

Aging & Your Skin

1. What ingredients in anti-aging creams are the most effective?

The ingredients that I believe to be the most effect are retinoids, alpha hydroxyl acids, anti-oxidants and peptides. Here's why:

- **Retinoids** (over the counter Retinol as well as prescription Retin-A): While it was initially used to get rid of acne, blackheads and dead cell buildup in pores, retinol has proven to have incredibly effective anti-aging properties. It has shown to speed cell turnover to smooth wrinkles, fade sunspots, and build collagen.
- **Alpha Hydroxy Acids:** Alpha hydroxy acids work as powerful exfoliants, allowing the dead skin cells to slough off and make room for regrowth of new skin. AHAs have shown to stimulate the production of collagen and elastin and have proven to be very effective in diminishing the appearance of wrinkling, roughness, and hyperpigmentation.
- **Antioxidants:** Antioxidants, such as lycopene, beta-carotene and Vitamin-C, eliminate damaging free radicals responsible for most of what we perceive as skin aging including fine lines, pigment changes and textural irregularity.
- **Peptides:** Peptides, which are the building blocks of proteins, have become an essential ingredient in skincare and are very powerful in the treatment of premature aging. There are many types of peptides, but for skin care, there are specific peptides that are used widely. The most popular are **collagen stimulating peptides, copper peptides**, which are also shown to reduce inflammation and **neuropeptides**, which can help to relax facial muscles, therefore reducing the appearance of wrinkles.

2. What will the impact of the modern world have on the aging of our skin?

Yes, modern living impacts aging indefinitely. Cultural Stress, a form of stress I founded based on years of research and the observation of thousands of my patients, is the constant and pervasive stress of everyday life that has become a normal part of our technologically savvy society. The aging of our otherwise youthful skin flourishes under the feeling that we must complete everything for everyone now. Combined with the bolstering of our devices with email, texts and constant phone calls, it's a recipe for stressed, aging skin. I always recommend my patients to take a breath, relax and always remember the most important person in your life is you!

3. What is actually happening to the skin as we age?

The skin acts as a barometer of the overall health and wellness of the entire body and as the body progresses through the aging process, changes inevitably occur. The sudden reduction of hormones seen in women in their 60s who are experiencing menopause will cause their skin to look and feel quite different, due in some part to poor circulation and blood flow to the complexion which in turn, causes a dull, lacklustre appearance. These changes show themselves on the skin in the form of fine lines and wrinkles and drier-than-normal skin that is often married with a sallow and dull appearance.

The skin has also likely become thinner and pigmentation disorders may have also begun to form, resulting in slightly yellowed or brown areas of the skin that are often known as age spots or sun spots. These symptoms may also be coupled with the formation of jowls around the face or larger nasal labia lines around the mouth area.

These changes also vary heavily on the treatment of the skin over a person's lifetime. If they have exposed their skin to the damaging effects of the sun or haven't been diligent about moisturizing heavily, their skin will likely show other signs of aging. However, if they have taken proper measures to ensure their complexion is hydrated by eating a proper diet full of water-rich foods or have applied their SPF as they should have, their skin may actually appear youthful and radiant as they have aged. It is all relative to the care a person has taken over their lifetime.

4. Can you advise on treatment of the skin for women in their sixties and beyond, including the types of products they should be using?

Women who are experiencing hormonal changes in the later stages of their lives should be using a regimen that is targeted to address their menopausal symptoms. I strongly believe in targeted skincare solutions, as everyone's skin is different; one woman may have a need to absolve hyperpigmentation where another woman is concerned about the lacking brightness of her skin's tone. As I had mentioned before, it will all vary depending on which concerns are most prominent.

Generally, however, women in this age range need treatment for their hormonally aging skin. In this case, I recommend a night cream that works while they sleep and while their pores and skin are relaxed in order to fully absorb high-performance ingredients. I recommend Murad's Age-Balancing Night Cream, which contains essential fatty acids and Starflower oils to provide and lock in intense hydration against dry, dull skin while Shea Butter encourages cell turnover to improve skin texture. Age-Balancing Night Cream is a part of Murad's Resurgence line, the first comprehensive line of products developed specifically to address the signs of hormonal aging. Resurgence formulas contain breakthrough technology that delivers essential fatty acids and plant-derived phytoestrogens to help replenish essential hormones that diminish with age.

