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The Ultimate Guide to Perfect Skin

Expert advice on the TOP NEW PRODUCTS and procedures to keep you LOOKING YOUR BEST

By Caitlin Gaffey

How many of us spend hundreds of dollars on the latest skin cream, only to bake ourselves to a nut-brown tan while on holiday a month later? When it comes to the aging of our skin, we are usually our own worst enemy. But even if you've smoked countless cigarettes, sunbathed every summer, or spent the last decade in a perpetually sleep-deprived state, all is not lost. We've consulted some of the most esteemed dermatologists—Fredric Brandt of New York and Miami, Patricia Wexler of New York, Brad Katchen of New York, and Marta Rendon of Boca Raton, Florida—along with Los Angeles facialist Kate Somerville and Lauren Thaman, global director of P&G Beauty Science, for their advice on choosing the very best treatments for your skin.

For ALL Skin Types

No matter your age or the state of your complexion, here are a few rules every woman should follow.

And if you're lucky enough to have normal skin—the kind that doesn't suffer from flakiness or acne flare-ups—these tips may be all you need to look great.

USE SUNSCREEN DAILY

"It's ridiculous, but people still don't get the hazards of the sun," says Katchen. "You incur damage whether or not you burn." Make sure your sunblock has SPF 15 to block UVB rays, as well as a UVA blocker like Mexoryl. Try La Roche-Posay Anthelios 15 Sunscreen Cream (\$29).

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Many beauty companies would have you buy a different product for every

inch of your skin, but you're better off being low maintenance. "I see so many people using too many products and overtreating themselves," says Katchen. "But less is more. An educated consumer who chooses products wisely will do best." So what does every woman need? First and foremost, a sunscreen to be worn religiously and a gentle cleanser. Try Olay Hydrate & Cleanse Anti-Oxidant Face Wash (\$6.99). "For day, I recommend a moisturizer with antioxidants like vitamin C that absorb free radicals in the environment," says Brandt. "At night, use a cream with peptides or retinol to boost collagen and hydrating hyaluronic acid or

shea butter." Try Olay Total Effects Mature Skin Therapy (\$18.99) for day and L'Oréal Paris Advanced Revitalift Night (\$16.59) at night. Eye cream is crucial, as the skin around your eyes is thin and easily shows signs of time. Try Dr. Brandt r3p Eye (\$80).

PRICE WON'T PROMISE PERFORMANCE

You don't have to spend your paycheck in the name of smooth skin. "Ask a dermatologist or a friend who has great skin what she recommends," says Wexler. And when trying a new product, give it a real chance. "But if you don't see positive changes after a month, move on," says Somerville. ➤



Model Natasha Poly looking radiant

OILY Skin

Key concerns: Acne, as well as oiliness and shine, especially in the T zone.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SUNSCREEN FOR YOUR SKIN

If sunscreen causes your acne to flare up, you're not using one that's compatible with your complexion. "People with oily or sensitive skin should use a sunscreen containing a physical sunblock, like zinc oxide or titanium dioxide, rather than chemical sunblocks like PABA," says Somerville. In general, chemical blockers are more likely to cause breakouts.

PREVENT PIMPLES

Salicylic and glycolic acid are tried-and-tested acne-fighting ingredients. "Salicylic acid is lipid soluble, so it not only gets rid of dead skin, it also dissolves the sebum in your pores," says Brandt. If you use a salicylic-acid face wash but follow it with an oily moisturizer, you defeat the purpose. Try a kit of products for oily skin instead, like iS Clinical Acne Kit (\$248). And if you're worried about wrinkles, look for acne products that have antiaging ingredients. Try Patricia Wexler M.D. MMPi 20 Anti-Aging Acne Serum (\$55), which fights wrinkles and banishes blemishes at the same time.

