

Q My doctor gave me a cream for a brown patch that showed up on my face this summer. It is not working. What else can I do?

J. Feldman, Dallas

A There are many kinds of brown spots—however the most common are caused by sun exposure. For most, these “age spots” usually appear on the face, hands, back, and feet. There are various treatments to help, and the first is usually topical creams.

Tretinoin, steroids, and glycolics are available in combination with hydroquinone to help depigment the skin. Other medications which also can help are kojic acid, niacinamide, and azelaic acid.

Your physician can also create an aggressive exfoliation treatment with liquid nitrogen, microdermabrasion, or chemical peels, but results can vary. In addition, lasers and Intense Pulsed Light (IPLTM) technology are treatment breakthroughs that can correct a variety of skin conditions, such as facial skin imperfections, the signs of photo-aging, and brown spots. It can offer a safe, non-invasive solution that can be tailored to your individual condition and skin type and provide superior cosmetic results.

Management of hyperpigmentation can require a comprehensive approach. Avoidance of sun and irritants, use of sunscreen, application of depigmenting treatments, and close supervision with your doctor can, however, lead to a successful outcome.

*Dr. Fiona Wright, Aesthetic Institute of Plano
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Q I was a smoker for 23 years and have deep lines around my lips. What is the best way to get rid of them?

L. Cramer, Richardson

A With aging, our lips lose volume and become narrower and less defined. To add to this problem, levels of oil and water – our natural lip balm- decrease, especially with smoking. With this volume loss and dehydration, the lips will develop deep lines. By avoiding sun exposure and smoking and not pursing the lips with straws and bottled drinks, you can however, slow down the aging process.

In my office, I utilize many treatments to help with the “barcode” lip lines and find that a four step approach works best. 1.) Resurface the skin with microdermabrasion, chemical peels, or micro laser peels. This

exfoliation process will “peel off” the aging skin and allow new skin to regenerate in its place. One of the newest technologies, the WrinkleLite will also aid in the reduction of wrinkles and the growth of collagen. 2) Recontour the lips with Botox. This will stop the wrinkle movement and prevent the lips from narrowing in. 3.) Restore the volume loss and refill the lines with Facial Fillers. 4.) Replenish the skin with advanced skin care products.

This multi-step approach to lip rejuvenation is an effective technique that creates natural, long-lasting results and satisfied smiles.

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Q I have seen many television ads for the new HPV vaccine for women. Do I need to get it?

T. Peterson, Plano

A The newly approved HPV vaccine is exciting news for cancer prevention. HPV (human papillomavirus) is a common virus that can cause cervical cancer and genital warts. The HPV vaccine is highly effective in preventing the four types of HPV that cause 70% of cervical cancers and 90% of genital warts. The vaccine is currently approved only for girls and women aged 9-26. It is still being studied in males and women older than 26, and may be approved for these other groups as well if it is determined to be safe and effective. Because the virus is highly contagious through sexual contact (50% of sexually active people will have the

virus at some point in their lifetime), the vaccine is now routinely recommended for girls aged 11-12 to assure that they will be protected before being exposed to the virus. Even if you are already sexually active or have tested positive for one type of HPV in the past, the vaccine may still be effective in preventing the other types of HPV. Talk to your primary care physician about getting vaccinated. You can also find more detailed information from the Centers for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/vaccine/hpv/hpv-faqs.htm#21>.

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