

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white blouse and a grey skirt, is sitting at a dark wooden table in a restaurant. She is holding a fountain pen in her right hand. The background is dimly lit with some blurred lights.

Outfit : Lanvin @ Wisma Atria
Fountain pen and ring by
Mount Blanc
Shades by McQueen

The call of beauty

As far as she is concerned, beauty is within the grasp of everyone. Yes, it's for both genders. And, she is passionate about helping you achieve a more beautiful you. With her extremely busy schedule, she makes time and takes effort at keeping herself looking beautiful and feeling good every day. By Joseph Hong

When I first met Dr. Christine Cheng at her clinic, she comes across to me as a doctor with huge doses of passion for what she does. She's a very pragmatic person, a caring and patient aesthetic doctor who listens and tells you exactly what she feels about a situation.

She's candid about her busy schedule and her own efforts at keeping beautiful, healthy and fit. You can sense her personal touch and warmth in her aesthetic medical practice. Well, you can be fully assured you are in really good hands when you do consult her on Aesthetics.

WHAT'S IN A DAY'S SCHEDULE FOR YOU LIKE?

Pretty variable! Try to bring daughter to school before starting work. Juggle Anaesthesia & clinic. All pretty much appointment based, so not too much of a problem. Anaesthesia can start pretty early, 8 am on some days. Run between the various private hospitals, Day Surgery units and Singapore National Eye Centre. Otherwise, my clinic starts at 9am. Work through till close of clinic (6pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, and 8pm on Mondays & Wednesdays).

Clinic work involves seeing patients, designing our ads, building the website, and steering the company's direction.

Aim to go to gym on early close nights. Fail more often than not nowadays: tight schedules to meet, meetings or when patients turn up late. Work comes first now.

DO YOU FIND ENOUGH TIME TO DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO?

Time is the one denominator that determines if one is a success or a failure. True, luck may boost a person's fortunes temporarily, but ultimately it's the fruitful use of one's time that determines long-term success. We can only really reap the rewards of what we've taken the time to sow.

Ultimately it's a matter of priority, and I get to do most things I deem vitally important.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES AND LEISURE PURSUITS? ARE THESE

PURSUITS REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR PHILOSOPHY IN LIFE, AND IN WHAT ASPECTS?

Main hobby is keeping fit, particularly kickboxing & yoga, both in gym classes and one-to-one personal training. It goes with the philosophy that looking after myself is not just window dressing the external façade. Internal care matters more: regular exercise, eating healthy food. All reflects the outside eventually. And health is something that we can't buy. In fact, staying in optimal health is something most of us do not have the luxury of! It's very time consuming and expensive! But, we must try!

Kickboxing is fantastic as it has aerobic and anaerobic elements. It builds muscle, improves core strength, flexibility, mental agility and burns fat! It's a particularly good way of de-stressing too! Yoga is vital for flexibility, and useful for introspection and meditation.

I enjoy learning new skills. Self-improvement is essential. Otherwise we'll be stuck in a rut reminiscing about how things used to be. I've attended courses, read books, basically spent time learning skills outside of medicine. Sometimes the knowledge is left by the wayside, but a lot of the things I learnt before are coming in useful now. Web design, search ranking, nutrition, to name a few.

I also love food! It's a sure way of getting a smile on my face! Ask Rossara! I was fantasizing about the lobsters swimming in the tank behind her at the restaurant during the shoot! I live to eat. Moderation is important though. I also enjoy traveling, shopping, going to the cinema and reading.

WAS BEING AN AESTHETIC DOCTOR AN AMBITION WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL AND ASPIRING FOR A GREAT PROFESSION?

Certainly not! I was always keen on becoming a doctor, but aesthetics was never on the agenda. I prefer to stay out of the limelight, to play a supportive role. Anaesthesia was my first love and I still enjoy it tremendously.

Aesthetics was never an option in my early years as a doctor. Cosmetic enhancement always meant plastic surgery to me, and I had no intentions on being a surgeon.

My interest in Aesthetics was only aroused in the last few years when I saw the positive impact plastic surgery made, and became more aware of the non-surgical options, and had more personal experience with aesthetic treatments.

It started off as one of my self-improvement projects. Mentally and physically. I've spent years working out to lose weight but could never get rid of certain trouble spots. Then I found out how Mesotherapy can literally melt away unwanted fat without going through surgery. How cool is that?! The more I learnt, the more fascinated I became. The more I tried, the more impressed I was by the results.

DO YOU FEEL GREAT HAVING BEING ABLE TO INFLUENCE AND HELP CHANGE THE WAY A PERSON LOOKS?

It's the first medical specialty that I've truly developed a passion about! It's a way I can make a positive impact on someone else's

life. It becomes a long-term happy relationship, something I don't get with Anaesthesia. We see improvements with every treatment, develop friendships with our regular clients and meet people from all walks of life and numerous countries of origin. It's very rewarding and gratifying to be able to make a real difference.