BE SPARING WITH SPOT TREATMENTS

"Younger skin can tolerate harsh benzoyl-peroxide spot treatments, whereas older skin is more irritated by them," says Rendon. Your first line of defense should be a salicylic-acid product like Aveda Outer Peace Acne Spot Relief (\$28). For oil control, a mattifying gel is more effective than oil-absorbing sheets. We like OC Eight Mattifying Gel (\$40).

DRY Skin

Key concerns: Dry skin is often accompanied by flaking and itching. Lines and wrinkles appear more pronounced when your skin is stripped of moisture.

PICK EMOLLIENT PRODUCTS

The combination of the frigid, dry air outside and the even drier heated air inside buildings makes the winter months a nightmare for those with dry skin. Stay away from harsh cleansers, and hydrate the skin as much as possible. "I recommend a soapless cleanser, like Cetaphil [\$7.59], followed by a very moisturizing cream with a high lipid content," says Brandt. Look for a product with silicone, shea butter, or petrolatum, moisturizers that cover the skin with a film so that water can't escape. Try

Darphin Aromatic Renewing Balm (\$75). If a balm is too heavy for you, opt for a lotion with lighter humectants like hyaluronic acid or glycerin, which draw moisture into the skin instead of forming a barrier over it. Try Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream (\$24.99). Also, if you use products with retinols, give them a rest in the winter months, as they can exaggerate dryness.

EXFOLIATE FLAKES

A face that's shedding is an unpleasant sight. "Dry skin is dead skin," Somerville says, "so exfoliating twice a week is crucial and will also make your skin more permeable to moisturizers." But don't just pick any product and start sloughing away. Use an enzyme exfoliant or a scrub with round beads rather than sharp nut granules. Try Kate Somerville ExfoliKate (\$85).

SENSITIVE Skin

Key concerns: Redness and blotchy pigmentation or rashes that are exacerbated by fragranced products and harsh exfoliants.

BOOST THE SKIN'S DEFENSES

If your medicine cabinet is stocked with products and you're constantly trying a new cream, your skin may be acting up because the

epidermis has been disrupted by exposure to so many fragrances and preservatives. This is known as cosmetic intolerance, and it can be caused by product overuse or overpeeling the skin. Try simplifying your product regimen, and rebuild the skin's protective outer layer with creams that contain ceramides or gentle moisturizers. Try the 14-day Shiseido Bio-Performance Intensive Skin Corrective Program (\$300).

ALL SENSITIVE-SKIN PRODUCTS ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL

"There's no industry standard for products intended for sensitive skin," says Thaman. So while most products bearing "sensitive" labels are fragrance, dye, and alcohol free, there are some that still contain all three. Read the label carefully to make sure the product doesn't include ingredients you react to, or buy sensitive products only from a brand that tests them on people with different kinds of sensitivity, like La Roche-Posay. Try La Roche-Posay Toleriane Soothing Protective Skincare moisturizer (\$20). Just like those with oily complexions, people with sensitive skin should use a sunscreen with physical, rather than chemical, sunblocks. ➤

BEST BUYS



See Where to Buy for details

Look **Younger** Instantly

EXPERT TIPS

BEST BUY



20s

Jessica
Biel**BRIGHTEN TIRED EYES**

If late nights have left you with dark circles, address them with an eye cream before applying makeup. "Trying to hide eye issues with extra concealer just makes you look worse," says makeup artist Nick Barose. So which ingredients work? "Caffeine constricts superficial blood vessels, a cause of dark circles, minimizing their appearance, while peptides stimulate collagen synthesis," says dermatologist Brad Katchen. Try Lancôme High Resolution Eye (\$56) or peptide-packed **LiftFusion Eye Lift (\$89)**.



30s

Cate
Blanchett**HIDE SUN SPOTS**

Sun spots and freckling on your face and décolleté can be just as aging as wrinkles. So if the hours you've spent at the beach in your teens and 20s are catching up with you, even out your complexion instantly with a cream bronzer. "If you have fair skin and dark spots, bronzer or sunless tanner decreases the contrast," says Katchen. To tighten skin and cover spots simultaneously, try **Murad Firming Bronzer SPF 15 for Face and Body (\$48)**. For a tan that won't rinse off, opt for Olay Total Effects Touch of Sun moisturizer (\$18.99).



