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# allure

DECEMBER 2010

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# ANTI-AGING

# Know-it-alls

The best wrinkle fighters. The SPF you really need. The new fix for flabby arms. Eight skin-care wizards reveal the whole truth about looking younger. **By Mary Rose Almasi**

**F**orget a personal chef—if we won the lottery we'd enlist a personal dermatologist to hover by our side so that every morning, we could get the ultimate advice on how to treat our skin. We'd take our doctor shopping for sunscreen and wrinkle-reducing creams. And of course, we'd look to her for the whole truth and nothing but. Do we need Botox? Can we fix eye puffiness? Why is our face flaking today, when it wasn't last week? Since we're still waiting for that winning lotto ticket, we decided to go for the next best thing: We quizzed leading dermatologists for their best little-known anti-aging advice and discovered truly surprising tips—that work for everyone. *Jackpot.*

## The Truth About Retinoids

Leslie Baumann is part hard-core, product-testing doctor—and part beauty hound. She's analyzed almost every skin-care ingredient in creation for efficacy at the Baumann Cosmetic & Research Institute in Miami Beach and knows what works. She shares the secrets she's learned about her favorite wrinkle-fighting ingredient.

- **Packaging matters.** Avoid retinol products that come in jars—as soon as the cap comes off and air hits the formula, the retinol begins to degrade. Ideally, you want something in an aluminum tube with a tiny mouth. Second best is an opaque plastic pump bottle.
- **The name matters.** Retinyl palmitate and retinyl linoleate are mixed with a buffering agent to make them less irritating—so they're also significantly less effective than straight-up retinol.
- **Nighttime is the right time.** It doesn't matter if a retinol product contains sunscreen—sun exposure causes the ingredient to break down.
- **They're safe for eyelids.** Many women don't realize that retinol eye

creams can be applied directly to the lids to fight crepiness. Use them every third night; any more may cause redness or peeling.

- **Breaks are necessary.** Stop using retinol two days before a trip to a location where the air is dry, like a ski vacation, or before a flight that's six hours or longer. Low humidity is drying, so the retinol might be more irritating. Once you're home, wait two days to resume use.

## The Truth About Antioxidants

These skin-care ingredients come with their own language (“free radicals,” “oxidative stress”), and David H. McDaniel speaks it fluently. The director of the Institute of Anti-aging Research in Virginia Beach is an authority on antioxidants—he conducted clinical trials for topical idebenone and CoffeeBerry—and here he explains how they can protect and improve your skin.

- **They're extra-important for skin sinners.** If you smoke or skip sunscreen, topical antioxidants should be a priority over all other anti-aging products. Anti-

## Latest Coffee (Berry) Talk

CoffeeBerry is to dermatologists what Justin Bieber is to tween girls—a big, huge star. And now the potent antioxidant is crossing over from skin care to cosmetics. Puri CoffeeBerry Perfecting Minerals, an all-natural makeup collection, contains a high concentration of CoffeeBerry (0.5%)—the same level found in Puri's skin-care products. An independent study by dermatologist David H. McDaniel (sponsored by Puri) found that daily use of the foundation, concealer, and setting powder improved brown and red pigmentation by 20 and 23 percent respectively, fine lines and wrinkles by 30 percent, and dryness by 39 percent. And no one in the study had an adverse reaction or an acne flare-up. “Based on the data, the products do a good job of treating photodamage and rosacea,” says Amy B. Lewis, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Yale School of Medicine, who reviewed the study. “But it's undetermined whether it's due to Puri's specific formulation or just the fact that they're mineral powders with SPF.” (McDaniel agrees with Lewis's assessment, but adds, “My feeling is that makeup alone with SPF does not do anything more than prevent sun damage, so it is a reasonable assumption that it is the CoffeeBerry.”) Puri's new makeup line also includes a bronzer. We're betting that the products' effects will outlast Bieber bangs. —JOAN KRON

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oxidants' greatest value is in preventing skin-cell damage, so you want to have your defense barrier on day and night to fight off free radicals.

- **Antioxidants come first.** These ingredients work best on bare skin. Sunscreens or moisturizers should go on top; otherwise they'll prevent the antioxidants from fully penetrating.

