

[HOME](#) > [LIFE](#)

Gua Sha Tools That Promise Botox-Like Effects Naturally Are Trending for Women Over 50—But Do They Work?

Here's what estheticians say.

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Is it just us, or are celebrities gua sha'ing more than ever lately? It seems like everywhere we turn, there's another A-lister showing off their [gua sha routine](#) with the smooth-edged tool on Instagram, which has people of all ages wondering about its skin-enhancing, facial sculpting benefits.

Although it's become somewhat of a viral beauty trend lately, with women over 50 turning to the DIY treatment for its [#naturalbotox](#)-like effects, gua sha is by no means new. The traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) practice dates back to the ancient Ming Dynasty days between 1368 and 1644 and involves scraping the skin with a stone-like massaging tool for a more lifted, less puffy look.

When [gua sha tools](#) can be found for as little as \$7 on Amazon, they seem like the non-invasive answer to tighter, taut skin as we get older and lose elasticity but they also beg the question: do they work? We asked a panel of celebrity dermatologists, leading estheticians and facialists to find out.

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CONTENTS

- [What Are Gua Sha Tools?](#)
- [Is Gua Sha Good for Women Over 50?](#)

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ACCEPT

- [Who Shouldn't Gua Sha](#)
- [Gua Sha Tools Recommended for Women Over 50](#)
- [Other Skincare Tools to Help Women Over 50](#)
- [Sources:](#)

What Are Gua Sha Tools?

"Gua sha is a traditional Chinese [healing](#) technique used for lymphatic drainage, increasing circulation and sculpting," explains [Jennifer Adell](#), a veteran skincare expert and senior esthetician at [New Beauty and Wellness](#) in Westport, Connecticut.

Although gua sha stones can be made of different materials such as bian, jade, nephrite jade or rose quartz, Adell notes the tools are meant to function the same way despite their various shapes and sizes. "Whichever stone you choose, you will follow the lymph pathways to focus on releasing muscle tension while also working with your body's lymphatic system to aid in the removal of toxins and fluid retention," she says.

Even supermodel [Kendall Jenner](#) gua sha'ed for *Vogue* recently, [displaying her untraditional use of the tool](#) where she uses it two different ways on her forehead to even out her eyebrow arches.

Jenner's gua sha practice may be a tad individualized for her face (and brows), but there's no denying the instantly lifted results these palm-sized gadgets produce—without needles or injections. Who doesn't want a more snatched visage, after all? Without resorting to Botox and other pricey fillers.

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Is Gua Sha Good for Women Over 50?

Absolutely! Although gua sha's benefits can be particularly intriguing to anyone experiencing slack, sagging skin and looking for Botox alternatives in their 40s and 50s, its advantages aren't limited to a certain age group. (This is why you'll notice plenty of teens taking up the practice on [TikTok](#) as well.)

Just like cold plunging your face into a bowl of ice cubes à la Bella Hadid can offer a multitude of glow-boosting, inflammation-reducing perks, so can gua sha. In addition to detoxifying your skin after a big night out or a long flight, these tools also help to promote blood flow and increase circulation to the skin, according to board-certified dermatologist and cosmetic surgeon [Kim Nichols](#), MD, FAAD.

"Gua sha also helps to de-puff the face, especially under the eyes and in the cheeks, for a more sculpted appearance and contributes to healthy skin with fewer lines and wrinkles," she says.

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Do Gua Sha Tools Truly Deliver Botox-Like Effects?

"Gua sha can temporarily improve the appearance of fine lines on the face shortly after use," explains Dr. Nichols, "but this only lasts 24-48 hours." While she notes the stone cannot relax muscles the way

an injected neuromodulator like Botox can, it is an excellent way to both maintain Botox results in between office visits and provide a temporary sculpted look to the face.

"Think of Botox as fast-acting while gua sha works slow and steady, giving us ample benefits like cell renewal and softer lines along the way," shares Adell. Like any skincare practice, consistency is key, however. She suggests gua sha'ing at least three times a week or more for a more chiseled, sculpted face.