40s

Angela
Bassett**SMOOTH EXPRESSION LINES**

You're likely to have a few fine lines around your eyes and across your forehead by now. "Rather than trying to cover them with foundation, use an instant-line-smoothing product before applying your makeup," instructs Barose. Dab a small amount around your eyes, between your brows, and even on the bands on your neck to plump wrinkles. We like **Clarins Instant Smooth (\$27.50)**, which not only fills in lines, it shrinks the appearance of pores, too. The effects last a few hours, and you can reapply anytime, even over makeup.



50s

Ellen
Barkin**PLUMP SKIN WITH MOISTURE**

Lines look worse when your skin is parched, as it often is at this age. Whether it's crow's-feet or jowliness that has you concerned, a moisturizing mask will give aging skin a lift. "Hydrating the skin lessens the appearance of lines instantly," says Katchen. For the best results, try an intense treatment like **SK-II Signs Dual Treatment Mask (\$110 for six)**, which is a stretchy cloth mask soaked in a solution of peptides and hydroxyproline, a major component of collagen. Leave it on for just 10 minutes and then rub the excess into your skin.



60+

Blythe
Danner**SAY SAYONARA TO LIP LINES**

At this age, the lines around your mouth can make it difficult to keep your lipstick in place. "A lot of women opt for a long-last lipstick to prevent color from feathering, but the texture of matte long-wearing products can look lifeless," says Barose. Instead, smooth and fill those lines with **Estée Lauder Perfectionist Correcting Concentrate for Lip Lines (\$35)**, which has light-reflective pigments and hyaluronic acid.



See Where to Buy for details



Model Lily Donaldson is blessed with flawless skin. Even if you aren't, the advice here will keep your face looking great, too.

What the Derm Can Do

Top dermatologists reveal the **NEWEST IN-OFFICE PROCEDURES** to smooth skin and turn back time without going under the knife

These days, rather than growing old gracefully or going under the knife, many women are choosing something in between the two. It's no surprise, considering the tremendous range of "quick-fix" options available, that in the past decade, the total number of cosmetic procedures has jumped 446 percent, while the number of surgical cosmetic procedures (face-lifts, eyelid surgery, and liposuction among them) is actually on the decline. Whether it's fear or finances preventing women from succumbing to the scalpel, fillers, peels, and light therapies are having a heyday. We asked some leading dermatologists to tell us about the newest and most effective innovations they're using in the fight against wrinkles, sagging, sun spots, and acne. Read on to learn about the most up-to-the-minute options.

SMOOTH Wrinkles

"With so many injectables on the market, you need a doctor who will consider your budget, pain threshold, and whether you need an instant fix or a long-term solution before choosing a treatment," says dermatologist Patricia Wexler.

NOTHING BEATS BOTOX

Botox is still the gold standard for smoothing expression lines instantly. "My patients who get Botox are the happiest, because they get immediate, great results," dermatologist Brad Katchen says. Injections cost about \$500 per area of the face and paralyze muscles beneath lines. Botox works especially well on the forehead and crow's-feet; results last about four months. Reloxin, a new form of botulinum toxin, is now undergoing FDA trials. "It appears to have a different

diffusion quality, paralyzing a greater area," says Wexler. FDA approval is expected by 2008.

SMOOTH SUPERFICIAL LINES WITH COLLAGEN

Collagen injections add to the skin's natural collagen and are used on lines in the lip area, the nasolabial folds, and around the eyes. Marketed under the names CosmoDerm, CosmoPlast, Zyderm, and Zyplast, collagen is injected with a small needle, so there's not much bruising or swelling. "CosmoDerm is the best for filling very superficial lines," says dermatologist Fredric Brandt. The effects last three to six months, and the cost is about \$500 to \$600 per syringe. Evolence, a new collagen filler, is currently under FDA trials. Explains Wexler, "The particles are woven together more tightly than in other forms of collagen, so it appears sturdier."