If age spots, sun spots or sun-damaged skin is the main concern, I recommend vitamin C-focused products to fade spots and neutralize free radicals responsible for rough, dull texture. Murad's Environmental Shield product line will help restore, renew and protect your skin against sun damage and everyday environmental aggressors. Infused with pure Vitamin C and powerful antioxidants, Environmental Shield helps reduce the appearance of deep wrinkles, lightens skin discoloration and improves skin texture and tone.

5. Which ingredients are key to aid in the fight against aging?

I recommend ingredients that will help renew skin and remove dead skin cells like Alpha Hydroxy Acids or retinoids. Once applied, retinol helps the skin produce more robust, structural components, provides antioxidant support, and optimizes the differentiation of cells in the various layers of the epidermis, boosting skin firmness, evenness and reducing wrinkles. Our Time Release Retinol Concentrate for Deep Wrinkles utilizes Encapsulated Retinol which helps reduce sensitivity and irritation often associated with Retinol.

Look for products that contain Alpha Hydroxy Acids (AHAs) too, they are considered a strong exfoliator and have been shown to stimulate collagen and elastin production to prevent fine lines and wrinkles, rough texture and even hyperpigmentation. Try our AHA/BHA Exfoliating Cleanser; it contains a trio of renewing exfoliators, Alpha Hydroxy and Beta Hydroxy for a glowing complexion.

Phytoestrogens are also a key ingredient in the defense against visible aging. A substance derived from plants that mimic the properties of estrogen, phytoestrogens are attracted to receptor sites that are usually meant for estrogen. In terms of the skin's complexion, where there is a drop in estrogen flow, the phytoestrogens come in and act as an estrogen substitute, resulting in a radiant, firm and plump appearance. I recommend using our Resurgence line which is formulated with phytoestrogens to fight against the visible signs of hormonal aging.

Additionally, I recommend looking for products rich in antioxidants, although I also recommend incorporating antioxidants as a part of a well-balanced diet. Topically, antioxidants help to prevent premature aging and defend skin from daily free radicals like sun damage, smog and pollution. Internally, antioxidants found in raw fruits and veggies benefit health by reducing the incidence of varied degrees of sunburn, as well as prevent a number of degenerative diseases like cardiovascular disease, cataracts, cancer and even some studies have showed a correlation between antioxidants and the reduction of Alzheimer's in some patients. Pretty amazing!

6. Why is targeted care important?

Everybody is unique; what affects you will not necessarily affect me. Specific circumstances lead to specific problems and thus need specific, targeted treatments.

For example, many people believed for a long time that Retin-A was the cure-all ingredient and could be recommended to everyone regardless of their skin's condition. While Retin-A is certainly effective and is a great option for many skin problems, it is not for everyone. Often touted as the solution to hyperpigmentation and acne scarring, Retin-A can actually *exacerbate* the appearance of these marks because it often causes photo-sensitivity which can, in turn, make scarring and sun spots even worse.

7. Can clients prevent further damage to the skin at this stage ready for the next?

Yes, absolutely. I believe that Youth Building is the key to reversing the aging process; there are ways to turn back the hands of time and while topical products can certainly do a lot, they just can't do everything. They can make you look better, but in order to actually *feel* and *act* younger you have to take a comprehensive approach.

My philosophy of Inclusive Health says that in order for skin to be truly beautiful, it must be healthy. As I had mentioned before, the skin acts as a transparent window into the health of the body. Inclusive Health is made up of three facets of wellness, Looking Better through the use of high-performance, topical ingredients; Living Better through a diet full of water-rich foods, omegas, antioxidants and amino acids to fuel the body for peak performance and appearance; and Feeling Better through proper stress management, emotional care and a focus of the self. These three building blocks to overall wellness will improve your appearance, and more importantly, improve the way you feel.