And good news for anyone looking to combine the benefits of gua sha with Botox: Dr. Nichols says they're safe to do together. "At my practice, [NicholsMD of Greenwich](#), many of our facial treatments include gua sha but I recommend my patients wait to get their facials or perform gua sha at home for about two weeks post injectable treatments," she explains.

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How To Practice Gua Sha

A word to the wise: you don't want to gua sha on dry skin. Scraping a stone across a bone-dry face—even one that's supposed to be used as a facial massaging tool—can exacerbate fine lines and rosacea-prone patches rather than minimize them.

Instead, Dr. Nichols likes to start with clean cleansed skin, then apply a small amount of [SkinCeuticals Phyto Corrective Masque](#) or a lightweight cleansing oil to allow the gua sha stone to slide over the surface of the face. We love [Tatcha's Pure One Step Camellia Oil Cleanser](#) and [Tata Harper's Nourishing Oil Cleanser](#) for this.

Then, in very gentle strokes, she says to work upward and outward with the stone flat against your skin. "It's important to know the lymphatic system and the lymph nodes in the face and neck to do it properly," she warns. "The pressure of the stone on the skin needs to be very gentle to target the lymph and de-puff the skin; a lot of people use the side of the stone and use too much pressure, which is wrong."

To help you master gua sha on your first try, watch her master aesthetician Jessica's easy tutorial here:

After gua sha, Dr. Nichols likes to apply a moisturizer or humectant. "It's also important to drink ample water post gua sha to help the lymph system flush, therefore amplifying the detoxifying effects," she adds.

Lastly, don't forget your neck! "Our neck is like a super highway when it comes to lymphatic drainage," says Adell. "We also hold a tremendous amount of tension in our neck and shoulders which blocks blood flow leading to stagnation in our faces."

Whether you choose to do this at the beginning or the end of your gua sha, Adell advises taking a few minutes to stretch your neck back and forth, up and down and around in circles. "This simple step will allow better blood flow, providing a huge release that will help improve your overall skin health."

Related: [5 Essential Tips for Changing Your Skincare Routine Over 50, According to Model Molly Sims](#)

Who Shouldn't Gua Sha

Although gua works wonders for *almost* everyone, Adell says there are a few exceptions to the rule, including anyone with an open wound, active acne or inflamed skin. Don't gua sha if this is you.

Natalia Rico, an esthetician at [The Ritz-Carlton Spa New York, NoMad](#) in New York City also says to avoid hot tubs, swimming pools and saunas for the first 72 hours after a GS session. "This precaution is necessary because gua sha opens up the body's surface area, potentially allowing pathogens to enter if not adequately protected," she explains, adding that pathogenic factors can lead to the recurrence of symptoms such as spasms and tightness.

Gua Sha Tools Recommended for Women Over 50

"So much of gua sha has to do with not only the technique but the stone as well," explains Dr. Nichols. "A lot of people think they can use a cheap stone, but the stone itself matters."

As for our experts' go-to gua sha tools, these are at the top of the list.

1. [Nephrite Jade Gua Sha](#), \$59

Regarding the best gua sha stones to purchase, Dr. Nichols and Adell agree that a nephrite jade gua sha stone is #1 because of its healing and anti-aging properties.

In general, nephrite jade gua shas tend to be on the pricier side, since these precious stones are composed of iron, calcium and magnesium and give off far-infrared heat which boosts blood circulation, but Adell says Cecily Braden's [Nephrite Jade Stone](#) (\$140) is worth every cent and her most used tool. "The craftsmanship is beautiful, it fits perfectly into the hands and effortlessly contours the natural [geography](#) of the face," she says. Dr. Nichols also loves its comb-like end that can get into the hairline for scalp stimulation.

For an affordable dupe under \$100, consider Lanshin's [Intro Nephrite Gua Sha](#) (\$59), pictured above. Made of good quality nephrite jade, this stone has all the right shapes and notches to release tight muscles and fascia, while decongesting your skin.