ANOTHER OPTION IS HYALURONIC ACID

Juvéderm and Restylane, hyaluronic-acid fillers that bind to water in the skin to instantly plump wrinkles, continue to be popular fixes for lines around the mouth, eyes, and cheeks and last four to nine months. They can fill deeper lines than most collagen fillers can, though there's more swelling and inflammation with hyaluronic acid than with collagen. "It's an acid," says Wexler, "so never do it the day before a big event, as there's usually some redness and swelling." Both brands cost \$600 to \$1,000 per syringe.

THICKER FILLERS CAN CORRECT DEEPER LINES

Newer, more viscous hyaluronic-acid fillers like Juvéderm Ultra Plus and Perlane (a denser form of Restylane) have even greater wrinkle-smoothing and volumizing properties than ➤

The Ultimate Guide to Perfect Skin

Best Beauty

PICK A LASER FOR A TWO-IN-ONE PUNCH

Treat fine lines and sun damage with Affirm or Fraxel, fractionated lasers that work by making tiny injuries to the skin to trigger collagen production. They're perfect for people who want to improve skin texture and very fine lines rather than deep wrinkles. One session for either laser costs \$600 to \$1,000, can be painful, and leaves skin looking sunburned for 24 to 72 hours. Because Fraxel penetrates deeper, it results in more pain and downtime.

If needles make you nervous, consider smoothing lines with lasers and light therapies instead

their predecessors. They're used around the jawline to lift the neck area or at the cheekbones to fill hollows. Because the particle size is bigger, injections can be more painful, with more redness and swelling. "I always say it's the fill-er, not the filler," says Wexler, meaning it's more important who injects you than which injectable is used, so go to a doctor who has experience with thicker fillers. Cost is about \$600 to \$1,000 per syringe; results last six months to a year.

"Radiesse, a calcium-based thick filler, is great for deep laugh lines and lasts longer than hyaluronic-acid fillers," says New York dermatologist Bruce E. Katz. Cost is around \$800 to \$1,200.

GET LONGER-LASTING RESULTS

"One of the more exciting injectables I've been using is Sculptra," Wexler says. Sculptra, a form of lactic acid, stimulates production of the body's own collagen, replacing volume gradually, with results that can last two to three years. Unlike the fillers mentioned above, it is not a good option for someone who wants immediate results. It's commonly used to replace volume around the eyes, in the temples, and at the corners of the mouth. "I think of it as a trellis on which collagen can grow," explains Wexler. "And new collagen formation means that it makes your skin look younger rather than just filling up lines, which is something not many fillers do." If you're willing to wait a few months to see results but want a longer-lasting, more natural look, Sculptra is an ideal choice. Cost is \$800 to \$1,500.

LIFT Sagging Skin

"Face-lifts tighten skin but don't make you look young," notes Brandt. "What makes you look young is recontouring the face and replacing volume loss."

FIRM SKIN WITHOUT SURGERY

Thermage and Aluma are nonablative devices (which means they don't injure the skin like Fraxel or Affirm) that treat sagging. They heat the skin with radio-frequency energy to stimulate collagen and elastin. Aluma transfers heat only through deep layers, where it's most effective. "Because there's no damage to the outer layer, there's no pain or downtime," says Brandt. Not everyone is a fan of these technologies. "I don't use them because it's too hard to predict whether they will work," says dermatologist Marta Rendon. Aluma is \$1,000 to \$2,500 per session, while Thermage is \$1,500 to \$5,000, with the cost largely dependent on the area being treated. Neither requires downtime, though results are not immediate. One to three treatments are recommended for Thermage, four or five for Aluma.

RECONTOUR WITH THICK FILLERS

For hollowing and sagging around the eyes, cheeks, and mouth, Brandt uses thick fillers. "All injectable fillers help sagging to an extent, because they plump out loose skin," he says. Viscous fillers along the jawline combined with Botox in the neck will minimize jowls. ➤

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ONE PRODUCT, THREE BENEFITS.

