

allure

THE BEAUTY EXPERT

APRIL 2007

SPECIAL SECTION

**LOOK YOUNGER—
RIGHT NOW!**

46 Skin Smoothers, Wrinkle Erasers & Fat Melters

PLUS: The Best Products From \$5 to \$150

**Classic
Makeup**

Designers' 5 Favorite Looks

Mean Girls,
Catfights, and the
Culture of Snark

**3 TRULY
SIMPLE
HAIRSTYLES**

With Speedy How-tos

*Jennifer
Garner*

Real Woman, Has Curves





SKIN. Saviors

Stop dimming the lights and piling on the makeup. There are new, better ways to make your skin look fresh. By Brooke Le Poer Trench

There's an old Guatemalan proverb that says, "We are the age of our heart." Sweet sentiment, but as any dermatologist will tell you, we're actually the age of our cumulative sun exposure—and to a lesser extent, our chronic stress, poor diet, lack of sleep, and genetic makeup. Fortunately, it's not too late to repair some of the damage we've already wrought. "You have a lot of control," says dermatologist Doris J. Day, clinical assistant professor of dermatology at New York University Medical Center. "Women don't have to accept changes to their appearance just because they're getting older—there's so much you can do."

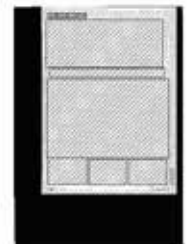
In fact, there's so much you can do that it can get a little confusing—but at least dermatologists are in 100 percent agreement on where to start: A broad-spectrum sunscreen is the most effective (and cheapest) anti-aging product on the market. "Exposing skin to aging UVA rays breaks down the supportive collagen and elastin fibers in the skin and leads to a complexion that is dull, blotchy, discolored, wrinkled, and at risk of skin cancer," says dermatologist Howard Fein, clinical instructor in dermatology at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Beyond that, it can be hard to know where to invest your money when so many products promise so much. We asked the country's top skin doctors

to share their best advice. Follow their guidance, and you can be confident that the only mementos of summers spent with burned cheeks and peeling noses are sitting in a dusty photo album.

FINE LINES

It's in the harsh light of day (cue the *Jaws* music) that many women notice these first signs of aging. "One day, you're not aware of it, then you start catching yourself in certain light and there they are—lines that weren't there before," says Fredric Brandt, a cosmetic dermatologist in New York City and Miami and author of the new book *10 Minutes/10 Years* (Free Press). While the change sometimes feels like it happened overnight, doctors say those tiny crinkles have been in the making since we sucked in our first breath. Expressions cause wrinkles that can be exacerbated by environmental stress breaking down elastic fibers and collagen in the skin (the stuff that made us look so cherubic at age two).

At Home: No, hitting the dimmer switch isn't a real solution. Instead, teach your skin to act young with the three ingredients dermatologists agree can make a difference. Retinol, a vitamin A derivative, has been proven to stimulate cell turnover and increase collagen production. "As of today, this family of ingredients still has the most well-documented science behind it," says David E. Bank, an associate in clinical dermatology at Columbia





University/Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. Peptides, or protein fragments, prompt skin to stop acting its age by helping boost collagen production. "When peptides are used in conjunction with a retinol at night, the results can be powerful," says dermatologist Patricia Wexler, associate clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. And antioxidants, such as green tea, grape-seed extract, vitamin C, and soy, combat free radicals by transforming them into benign compounds. "The complexion is assaulted with stress every day, and antioxidants defend against environmental injury to the skin," says Amy B. Lewis, a clinical assistant professor at Yale University School of Medicine. In the morning, smooth an antioxidant serum, such as Physician's Complex C-Plus Antioxidant Serum or Prevege, on cleansed skin, followed by a moisturizer containing a broad-spectrum sunscreen. Or find a product that is all three in one, such as Clinique Superdefense Triple Action Moisturizer SPF 25 or Nivea Visage Q10 Advanced Wrinkle Reducer Lotion SPF 15. In the evening, cleanse, moisturize, and slather on a treatment cream or serum containing just retinol, such as Neutrogena Healthy Skin Anti-Wrinkle Intensive Night Cream, or one that combines it with peptides and antioxidants as well, such as Clark's Botanicals Youth Serum or Philosophy Save Me. To make sure you're using a strong enough cream (1 percent is the most you can get over the counter, and .04 percent is as low as you want to go), Brandt suggests buying over-the-counter brands that list ingredients in detail. Companies don't *have* to disclose ingredient concentrations, but some still do. You should see some change in a month, but Brandt says it takes at least 12 weeks to experience significant results.

