

Ageless ...

with Fiona Wright, MD

The cosmetics industry is buzzing with countless products and procedures that are affordable, safe and provide fast results. Now, there is something suitable for everyone and every budget. Because of this easy access, we are becoming more obsessed with health and aesthetics as a society. We asked Dr. Fiona Wright to help us navigate the maze of technology and trends and find the appropriate skin care for persons of every age. **Lazy and beautiful just do not mix.** So what are you waiting for? Start reading and learning what you should do at various stages of your life to have beautiful skin!

In our 20s—when skin is at its peak of beauty—your main goal is developing good skin care habits and preventing premature aging by wearing UVA/UVB SPF 30 sunscreen. According to extensive research, sun damage is responsible for 80-90 percent of skin aging. Free radical damage created by sun, smoke, and pollutants will destroy our collagen and cause fine lines. Hydration becomes important in the mid-twenties when our skin starts to lose its ability to retain moisture. Choosing a hydrating complex (hyaluronate) that is combined with antioxidants (green tea, coQ-10, vitamins A, C, E) will keep your skin hydrated and will fight free radicals.

Physiological changes of aging begin to manifest themselves during our 30s. Cell growth begins to slow down and the skin tends to become thicker as cells are not replaced as quickly. Your skin becomes a bit drier and sun damage may begin to appear as visible roughness, fine lines and discolorations. It's time to make your skin care more comprehensive. Start using thicker moisturizing creams that have wrinkle-reducing effects (retinoids, idebenone, vitamin C). Put your moisturizer over damp skin. This helps lock in more moisture. Begin with eye creams at night and use your sunscreen religiously. If you notice that your skin looks dull and drier and also has more uneven texture, periodic exfoliation may help restore a more youthful feel. You can begin with at-home exfoliation treatments with ingredients such as alpha and beta-hydroxy acids, lactic acid and salicylic acid. Home microdermabrasion kits are also an option. But when tackling deeper problems, an office treatment can prove to be the most helpful.



At 40-something it is time to kick it up another notch. At-home treatments include advanced skin care products such as argeline for crow's feet and peptide technology to rebuild collagen. Begin to visit your skin care specialist. Monthly facials or microdermabrasions should be done on a regular basis. My preference is to have a microdermabrasion that incorporates a customized facial with the treatment. Age spots, blood vessels, and changes in skin color also become much more visible—and office treatments can begin to address these issues more aggressively.

The most annoying problem at this age is wrinkles due to movement and volume loss. These relatively pronounced wrinkles develop in the areas where facial movements result in skin folding. The most reliable way to treat these wrinkles is with Botox Cosmetic and facial fillers. For sagging eyelids, Botox can also be used to recontour and raise the eyebrows.

Women in their mid 40s and 50s experience particularly dramatic hormonal and skin changes as they approach menopause. The loss of hormones causes a decline in collagen, elastin and oil production and thus leads to skin thinning, dryness and other negative changes. The scope of this article is too narrow to cover all possible treatments for these common problems—but hydration, exfoliation and protection are essential. Now is the time to consider products that contain zinc, soy and high concentrations of green tea polyphenols. These products are able to rebalance the skin's estrogen losses and decrease skin irritations.

Many problems of the 40-50 year-“young” skin may be stubborn enough to resist topical agents and then, you should consider second-line treatments/procedures. It is critical to pick the right treatment for a particular problem and find the right doctor to administer it. True anti-aging treatments are now available and while aging remains inevitable, you don't have to sit down and accept it. +