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Face Time

"People tend to stop using products when they don't see immediate results," says

Jennifer Linder, M.D., a clinical instructor of dermatology at the University of California, San Francisco. "But you need to be patient: You should see improvement in about two to three months."

The insider's Guide to healthy Skin

IN YOUR DREAMS, YOUR FACE IS SMOOTH, BLEMISHES DON'T EXIST, AND WRINKLES ARE JUST A FIGMENT OF THE FAR~FLUNG FUTURE. *And then you wake up? Not necessarily.* "GOOD SKIN ISN'T SIMPLY A MATTER OF GOOD GENES," says *Jonette Keri, M.D., assistant professor of dermatology at the University of Miami.* "Anyone can improve her complexion with the right routine." IT STARTS WITH SELECTING THE BEST CLEANSER FOR YOUR SKIN TYPE (*hint: it's probably not what your best friend uses*), FOLLOWED BY A TARGETED TREATMENT (BUT ONLY IF YOU NEED ONE), a great moisturizer~cum~sunscreen (everyone needs one), and, finally, an overnight preventive measure. ON THESE PAGES, TOP DERMATOLOGISTS SHARE TRUSTED ESSENTIALS TO HELP BUILD YOUR SKIN~CARE DREAM TEAM.

TEXT BY Elizabeth Graves PHOTOGRAPHS BY Christopher Baker



{ First, choose the right Cleanser }

(1)



(5)



For Combination Skin

If your face is pretty balanced, with a little oily or dry spell now and then, you have combination skin (which, by the way, is as close to "normal" as it gets). The trick is to wash with a soap-free cleanser that isn't too moisturizing or too drying, either once a day (at night, when most people's skin is dirtiest) or twice (if necessary). At the top of dermatologists' lists: (1) AQUANIL CLEANSER, \$13, drugstore.com, and CETAPHIL DAILY FACIAL CLEANSER, \$11, drugstores, because they simultaneously clean and nourish, and are less likely to irritate skin.

For Oily or Acne-Prone Skin

When your skin often shines shortly after you cleanse it, go with an oil-free wash that purifies pores but doesn't strip away all of the natural oils (which only encourages glands to produce more). Lisa Airan, M.D., a New York City dermatologist, likes to use (2) OLAY FOAMING FACE WASH, \$4, drugstores. If you get breakouts, experts suggest

a cleanser with salicylic acid, like (3) NEUTROGENA OIL-FREE ACNE WASH, \$5.50, drugstores, which sloughs off dead skin and unclogs pores. Pregnant women, however, should avoid salicylic acid as a conservative measure. Instead, opt for a product with alpha hydroxy acids, like lactic or glycolic. Try M.D. FORTÉ FACIAL CLEANSER III, \$27, skincarex.com.

(4)



(2)



For Sensitive Skin

A complexion that easily becomes red and angry could be the result of nature or nurture, so assess your regimen. "Using scrubs, sudsy bar soaps, and products with fragrances or lots of alpha hydroxy acids can induce skin sensitivity," Keri notes. Rebuild your routine with a mild cleanser with comforting ingredients. Her favorite: (4) AVEENO ULTRA-CALMING FOAMING CLEANSER, \$7, drugstores. It contains feverfew, an herb that tempers redness and irritation.

For Dry Skin

"Your epidermis has a balance of oil and water," explains Linder. "When that's thrown out of whack, skin gets dry and sheds off unevenly in flakes instead of light, indiscernible layers." To raise moisture levels, wash only at night to remove makeup and debris, and just rinse with water in the morning, Keri says. Look for highly emollient, creamy products, such as DOVE BEAUTY MOISTURE FOAMING FACIAL CLEANSER, \$5, drugstores, or cleansing oils, like (5) SHU UEMURA CLEANSING BEAUTY OIL PREMIUM A/O, \$72, shuuemura-usa.com, a rich wash that removes dirt and waterproof makeup and contains green tea to help protect skin.



{ Next, Treat as needed }

Clear Blemishes

Although oily skin is most susceptible, any type can get pimples. The best time to treat spots is after cleansing, but before applying moisturizer. Keri prefers benzoyl peroxide or salicylic-acid acne treatments to extinguish existing spots and keep away new ones. (Note: Benzoyl peroxide can bleach fabrics, so don't get it on clothes or towels.) Dab a light layer of (3) CLINIQUE ACNE SOLUTIONS CLEARING MOISTURIZER, \$16, clinique.com, over pimples or areas prone to breakouts. It contains benzoyl peroxide, along with a light hydrator to prevent drying and flaking. Tip: If you have sensitive skin, apply acne salves when skin is dry. This will hinder deep absorption and help prevent irritation.

Sop Up Shine

If your skin gets very oily during the day, blot away shine with a tissue instead of covering it with makeup. To curb that gleam ahead of time, apply (5) NEOSTRATA NEOCEUTICALS OIL CONTROL GEL, \$23, neostrata.com, to oil-prone areas after cleansing in the morning. It contains mandelic acid, an almond extract, to absorb oil, and alpha hydroxy acids to minimize the appearance of pores.

De-Puff Eyes

Are eye creams absolutely necessary? Absolutely not, Airan says. However, the skin around your eyes is four times thinner and has fewer oil glands than the rest of your face, so it shows darkness and fatigue first. If yours exhibits either of the above, apply (1) TEAMINE EYE COMPLEX, \$55, skinstore.com. "It's the number-one doctor-recommended eye cream," Keri says. The formula is packed with vitamin C and peptides to "help reduce dark circles, puffiness, and fine lines."