- **They shut down sensitivity.** Antioxidants have been shown to offset irritation, and they can help you tolerate anti-aging products with retinol and alpha hydroxy acid.

- **Not all antioxidants are the same.** Idebenone, CoffeeBerry, and the phloretin CF combo from SkinCeuticals (phloretin with vitamin C and ferulic acid) are the most potent antioxidants.

- **You can't just count on pills.** Some antioxidant supplements can make skin look healthier, but many won't. For example, there are two forms of vitamin E, and only one, gamma-tocopherol, has demonstrated value in pill form. The best way to get your antioxidants is by eating whole foods, such as blueberries and cruciferous vegetables (including broccoli and cauliflower).

### The Truth About Lasers

Roy G. Geronemus not only uses more than 50 different types of lasers at the Laser & Skin Surgery Center of New York; he also helped develop plenty of them (and owns stock in the manufacturers of Fraxel and Zeltiq). He explains how the devices tighten skin, erase dark spots—and even blast belly fat.

- **They don't all leave you red for weeks.** New nonablative resurfacing lasers like the Fraxel Dual leave skin red for two to three days. They target multiple aging issues at once, leading to a reduction in lines, pore size, dark spots, and rough texture, and improved



The newest lasers can improve lines, dark spots, pores, and roughness all at once.

### Acid Test

Hyaluronic acid is regularly heralded by dermatologists as one of the best moisturizing and wrinkle-plumping ingredients in skin care, but its high cost—more than 1,000 times as expensive as glycerin—can be prohibitive for companies. "Most over-the-counter products don't have enough hyaluronic acid to moisturize skin in the long term," says Jeannette Graf, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City. "Its effectiveness really depends on concentration." That's because hyaluronic acid works by absorbing its own weight in water in order to pull moisture into the skin (and thereby temporarily reduce lines). The most potent skin formulas pack a dehydrated form of it into microspheres, which help propel the ingredient into skin. They include Lancôme High Résolution Refill-3X, SkinCeuticals Hydrating B5 Gel, Chanel Hydramax + Active Moisture Gel Cream, Peter Thomas Roth Instant Un-Wrinkle, and Shu Uemura Depsea Hydrability Concentrate (Graf's pick). —ELIZABETH SIEGEL

skin tone overall. It generally takes two or three treatments at about \$400 to \$1,000 a session, but the results are dramatic.

- **Even undereye bags can be zapped.** The skin under the eyes is notorious for developing bulging pockets of fat. Surgery has always been the fix, but now one treatment with an ablative laser like the Fraxel Re:pair can break up the fat and tighten the skin. It requires a local anesthetic and three to five days to recover (compared with 10 to 14 with surgery), and costs about \$750 to \$1,000.

- **They can tighten a stomach bulge.** The Zeltiq CoolSculpting treatment is a noninvasive way to shrink a belly pooch, even if you're slim. The device chills fat cells until they crystallize; they're then eliminated by the body over 8 to 12 weeks. It usually takes one or two sessions (at \$500 and up), but results are permanent.

- **Flabby arms can be firmed, too.** Surgery to remove excess fat and skin from the upper arms leaves a scar from shoulder to elbow, and who wants that? But laser-assisted liposuction is showing promise in trials; it removes excess fat, then uses heat to tighten loose skin.

- **They won't keep you looking young forever.** After a laser treatment, it's wise to regularly use products containing anti-agers like retinol, peptides, and growth factors. It's much easier to maintain a new reservoir of collagen than to build up stores that have been depleted.

### The Truth About Botox

Ask any dermatologist, beauty editor, or celebrity what name comes to mind when they hear the word "Botox," and they'll say Fredric Brandt. The New York City and Coral Gables, Florida, dermatologist is the number-one user of

*Botox in the world—and he may just know more about the injectable than anyone else, too.*

• **It can go in the nose.** At around age 40, the nose tip begins to droop, which visually drags down the face. Botox injected at the base of the nose, between the nostrils, can release the depressor muscle that pulls the nose downward—making the whole face appear lifted.

• **It can lift your lips.** Collagen isn't the only solution for thin lips. Tiny drops of Botox along the upper lip border can roll the top lip up and out slightly so it appears plumper. And because this requires less Botox than other areas of the face, it's less expensive—about \$200 instead of \$400.