At the Doctor's Office: Dermatologists can smooth superficial lines—when they're not accompanied by deeper wrinkles—with the least invasive treatments. A series of microdermabrasion sessions

can minimize the problem. For this treatment, a device sprays the skin with finely ground mineral crystals, and as they're sucked back up into the vacuum, the dead outer layers of skin go with them, reducing fine wrinkles. Beyond abrasives, don't be alarmed if you start to hear the word "laser"—a lot. "Nonablative lasers shoot energy deep into the skin to increase collagen production and even out the texture of skin," Brandt says. The treatments require very little downtime, but they can burn a hole in your pocket (about \$500 to \$1,000 a pop), and it can take four to six sessions to see results.

DULLNESS

Physicians order patients who complain of exhaustion to slow down, but when skin takes on a pallid, lifeless cast, speeding things up is your best bet. "As you get older, cell turnover slows, more dead skin accumulates on the surface, pores get clogged, and the outer layer becomes irritated and coarse," Lewis says.

At Home: To brighten up, a weekly at-home peel containing glycolic, lactic, citric, and malic acids (all AHAs), or salicylic acid (a BHA), dissolves that dead, top layer and reveals the fresh, clean skin beneath. "They really penetrate skin and increase radiance within a month," Day

says. To determine the best peel for you, read the label and find out if the product is intended for your skin type. The sensitive-skinned can try L'Oréal Paris Dermo-Expertise ReNoviste Anti-Aging Glycolic Peel Kit; for normal skin, Avon Anew Clinical Advanced Retexturizing Peel; and for oily or combination complexions, MD Skincare Alpha Beta Daily Face Peel. To maintain radiance, slough away dead skin with a mild salicylic-acid cleanser, such as Patricia Wexler M.D. Dual Action Cleanser. At night, a cream containing alpha hydroxy acids, such as DDF The Glycolic 10% Exfoliating Moisturizer or Ole Henriksen Invigorating Night Gel, will speed up cell turnover while you sleep.

At the Doctor's Office: In pursuit of fresh-



er skin, "a series of four mild chemical peels definitely gives the complexion a glow and evens out hyperpigmentation," Brandt says. "And because the solutions doctors use are up to 50 percent stronger than over-the-counter peels, you can see the results more quickly. For smoothing over a rough complexion, medium-depth peels require a week of downtime, so recently, laser technology is being used more frequently. Lasers can reduce wrinkles, even out skin, and reduce dullness at the same time," Brandt says.

HYPERPIGMENTATION

Like elephants, skin cells have long memories. So while you may have kicked that sun-worshipping habit years ago, those brown spots and blotches indicate your complexion hasn't forgotten. "Hyperpigmentation is a general term for increased production of melanin in the form of spots, blotches, and uneven skin tone, mostly caused by too much sun," Bank says. "And it responds well to treatment—if and *only* if you commit to using sun protection every day."

At Home: Skin-care designed to tackle unevenly colored patches are usually labeled as skin "whiteners," "lighteners," and "brighteners"—and "they gently retard or block the production of melanin, inhibiting the production of new pigmentation as well as fading out pigment already present," Brandt says. Ingredients that help fade blotches include arbutin, kojic acid, and licorice extract, but the most commonly used ingredient—and the only over-the-counter product strong enough to really bleach skin—is hydroquinone. "When used conservatively, hydroquinone works," Bank says. "Unfortunately, it may soon be a prescription-only ingredient because the FDA is concerned about cases outside of the United States where people used very high concentrations on their bodies and developed pigmentation problems." For now, try True Radiant Revealing Complex, Ambi Skin Discoloration Fade Cream,

or Peter Thomas Roth Potent Skin Lightening Gel, all of which should be applied in a thin layer after cleansing, but before moisturizer and sunscreen. "And they must be used over the entire face to get the results for evening out skin tone," Brandt says.