RESURFACE

Gentle massaging regenerates surface cells, revealing younger-looking skin.

FILL IN LINES

Micro-spheres help fill in lines & wrinkles for a smoother look.

DECONGEST PUFFINES

Circular massaging motion helps remove excess under-eye fluids for a more contoured, less puffy look.

RESOLVE Discoloration

"Diffuse pigmentation is best treated topically with lightening creams and in-office peels," says Rendon. "Pigment-specific lasers work for distinct spots."

FADE PATCHY PIGMENTATION

Melasma is characterized by dark, irregular patches of discoloration. "It has a great memory and will come back again and again with sun exposure, even if you keep treating it," says Brandt. Bottom line: Don't waste money trying to get rid of it unless you're committed to staying out of the sun. Most derms recommend bleaching creams with hydroquinone, retinol, kojic acid, or arbutin. Tri-Luma, a prescription cream with hydroquinone and a retinoid, is effective on melasma. "But once you're on these creams, you have to stay on them for a long time," says Rendon. For light-skinned patients with resistant melasma, Rendon may combine Tri-Luma with in-office glycolic peels. The cost is about \$100 to \$200 per peel, and the skin may be flaky for a few days.

TREAT DISTINCT SPOTS

"If you have any kind of unusual spot, get it checked immediately by a dermatologist," says Katz. If you have just one spot, your doctor may be able to treat it topically with a prescription gel or freeze or scrape it off on the spot. If you have a number of distinct spots, pigment-specific lasers like the Q-switched ruby or Nd:YAG hone in on them, heating up the melanin and destroying it. "You will have a scab where the spot was, which usually takes a week or two to heal," says Brandt. Cost is \$250 to \$1,000 but is entirely dependent on the area being treated.

REDUCE REDNESS WITH LED LIGHT

The GentleWaves LED machine uses energy delivered through pulsating light-emitting diodes (LEDs) to stimulate cells so they multiply or produce collagen without pain or side effects. Wexler recommends two 45-second sessions per week for a month. "It immediately reduces redness and inflammation," she says. The cost is \$150 per session.

BANISH Blemishes

"We're seeing amazing results from the Isolaz laser," says Brandt. "Ziana is an effective at-home treatment, and I think Accutane can be a very good drug."

CLEAN PORES QUICKLY

Isolaz combines a painless laser to kill bacteria and a vacuum that extracts oil and dirt from pores. "With Isolaz, my patients actually leave the office looking better than when they came in," says Brandt. "And there is none of the pain, peeling, and light sensitivity that photodynamic therapy [another leading in-office treatment] causes." The cost is \$500 per session, and you'll need four or five 20-minute treatments spaced a month apart, with a touch-up every six months thereafter.

TRY PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

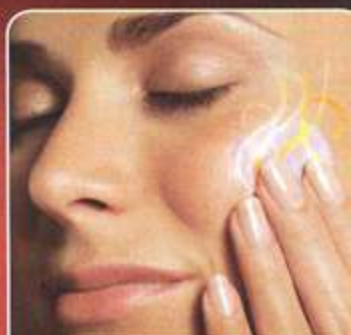
For severe cystic acne, Accutane is still the best at-home treatment. A course of Accutane pills, available only by prescription, takes about 20 weeks and works by minimizing oil production. Side effects include chapped lips and dry, flaking skin, and because Accutane causes birth defects, you must not get pregnant while on it. If your acne is not severe, it may be treatable with oral or topical antibiotics. Solodyn is an extended-release tetracycline pill that destroys acne-causing bacteria, and Ziana is a gel that contains both a retinoid and clindamycin. "The retinoid clears pores, while clindamycin kills bacteria," explains Brandt.