• **Even jowls can be tightened.** A little Botox along the muscles of the jawbone pulls the skin up for a crisp, defined jawline. It's a small change that can freshen the face.

• **Bruising is not inevitable.** Apply an ice pack for three minutes before getting injections. It will constrict the blood vessels so there's less chance that the needle will puncture them and give you black-and-blue marks.

• **There's a bust benefit.** Some women are distressed by the lines that develop between the breasts. It occurs with age, especially if you've had lots of sun exposure. Botox is a home run for this; it can be injected into the pectoral muscles, and the wrinkles will smooth out.

• **Necks can be smoother, too.** Horizontal wrinkles can be temporarily erased with a "Botox necklace." Tiny amounts are injected into the muscles above and below the lines, all the way around the neck; when they relax, the skin looks smoother.

## The Truth About Sunscreen

*It stands to reason that one of the country's top skin-cancer researchers would know—and care—a lot about sunscreen.*

*James M. Spencer of Spencer Dermatology & Skin Surgery Center in St. Petersburg, Florida, reveals the unwritten rules for getting maximum protection.*

• **The higher the SPF, the better.** SPF 30 or higher is the usual recommendation, even for nonbeach days, and here's

## Strong Stuff

Some of the most powerful wrinkle-fighting ingredients are cruel to be kind: Retinol and alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) often irritate the skin at first, causing redness or peeling.

Dermatologists usually advise using these treatments every other day and gradually increasing the frequency to avoid problems. Now, Neutrogena and Dior have kits that contain the ingredients at varying strengths—so the buildup is built-in. Neutrogena Dermatologics Retinol NX Progression Kit consists of three tubes of increasingly intense retinol treatments, to be used over 90 days. (The company will not disclose the specific levels.) Dior Capture Totale 21 Night Renewal Treatment includes three serums in three strengths: 5, 10, and 15 percent AHAs.

"These are a smart idea for women who want to start using AHAs or retinol, because it takes the guesswork out of how to let your skin adjust," says dermatologist Leslie Baumann. She adds that after you've finished with the kits, you can move on to a stronger product, such as Vivité Night Renewal (with AHAs) or a prescription retinoid, and experience less irritation.

why: People apply less sunscreen than they should and end up getting a protection level more like SPF 15—which is the minimum required.

• **Misting can lead to mistakes.** Spray-on sunscreens cover a large surface area quickly, but their speed encourages a light application that's inadequate. To really reach the SPF indicated on the can, you need to keep spraying until it looks like a liquid on the skin (then either wait for it to dry or rub it in—it's up to you).

• **Toweling erases SPF.** You probably know you need to reapply sunscreen—even ones labeled water-resistant—after swimming. But you probably hadn't heard that toweling off removes sunscreen, too. Sand also scrubs it away.

• **Shade is not a sunblock.** If you can read a book in the shade, then UV light is reaching your skin. Be sure you're protected with sunscreen.

• **There's no need to wait.** It's a misconception that you have to apply sunscreen 20 minutes ahead of sun

exposure; all formulas start to work right away. I apply mine as soon as I'm on the sand, not before.

## The Truth About Wrinkle Fillers

*Melda Isaac has earned the respect of her peers for her tremendous experience with all types of injectables. She's an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C.*

• **It's best to aim high.** Filler first-timers are often surprised that we don't inject directly into wrinkles. We fill the area around a line, because you get a lifting effect that pulls the skin up as well as smoothing it out.

• **It pays to pick the right target.** To save money, many women ask for a vial of filler to be spread around—a little near the mouth and the eyes—but that never really accomplishes a dramatic change. For the most impact, some may want to get a hyaluronic acid filler like Restylane or Juvéderm along the cheekbones. It can take away the downward droop that's part of aging.

• **Fillers are a great Botox boost.** To fill deep lines between the brows, it's best to get both hyaluronic acid injections and Botox. If the frown muscles don't contract, the filler lasts longer.

• **They work in unexpected areas.** A small amount of filler can give you a perky belly button by redefining the rim and making the center appear more sunken. Similarly, hyaluronic acid fillers can be used to replump saggy earlobes. (But if you want to prevent them in the first place, remove your earrings before bed—they drag along the pillowcase.) If your doctor has a little extra filler at the end of your appointment, ask; it's a good way to finish off the syringe, and there should be no added charge.