Once you start regularly using a brightener, "expect a general improvement to your overall skin tone as well as a gradual fading of patches within about 15 days," Brandt says. Even if sunspots have been treated, a certain amount of ultraviolet light will still trigger overly pigmented pockets of skin (so the splotches return, and your money is wasted). "Wear a hat, vigilantly reapply sunscreen every two hours, and be aware of how much casual sun exposure you get during the day, whether it's on the street or through the car window," Fein says.

At the Doctor's Office: When the discoloration is very dark, it may not respond to over-the-counter products. "Hydroquinone is available in higher concentrations and usually prescribed at a 4 percent strength," Bank says. "And it may also be combined with a retinoid—the prescription form of reti-

—or glycolic acid, both of which help remove overly pigmented surface cells and replace them with fresh new cells that aren't." Another popular treatment for patches: Intense Pulsed Light (IPL). "When pigmentation is bombarded with varying wavelengths of light from this device, it's converted to heat and absorbed by the skin, removing the spots and evening out the skin tone," Brandt says. Four monthly treatments usually suffice, and the pain is minimal. Likewise, lasers designed to target pigmentation can also work wonders on problem spots and are minimally painful. "Tiny pulses of energy remove

spots on the face, hands, shoulders, and chest," Brandt says. "Afterward, a scab forms for a week or two, and the redness can persist for over a month."



WRINKLES/SAGGING

Some telltale signs of age—a personal paper shredder, a full set of Le Creuset pots, the odd gray hair—can be hidden away. Others, like wrinkles, are tough to conceal, but not impossible to treat. As with fine lines, wrinkles are caused by photoaging and expressions, “but deeper folds are also due to loss of volume,” Bank says. “Fat, collagen, hyaluronic acid—everything thins out like a tire

going flat, and sagging and creases occur.” It makes some women want to hide under a paper bag—not shred it.

At Home: Follow the regimen for fine lines, as skin still needs to be repaired, protected, and hydrated, but switch from

retinol creams to a prescription-strength retinoid such as Retin-A or Renova. “They can diminish fine lines, improve skin texture, reduce brown spots, and minimize pore size,” Day says. Just keep your expectations realistic: “Topical creams will have a softening effect, but to completely smooth deep wrinkles, professional intervention is usually required,” Brandt says.

At the Doctor's Office: For combating deep creases, there are two main weapons in a dermatologist's arsenal. For areas around the eyes, between the brows, and along the forehead—caused by facial expressions and called “dynamic lines”—doctors like to stick it to them. Specifically, with a needle full of Botox.

“In these areas, the skin is very tightly adhered to the muscle below, and when they contract and flex, the skin on top of them gets pleated like a curtain.

Over time those pleats stop bouncing back,” Bank says. Botox, according to most doctors, is the only way to erase lines for an extended period of time (three to six months). For the rest of the face, fillers—mostly with either collagen, hyaluronic acid, fat, or polylactic acids—are injected into the skin

to plump marionette lines, cheek lines, and naso-labial folds, and add volume to sagging areas. “Different filling agents suit different needs and different doctors,” Bank says. “For instance, hyaluronic acid-based fillers, such as Restylane and Juvaderm, are the workhorses because they're soft and pliable when injected, and if you get a bump it can be dissolved. Collagen-based fillers are often thinner so they suit more shallow lines; but then you may have a dermatologist with a deft hand for Sculptra, a polylactic acid-based filler, or who has had good results injecting fat.” Find a cosmetic dermatologist who comes highly recommended, who either specializes in injectables or has a long history of work with them. “Their skill is crucial—no matter what substance is used, its success is entirely dependent on technique,” Brandt says. Fillers usually wear off within a year, so deep creases will need to be refilled—something to consider, given the expense and small risk involved. As author Dorothy Fulheim once wrote about aging: “Youth is a disease from which we all recover. It's really a matter of deciding how much you're willing to go through to catch it again.” ♦



“Be aware of how much sun exposure you get during the day, whether it’s on the street or through the car window.”