GET HORMONES UNDER CONTROL

If you suffer from adult acne and haven't gotten results with rigorous treatments, consider the role that hormones might play in your breakouts. "I have so many patients in their 30s and 40s who were plagued by persistent acne until they changed their birth-control pill," says Brandt. Excess hormones can contribute to skin problems but can often be controlled with birth-control pills or hormone therapy. Hair loss and facial-hair growth can be signs that hormones are out of whack. If you're concerned, see an endocrinologist. ➤

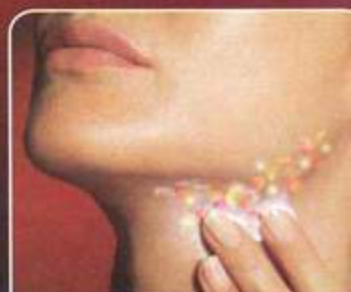
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Contour & Lift 101



The Contouring Thermal Treatment

1 Activate with water to gently warm while micro-definers help **recontour** skin's surface. Massage at forehead, working down the face and neck.



The Lifting Complex

2 Infuses moisture deep within skin's surface allowing the natural production of collagen, actually **strengthening** skin's structure. Apply at lower neck in an upward motion until reaching the forehead.



Love the skin you're in.™



New handheld devices, from left: Marvel-Mini (\$225), No!No! (\$250), and Zeno Pro (\$200)

"These devices are slow, and you have to treat small areas at a time, but they do work," says Katz.

ThermaClear (\$149.95) and Zeno Pro (\$185, both at sephora.com)

Use to: Fight acne
Both FDA cleared
ThermaClear and Zeno Pro work by using heat to kill bacteria. They are for mild blemishes and cannot be used on whiteheads. Both devices deliver a safe, controlled burst of heat to the skin through the

tip. ThermaClear takes only a few seconds to deliver the energy, while treatment with Zeno takes two and a half minutes. ThermaClear certainly beats out Zeno in terms of efficiency, but we found that the pulses are painful. Zeno, on the other hand, is pretty painless, but the treatment time of two and a half minutes seems epic. "I don't use or recommend these products," says Brandt. "They don't work like the lasers dermatologists use in-office."

Marvel-Mini (\$225, nordstrom.com)
Use to: Smooth wrinkles
Not FDA cleared

The idea behind Marvel-Mini is that certain wavelengths of light can stimulate cells to produce collagen, which then plumps out fine lines and strengthens skin. The company claims that its red-light device boosts blood flow, increases cellular activity, and relaxes facial muscles. Treatment is painless; just shine the red light onto the skin on your face and neck for 10 to 20 minutes once or twice a day for 30 days. The device is supposed to smooth wrinkles and improve the skin's texture and tone, but many derms doubt that handheld LED devices are worth the investment. "Save your money," says Brandt. "I'm a big believer in LEDs and I love the GentleWaves machine [an LED treatment available through dermatologists], but I don't think handheld devices do anything." ■

Do At-Home LASERS Work?

Before you go out and buy any device that uses light, there are some things you should check for. "First of all, find out if it is FDA cleared for the application you're using it for and if clinical studies were done that prove its effectiveness," says Rick Krupnick, CEO of Light BioScience, which makes LED devices for in-office use. Visit fda.gov for information. Second, make sure the product has been safety tested. "There are wavelengths of light that can be very damaging to the eyes," warns Krupnick. Look for a CE, ETL, or UL mark on the box and a pamphlet inside that contains safety information.

No!No! at-home hair remover (\$250, sephora.com)

Use to: Remove hair
FDA cleared

No!No! works by using gentle pulses of heat to dissolve hair follicles and is completely painless. It claims to safely reduce hair growth by up to about 65 percent—a significant but not quite staggering outcome—if used two or three times a week for eight weeks. To use No!No!, just plug it in and run it along your skin wherever you want to remove hair. You can use it on stubble or longer hair, but unlike with shaving, results are not instantaneous, and it gives off an odor of burning hair.

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you want.

Don't care for an eye lift?
Now there's **Regenerist Eye Serum**
for eyes that look beautifully
lifted and brightened.

Results not equal to medical procedures.