## The Truth About Nutrition

*Nicholas Perricone is known for his best-selling books—and for being a maverick. His anti-aging theories are often controversial at first, but his ideas have been known to pan out; for example, he was one of the first to advocate a salmon-rich diet for the skin, as well as talk about the*

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link between inflammation and aging. Here, his latest opinions on how the right diet can make you look younger.

• **Coffee can be aging.** The acids in coffee beans tend to cause the body's insulin levels to spike, triggering inflammation that can trigger the deterioration of skin cells and cause wrinkles. Limit yourself to one cup of coffee a day. Or, better yet, switch to tea.

• **Cinnamon is your friend.** The spice helps prevent cravings for sugars and starches, which raise insulin levels and play a role in glycation, a collagen-damaging process that leads to sagging and wrinkling. Add a quarter teaspoon to oatmeal or yogurt, or sprinkle some in your tea.

• **Watercress helps skin repair itself.**

It has more vitamin C than oranges and more calcium than milk, and it's also a source of vitamins A, E, K, and B<sub>6</sub>, and folic acid, zinc, iron, and powerful antioxidants. Collectively, these help your body produce robust, healthy skin cells and fortify the skin so collagen production, cell repair, and cell signaling function optimally. Aim for two to three ounces of watercress at least three times a week—add it to salads, sandwiches, omelets, or soups, or sauté it like spinach.

• **Stress can be beat.**

Excessive anxiety triggers inflammation, so a week before a stressful event, take 1,000 milligrams of fish oil three times a day to fight inflammation and one B-complex pill a day to bolster the nervous system. At night, take 500 milligrams of magnesium along with 1,000 milligrams of calcium (these are often combined in one supplement, and they help muscles relax, which can make it easier to sleep). Stick with the program until you feel calm.

• **Exercise doesn't always make you look younger.** Women who are slim risk shedding too much body fat, resulting in a gaunt look that's aging. I

The best way to get antioxidants orally? With food, not supplements.



## Hot Shots

A new injectable hyaluronic acid wrinkle filler, **Belotero Balance**, is expected to gain FDA approval early next year. Like **Restylane** and **Juvéderm**, it's designed to treat moderate to severe wrinkles with immediate results. But because **Belotero Balance** is softer than other hyaluronic acid fillers, "it also smooths fine lines around the eyes and lips," says Rhoda S. Narins, the New York City dermatologist who led the FDA study. Also on the horizon: **Xeomin**, a new botulinum-toxin-based injectable. It's already FDA-approved to treat neck spasms and involuntary blinking, but doctors using it to relax frown lines have found that, as with **Botox** and **Dysport**, its effects last up to three months. —JOAN KRON

seeds, and extra-virgin coconut oil (you can add it to tea in place of milk).

## The Truth About Brighteners

Few people have studied pigmentation like Philadelphia dermatologist Susan C. Taylor. The founding director of the Skin of Color Center at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York City explains how to treat skin-tone issues.

• **Picking is a problem.** It's the top cause of dark spots, and it creates a deep injury that floods the lower layer

don't recommend more than 45 minutes of exercise a day; instead, exercise every other day. These women also need more fat in their diet to keep volume in their face. Healthy sources of fat include avocado and olive oil, nuts,

of your skin with melanin—where it's incredibly hard to get rid of.

• **Lightening takes dedication.** Over-the-counter pigmentation treatments do work, but they require patience. Apply them twice daily, and stick with them for six weeks to see the first signs of improvement—three months for a major difference. And lay off the harsh scrubs, which can worsen spots.

• **Ingredients determine the degree of lightening.** Creams and serums that claim to lighten usually include 2 percent hydroquinone, a strong over-the-counter bleaching agent that should be applied to dark spots only. Treatments that "brighten" or "whiten" are different: These contain ingredients like soy, licorice, kojic acid, vitamin C, and arbutin. They fade superficial pigmentation that can dull skin, and they're safe to use all over the face.

• **Sunscreen is key.** If you don't wear a broad-spectrum SPF 30 sunscreen every single day, one 20-minute walk—that's truly all it takes—can bring back all the pigmentation. ♦