“Their skill is crucial—no matter what substance is used, its success is entirely dependent on technique.”



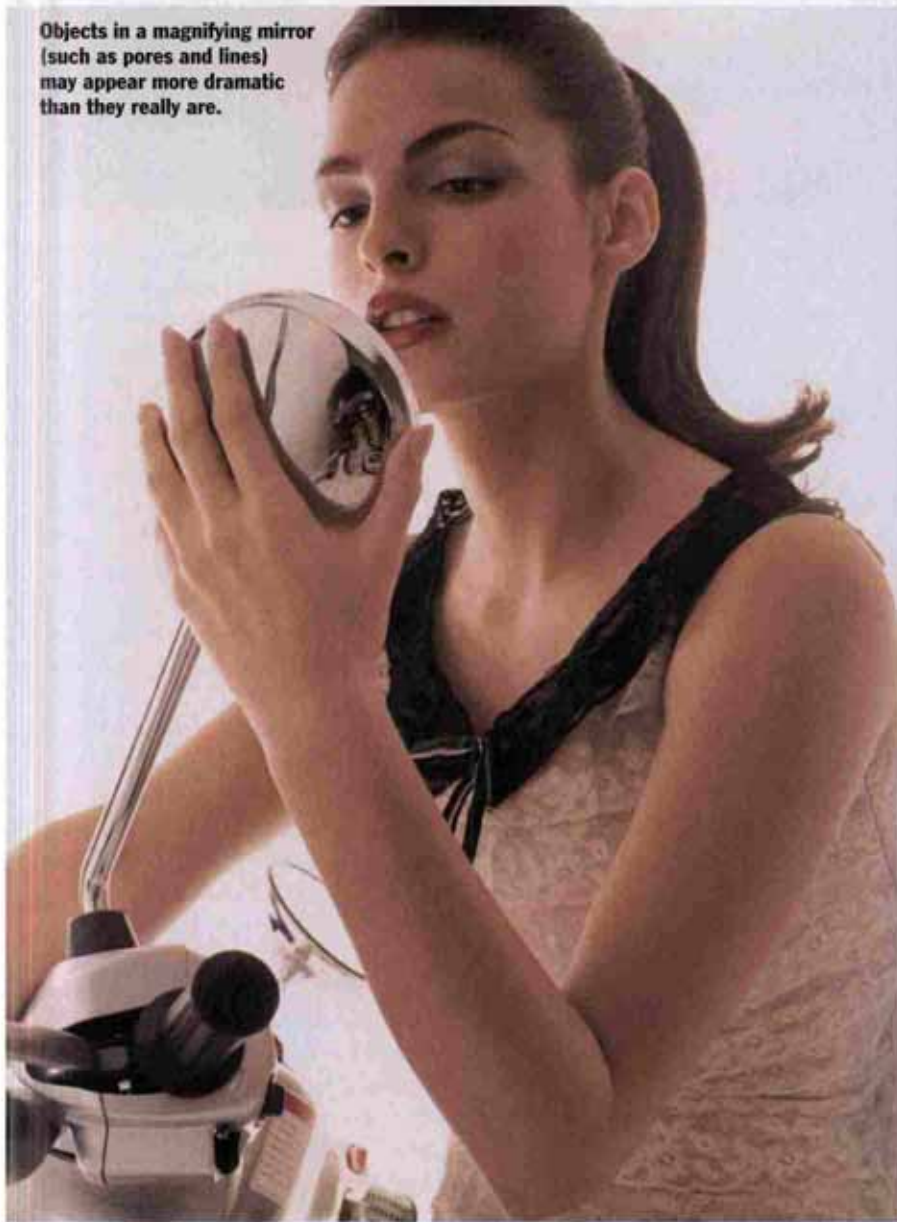
Using SPF 15 or more every day can help prevent and reduce lines and spots.



