she began her vampire facial just like Kim did: by getting blood drawn from her arm. The blood is then put into a centrifuge that spins the red blood cells and separates the platelets from the rest of the blood, leaving Dr. Shamban with the plasma serum. "Not only will you get faster healing and less redness, but you will get a better result because

you're stimulating the cells," Dr. Shamban said of the serum, which is used on the skin following the next, most daunting step of the facial: the micro-needling.

Though Dr. Shamban assured an understandably nervous Christiansen that the process would just feel like continuous "flicking" on the skin and skipped the typical numbing cream, Christiansen said she found it more painful than she'd expected. Luckily, the micro-needling step didn't last long, and the PRP serum applied afterward helped soothe the skin with a cooling effect.

"When I first looked at myself in the mirror after the treatment, I was expecting there to be red blood all over my face," Christiansen said. "In fact, I just looked super shiny. It 100% felt like what it looked like. I could feel every single needle going into my face. With no numbing cream, I felt really badass."

Without visible blood, Christiansen left wondering why it's called a vampire facial in the first place. She got her answer a few hours later, and for the next four days, when her skin started to show red dots all over... *and* when she followed instructions to stay out of the sun or risk scarring. But once the temporary marks had disappeared, Christiansen did feel like her skin was clearer and more even, and she said that she'd recommend it to anyone like her — those who feel like they've tried everything and are still left with hyperpigmentation and acne scars.

The vampire facial *sounds* intimidating, but the reason it's become so popular isn't just because Kim Kardashian did it once: The procedure can yield incredible results, when performed correctly by a trained practitioner. Those results do come at a price: Christiansen's facial goes for \$1,300, which is just slightly over the average cost of \$1,000. But if you're looking for a cutting-edge way to ditch acne scars and get smoother, more even skin, then channeling a vampire for a few days might be worth it — provided you're not afraid of a little blood.

Watch Christiansen's entire vampire facial journey, above.

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2018/11/216063/vampire-facial-review-kim-kardashian>