

Act your age

How to get clearer, younger-looking skin in your 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s

While there are few skin-care staples suitable for women of any age, the majority of products you use in your 20s are pretty much useless later in life. The rule when it comes to treating your skin is much the same as dressing your body: what you put on should evolve over the decades. The good news is that, no matter what your age, there's something tailor-made for your skin's specific needs.



20s

Although most twentysomething women aren't showing visible signs of aging, some have to contend with other skin ailments, such as adult acne. To soothe inflamed skin, Dr. Jody Levine, cosmetic dermatologist and owner of Plastic Surgery & Dermatology NYC, advises using products containing salicylic and glycolic acid. "I recommend using glycolic acid (either in a cleanser or toner) starting in your 20s because it gets rid of the dead skin cells, giving skin a nice glow," she says, adding that she prescribes a retinoid "because retinol unclogs the skin, prevents blackheads that turn into pimples and improves skin's radiance and smoothness."



30s

As the demands of careers and young families increase, the first signs of aging - crows feet, freckles and dark under eye circles - creep up. This is the time to begin using products containing vitamin C, which helps keep wrinkles at bay. "Once you get into your 30s, you start seeing the early sun damage," says Levine. You can reduce the appearance of freckles and sun spots by applying a brightener on a daily basis. To combat dark under eye circles, use an eye cream containing oligopeptides. Peptides build collagen, thereby plumping the skin under the eyes. This is especially important for women in their 30s, when skin in this area begins to get thinner and drier, requiring an extra dose of moisture.



Estee Lauder Idealist Pore Minimizing Skin Refinisher, \$63

Shu Uemura Phyto-Black Lift Anti-wrinkle Essence, \$105



Dior L'Or de Vie La Creme, \$380



40s

Just when many women start to really feel comfortable in their own skin, their skin starts to let them down. Deeper lines, jowls, skin discoloration and increasingly visible pores (due to enlarging oil glands) all develop. Look for products containing chestnut extract, which combats dryness and flaky skin as well as the super-potent anti-oxidant NDGA, which shrinks enlarged pores by reducing the buildup of excess oil deep within. This is also the time when you should stop using products containing salicylic acid (even if you are still battling adult acne) as it's too harsh for skin that's continually becoming drier. That's why Levine recommends stronger, richer moisturizers for her fortysomething patients.



Biotherm Reminere Intensive Replenishing Anti-aging Care, \$72



Lancome Platinum Eyes & Lips Reinforcing Contour Cream with Hydroxy-A Calcium, \$93



SK-II Dual Treatment Mask, \$130



Garnier Nutritioniste Ultra-Lift Anti-wrinkle Firming Moisture Cream, \$19.99

50s

Women who are over 50 and looking fabulous are using products that plump their skin with moisture to help soften the look of deepening wrinkles. This is when you'll see "increased lines, especially underneath the mouth," says Levine. For the ultimate dose of hydration, use a moisturizing mask once a week. After 50, many women experience more drooping around the eyes, the cheeks, underneath the mouth and on the neck. "This is when gravity really sets in," says Levine. Lines on your lips also start to detract from an appealing pout, so use lip products containing hydroxy - a form of calcium that makes up the skin's barrier.