2. [Bian Stone Gua Sha](#), \$69

"[Wildling's Gua Sha](#) (\$69) is also amazing," shares Adell, noting that it's easy to hold, lends itself to all the contours of the face and the bian stone is made of 40 minerals. "One of the sides has teeth which I appreciate for more targeted work," she adds.

3. [Rose Quartz Gua Sha](#), \$65

"My preferred tool is [Knesko's Rose Quartz Heart Gua Sha](#)," shares Rico. "Its unique design is tailored to enhance the skin's appearance by boosting circulation, stimulating lymphatic drainage and relieving muscle tension through gentle scraping motions."

Plus, there's no arguing that the rose quartz gua shas are some of the prettiest out there. The fact that this one is reiki-charged and handcrafted with fair-trade, AA-grade rose quartz is a bonus.

4. [Stainless Steel Gua Sha](#), \$30

While the pros often prefer gua sha stones for their additional healing powers, Adell admits a great gua sha for beginners is a stainless steel tool with anti-bacterial benefits, that's budget-friendly to boot. "This non-porous [stainless steel option from Sacheu](#) checks all the boxes," she says.

Other Skincare Tools to Help Women Over 50

Now that you have the basics of gua sha down pat, it's time to turn your attention to a host of other devices designed with great skin in mind.

1. LED Light Therapy

LED devices are right up there with gua sha tools as far as skincare must-haves to invest in, but much like the stones, there are endless options at all different price points and it's hard to know what's best—without help.

That's why we put our trust in light-emitting diode devices designed by the experts themselves, like board-certified NYC dermatologist [Dr. Ellen Marmur's MMSphere2Go](#) (\$395). Boasting all five essential LED colors, including blue for hormonal acne, red for collagen stimulation, green for sun damage, amber for a radiant glow and purple for combined benefits, this portable powerhouse is a must-have for women over 50.

It's also backed by clinical studies showing its ability to reverse skin age by up to four years, regardless of tone—and it can encourage hair growth when angled towards the scalp. Name another device that can do all that...we'll wait.

2. Microcurrent Technology

As we get older our levels of natural collagen production start to decrease, which is where devices that help stimulate collagen production come in handy. While you're binge-watching your favorite show on [Netflix](#), you could be treating your problem areas with a microcurrent facial toning device that delivers electrical impulses to mimic your body's natural current.

A few minutes a day with 7e Wellness' [MyoLift QT Plus Facial Toning Device](#) (\$329) can improve your circulation, repair tissue damage and increase collagen production but it can also make bunny lines between the eyes and crow's feet less visible at the same time.

Another reason to add to cart? The QT Plus app uses micro-current technology along with AI to recommend tutorials and guidelines tailored to your skin type.

3. A Neck and Chest Rejuvenating Mask

If you've ever heard the saying, "Everything you do to your face you should do to your neck," we're here to remind you that this is even more important as we age. The tech neck struggle may be real but luckily there are ways to treat it.

Case in point: [Solawave's Neck + Chest Rejuvenating Mask](#) (\$299) combines red and near-infrared light therapies to target areas where the effects of elasticity loss and sun exposure show up most—your neck and chest. All you need is 10 minutes a day to say see ya to sun spots, decolletage creases and hyperpigmentation.

Next: [Shoppers 55+ Call This Anti-Aging Serum the 'Holy Grail' for Bringing Glow Back](#)

Sources:

- [Jennifer Adell](#) has been an esthetician and skincare expert for 20+ years and has worked at some of the top spas and wellness centers in New York City. She is currently the senior esthetician at

[New Beauty and Wellness](#) in Westport, CT.

- Natalia Rico is an esthetician at [The Ritz-Carlton Spa New York, NoMad](#) in New York City.
- [Kim Nichols](#), MD, FAAD is a board-certified dermatologist, cosmetic surgeon and the founding director of [NicholsMD of Greenwich](#) and [SkinLab by NicholsMD](#) in Stamford, CT.

Prices are accurate and items in stock at time of publishing.