Address Sensitivity

In winter, when outside temperatures are low and indoor heaters are drying out the air, sensitive skin needs extra care and soothing. Amy Newburger, M.D., a dermatologist in Scarsdale, New York, suggests treating red or itchy areas right after cleansing with (2) ESTÉE LAUDER VÉRITÉ CALMING FLUID, \$60, esteelauder.com. It contains lipids and antioxidants to heal skin and repair its protective barrier, and it's free of common allergens, fragrances, dyes, alcohols, and emulsifiers.

Diminish Dark Spots

Discolorations can surface after years of sun exposure or result from hormone fluctuations caused by pregnancy or birth control pills. To improve your complexion's tone and clarity, smooth a vitamin C treatment on the darkened patch after washing. "Vitamin C, an antioxidant, inhibits the production of enzymes that cause the discoloration," Newburger explains. She prefers (4) AVON ANEW ALTERNATIVE CLEARLY C, 10% VITAMIN C SERUM, \$20, avon.com. Vitamin C also prevents wrinkles by promoting collagen formation. Follow up with moisturizer containing SPF to prevent future spots.

{ Then, Moisturize and protect }



For Sensitive Skin

It may seem like a tall—and tricky—order to prevent irritation while also moisturizing and protecting skin from the sun. But with the right lotion, it can be done. Keri and Linder suggest applying (1) EUCERIN REDNESS RELIEF DAILY PERFECTING LOTION SPF 15, \$15, drugstores. Its extra-gentle formula contains licochalcone, a licorice extract, to help soothe skin, and the oil-free fluid's faint green tint color-corrects red blotches instantly.



For Oily Skin

Experts recommend using an oil-free moisturizer that has SPF every day. Lisa Donofrio, M.D., associate clinical professor at Yale School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut, suggests this approach: Apply (2) NEUTROGENA ULTRA SHEER DRY-TOUCH SPF 55, \$10, drugstores, and then a sweep of mineral-based powder, like BARE ESSENTIALS BARE MINERALS SPF 15 FOUNDATION, \$25, bareessentials.com. "I love this combination," she says. "The moisturizer contains Helioplex, which provides solid protection from UVA rays, and the mineral makeup prevents shine and deflects light."

For Dry Skin

A rich day cream will help reintroduce some moisture. Linder advises reading product labels to look for the most effective hydrating ingredients. They include glycerin, hyaluronic acid (also listed as sodium hyaluronate), urea, honey, vitamin E, rosehip seed oil, borage oil, and lactic acid. Sun protection is also key, as

even winter rays can dry skin (not to mention cause skin cancer and premature aging). Try (3) DOVE DEEP MOISTURE DAY CREAM SPF 15, \$7.50, drugstores. Its thick formula contains glycerin and linoleic acid, an emollient omega-3 fatty acid. Apply it right after cleansing or showering, while your skin is still damp, to seal in the water.

For Combination Skin

Fairly harmonious skin (not too dry or too oily) calls for a daily moisturizer that's equally well-balanced (not too light or too heavy). And yes, it also needs to include sun protection. Like many skin experts, Newburger chooses moisturizers formulated with Helioplex (found in Neutrogena and Aveeno products) or Mexoryl (found in L'Oréal goods) because these ingredients prevent sunscreens from breaking down during the day. An all-around favorite: (4) LA ROCHE-POSAY ANTHELIOS SX DAILY MOISTURIZING CREAM WITH SPF 15, \$29, anthelios.com. It has Mexoryl and a level of SPF sufficient for daily use, and it feels nice on the skin and layers well under makeup.

Skin Damage

If your skin tone is starting to look dull or uneven (or your conscience is ticking off all those summers spent baking in the sun), apply a proven antioxidant treatment each night to fend off free-radical damage, even out tone, and improve texture. Two antioxidants that have "impressive science behind them," according to David

J. Goldberg, M.D., director of Skin Laser & Surgery Specialists in New York and New Jersey, include idobenone, which is found in (1) PREVAGE ANTI-AGING NIGHT CREAM, \$125, elizabetharden.com, and coffeeberry (from, you guessed it, the coffee plant), which is used in (4) REVALÉSKIN NIGHT CREAM, \$99, dermstore.com.

Finally, at night, Prevent

Dryness

According to the experts, your skin experiences "transepidermal water loss" while you sleep. In other words, it gets dry. If you're already on the parched side of the moisture spectrum, bedtime is a smart occasion to apply a rich serum, such as (2) LIZ EARLE SUPERSKIN CONCENTRATE, \$68, lizearle.com. This yellow elixir contains many natural moisturizers like vitamin E and rosehip seed oil. It also has lavender and chamomile oils to calm skin (and maybe even help relax you).

Future Breakouts

After treating pimples during the day with a lighter—and invisible—product that layers well under makeup, treat them again at night. Keri suggests dabbing (5) MARIO BADESCU DRYING LOTION, \$17, mariobadesco.com, onto visible blemishes and those

you feel coming to the surface. Use a cotton swab to apply. The pale pink formula is preferred by many experts because it contains sulfur to reduce inflammation and redness, as well as salicylic acid to exfoliate skin and deep-clean pores.

Fine Lines

There are three keys to keeping skin smooth for the long haul: Sun protection is necessary each and every day, as are antioxidants, which help prevent free-radical damage. At night, a retinol treatment will help smooth lines. Retinol, a pure form of vitamin A, continues to be the "gold standard for generating skin cell turnover," says Newburger. So why isn't everyone using it? "It can be irritating and often leaves skin red and sensitive, so people give up," notes Goldberg. The solution: When first using retinol cream, apply a pea-size amount every third night so that your skin can adjust. Then work up to using it every other night. Newburger recommends (3) EAU THERMALE AVÈNE RÉTRINAL 0.1 CRÈME, \$55, dermstore.com. "This formula contains retinaldehyde, a form of retinol that's just as potent, yet less irritating." If you are pregnant, she suggests forgoing retinol altogether and using vitamin C treatments instead.

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