Heading off signs of aging, experts say, is a matter of knowing which products are best suited to the task and when to use them.



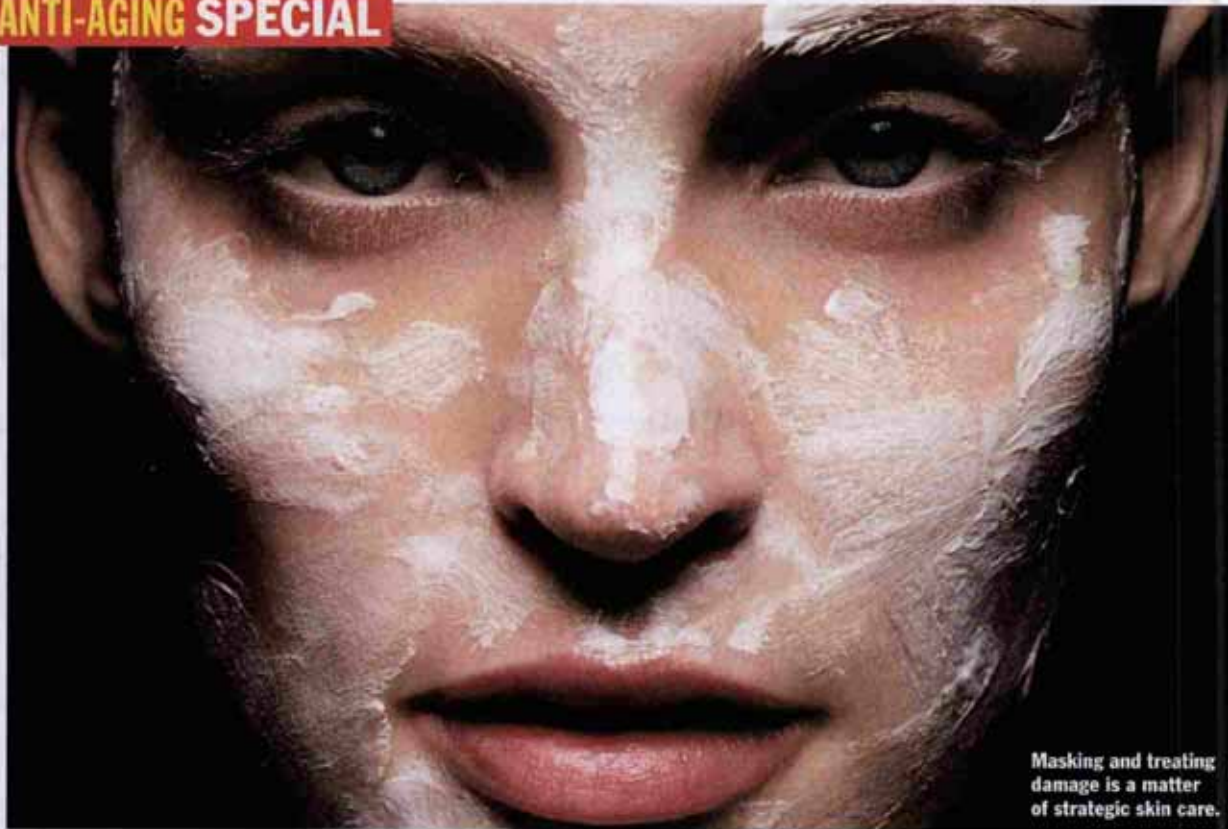
Those tiny crinkles have been in the making since we sucked in our first breath.



Objects in a magnifying mirror (such as pores and lines) may appear more dramatic than they really are.



ANTI-AGING SPECIAL



Masking and treating
damage is a matter
of strategic skin care.

MICHAEL THOMPSON

TESH

ROGER CABELLO

TESH

CATHERINE LOUIS