Ultimately, the changes we make are very subtle, but once our clients see the difference, it triggers a major increase in self-confidence and that is what has a huge life impact. A plain Jane, after improving her complexion, goes on to perm and dye her hair, buy new clothes and walk taller. We are just a catalyst in the process.

I do not plan to add general medical practice into the clinic's services. I will happily advise my existing patients to the best of my knowledge, but it'll never be a core part of the practice. I do not think it's appropriate for a patient being treated for a medical problem to be coerced into aesthetic treatments by

her doctor. In fact, I have never approached a patient I've dealt with as an Anaesthetist and used that relationship to coerce them into Aesthetic treatments, however badly I may feel they may need my help in that area. In fact, the majority of the patients I anaesthetize are totally unaware I own an Aesthetic clinic

DO YOU EVER GET UPSET WITH YOURSELF FOR THE WORK YOU DO, AND WHAT TYPE OF PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE AND SOCIAL CIRCLES PARTICULARLY UPSET YOU?

I'm not at all patient! I'm very goal-oriented and will strive towards my target at full speed. I'm as keen as my patients are at getting to their desired looks. So, only treatments with reliable results are included in my clinic.

My lack of patience is directed towards getting things done. I don't just talk about getting things done. I get things done.

Communication is key in aesthetic medicine. We need to take the time to speak to our clients and explain the treatment options in great detail. Fortunately, long detailed consultations is natural after the years of training in the UK, where the patients know their medical histories in great detail and are very knowledgeable about their condition. The challenge is to identify the clients' needs and getting them to be realistic in terms of results and rate of improvement.

I am more patient with people in general, until I'm tried to the extreme, after which, I get easily irritated by minor situations. I particularly dislike arrogance and dishonesty. Laziness irritates me too. For treatment to be successful, the patient has to be an active participant too. Instructions must be followed, or complications may ensue. Some think one session of Mesotherapy gives them



Time is the one denominator that determines if one is a success or a failure... - DR. CHRISTINE

96 HOURS by Neil Barrett by Venue Berlin © Palais Renaissance Necklace and bracelet by Mont Blanc

the license to overeat forever or one skin treatment will reverse decades of damage.

WHAT IS YOUR MAIN SPECIALTY AT YOUR PRACTICE? DO YOU DO BODY CONTOURING?

We do a lot of body contouring, using a combination of fat burning Mesotherapy and the latest contouring equipment. Using the combination produces a synergistic effect, thus speeding up the treatment process. The machines also break up cellulite and tones up the skin.

Our clients also seek rejuvenation treatments. We can remove difficult pigmentation and erase years off our clients with simple treatments. Our new Advanced Biomatix Eye Treatment even reduces saggy eyebags in just one session!

Our main differentiation factor is in pain management. Medical Aesthetic treatments are popular in part because surgery is avoided. However, the scalpel is often exchanged for the needle and other treatments with an element of discomfort. My Aesthetic Therapists are trained to comfort our clients during the more uncomfortable treatments.

But our major advantage is the selection of Anaesthesia-grade pain relief options available for those who wish to avoid pain completely.

I note there are other partners you work with at your clinic. How do you see the relation of the specialty services your partners provide for your patients when they consult you for aesthetic reasons?

We have a Nutrition Consultant and a Fitness Consultant at the clinic. I've always believed that Aesthetic Medicine complements a healthy lifestyle. For our clients who wish to embrace a healthier lifestyle, experts in these fields are at hand to provide the help required. We even have a personal trainer who will go to our clients' homes to

help them get into shape. The team approach works well.



Outfit and Bejeweled belt by Lanvin @ wisma Atria
Pendant and bracelet by Mont Blanc
Shades by McQueen

HOW DO YOU MANAGE YOUR STRESS?

I have good friends who have supported me every step of the way. Having someone to talk things through with and work problems out with helps a lot. Ultimately, nothing is impossible. Many things are challenging. It's up to us whether we're willing to rise up to the challenge. Once the shock of the latest disaster has died down, it's a matter of working things out logically and planning the next move.

My threshold for stress is pretty high. It can have a negative impact on my mood, but I will function until stress gets to extreme levels.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD? AND DO YOU COOK? ARE YOU PARTICULARLY A FUSSY FOODIE?

I live to eat. Food is part of celebration; food relieves stress, boredom, hunger. I enjoy most cuisines. Singaporean food is great! I really missed it during my time in the UK. Now I miss English food instead! Yes, I can cook, but I rarely have the time to nowadays. I love making popiah, steamboat, barbecues and traditional English roast dinners.

I hate mushrooms. And porridge! I won't touch any of either. But since I've taken the Food Intolerance Test, I have to avoid a few other foods, some of which I really enjoy. It's still early in the new eating plan, but I aim to see a reduction in allergic manifestations (running nose, rash and eye swelling) as well as weight loss after a few weeks of this new lifestyle.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS FOR 2007?

2007 should be an exciting year. Our MediSpa is open to complement our medical services. I plan to increase the services available at our clinic.

For more information on aesthetic medical services, please contact Dr. Christine Cheng at tel: 6732 5527 (clinic) and 6732 6670 (spa), or visit her website at www.simply-aesthetic.com.