

Skin Care 101

Proactive Tips for Healthy Skin at Every Age

Written by Shetye Cypher

The needs of your skin change at every stage of your life and your skin care routine should be adapted to your specific needs. Knowing what skin care solutions are appropriate for you can help keep your complexion glowing and in great condition throughout your life.



To guard your skin from the sun's damaging rays, wear sunscreen as part of your daily skin care regimen

Protect and Prevent in Your 20s

This is the time when most people begin a skin care program and become more aware of the benefits of long-term care. People in their 20s should definitely wear an SPF moisturizer, and developing good habits early on can delay signs of aging later on. “Common skin problems affecting this age group include oily skin, acne, and the onset of photo-damaged skin from childhood sun exposure,” says dermatologist Dr. Kelly Duncan of Advanced Dermatology in Katy. “Daily skin protection with a lightweight, oil-free sunscreen can prevent additional damage without clogging pores. Additionally, research shows that applying topical antioxidants such as vitamin C or coffeeberry extract enhances photo protection, stimulates collagen production, and neutralizes free radicals generated by sun exposure.”

Acne products with glycolic or salicylic acid, as well as retinol, not only help treat and prevent acne, but also have significant anti-aging and collagen-stimulating benefits, according to Duncan. She also feels that getting a facial peel every few months is an excellent way to maintain youthful, acne-free skin in your 20s.

Andrea Walker, 28 of Katy, has her own proven system for taking care of her skin. “Healthy skin is important to me, because it keeps me looking young and vibrant,” she says. “To ensure healthy skin, I moisturize regularly. That for me is one of the most important things anyone can do for their skin. I also do not ever go to bed with makeup on my face. To avoid the occasional breakout, I use products that contain benzoyl peroxide and salicylic acid. Also, hydration is key to healthy skin. I drink about a gallon of water daily and eat a large variety of vitamin-rich fresh fruits and vegetables.”

Moisturize and Exfoliate in Your 30s

Cell turnover starts to slow down in your 30s, so you might find that your skin looks a little dull. Help to combat this with regular exfoliation to get rid of dead skin cells. “The most common skin problems in this age group include enlarged pores, reddened skin, and the first signs of aging - fine lines, rough skin texture, and brown spots,” says Duncan. “In addition to daily sunblock and antioxidant use, topical retinoids can combat many of these issues and even reverse sun damage.”



For glowing skin at any age, be sure to eat a vitamin-rich diet and drink plenty of water

Generally, in your mid-30s fine expression lines begin to appear around the eyes, the mouth, and on the forehead. Your regular skin care program may have to be adjusted as skin becomes less elastic and slightly drier. "In your 30s is a good time to begin using a potent moisturizer in your daily PM skin care regimen to trap moisture in the skin while you sleep," says Duncan.

A disciplined approach works well for Katyite Sophia Buddenhagen, 35, who uses specific products targeted at her skin's needs. "I wash my face every morning and night, always moisturize, and use sunscreen," she says. "If I have breakouts, I [put] tea tree oil straight onto problem areas. Once a week or as needed, I cleanse with Mary Kay TimeWise Microdermabrasion Step 1, and I always wear No-Ad sunscreen on my face when I'm at the beach or out in the sun."

Refresh and Renew in Your 40s

Your 40s tend to be the years when your skin really starts to show signs of aging, like wrinkles and age spots, so more care must be taken. "In addition to skin photo-aging, common complaints in this age group include loss of facial volume around the mouth, eyes, and cheeks, which can make eyes look sunken and tired, and the corners of the mouth sag or turn downward," says Duncan. "Dark circles under the eyes become more prominent, and crow's feet can become deeper and more 'etched' into the skin."

According to Duncan, Botox Cosmetic and other professionally administered facial volume fillers such as Restylane, Radiesse, and Sculptra can address problems without the necessity of surgery. Laser treatments aimed at resurfacing the skin, such as the Fraxel laser, are an excellent way to encourage smoothing of deeper lines on the face and neck, in addition to encouraging skin tightening.

10 Steps to Beautiful Skin

- 1 **STAY HYDRATED** – Drink at least eight glasses of water a day.
- 2 **WEAR SUNSCREEN** – Don't leave the house without it. After all, this is Texas!
- 3 **KEEP IT CLEAN** – A mild cleanser made for your skin type is ideal.
- 4 **MOISTURIZE FREQUENTLY** – Morning and evening moisture therapy can help dramatically
- 5 **EAT RIGHT AND TAKE VITAMINS** – A balanced diet with vitamin supplements can help beautify skin.
- 6 **SLEEP WELL** – Get a full night's rest to prevent bags and tired skin.
- 7 **GET FACIALS** – Professional aestheticians can give your skin a deep cleaning and work on problem areas.
- 8 **DON'T NEGLECT THE NECK** – The neck is the base of your face and needs cleansing and moisturizing too.
- 9 **TRAIN YOUR FACE** – Avoid extreme frowns or grimacing. Over time, these will deepen and stay.
- 10 **SEE A DERMATOLOGIST** – There are many laser treatments and cosmetic procedures you can do to improve your skin.

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Dr. Vossoughi has been trained in hand surgery by Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, TX. She specializes in hand and upper extremity as well as micro vascular surgery and finger attachment.

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It's also important to protect your skin from the sun, keeping an eye on unusual developments and spots. "Skin cancer becomes more common in this age group, necessitating regular self-skin examinations, as well as annual checkups with a board certified dermatologist for a skin cancer screening," says Duncan.

Target and Treat in Your Better Years

In the years after your 40s, cell turnover significantly slows down, so it is important to get rid of dull, dead skin cells to keep your skin looking as vibrant as possible. As you age and once women hit menopause, oil production slows down, so you may need a richer, more emollient moisturizer. "I'm 61 and people don't usually think I'm that old," says Bronwyn Rack of Katy. "It is important to me to keep my skin fresh and young-looking, because your skin is what wraps your body, like a package. What good is a healthy body if your face looks scary?"

Both collagen and elastin in your skin are attacked by sun-generated free radicals, but antioxidants can help to minimize the damage. A moisturizer that contains collagen and elastin, as well as a broad spectrum sunscreen can help restore skin, and if you have taken good care of your skin, signs of aging should be less obvious. Rack also offers a few of her tried-and-true skin care tips. "First and foremost, I get a lot of sleep – eight to 10 hours a night," she says. "I also use two pillows to keep the swelling down in the bags under my eyes. I always wear sunscreen under or built-in to my moisturizer, [and I] wear dark sunglasses and a hat when out in the sun. I like to use a primer under my makeup. Photo-finish, non-oily primer by Smashbox is the best. It fills in the lines, so the foundation doesn't settle in. I also use Erase Paste by Benefit as an under-eye concealer. Before bed, I just use an Olay micro-moisturizer on my face and Aquaphor jelly on my lips and under my eyes."

Changes in lifestyle, medications, and the body's biological changes can also cause dramatic changes in the skin during this period. Skin is considered maturing and should be treated with special care. "Prevention and treatment of skin cancer are priority in this age group," says Duncan. "Daily sunblock use, hats, and even sun-protective clothing aid in prevention, while regular visits to a board certified dermatologist for early detection and treatment can literally be life-saving."

By taking care of yourself and your skin throughout your life, you can keep your complexion glowing and healthy. **KM**

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