

How To Keep Skin Looking Young And Beautiful

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The Value of Youthful-Looking Skin

People usually do not start worrying about aging until the first visible signs of aging show up on their skin. Like it or not, our society puts prime importance on youthful looks. Our sense of physical attractiveness is very much linked with our having young-looking, healthy and beautiful skin.

Although we cannot stop the years from adding up, we do have the means of slowing down the aging of our skin. By controlling different lifestyle factors and taking advantage of recent scientific discoveries on nurturing the skin, we can minimize or prevent the appearance of wrinkles, sagging skin, crow's feet and lines until well into our later years.

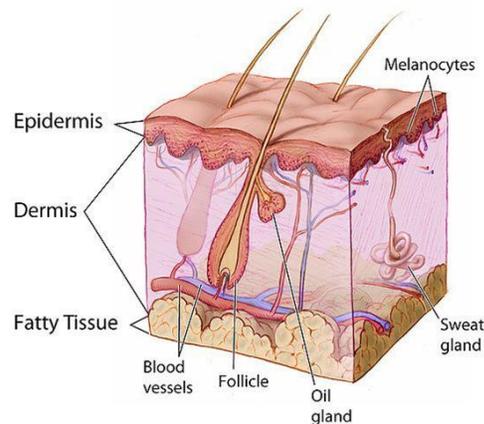
Anatomy of the Skin

The skin is the body's largest organ. An average adult has about 18 square feet of skin, which weighs around 6 pounds. It is composed of three layers: the epidermis, dermis and hypodermis. The epidermis is the outer layer and contains the protein keratin which strengthens our skin and makes it water-proof. The epidermis also contains melanin, the dark pigment which gives skin its color. The

other cells of the epidermis allow us to feel the sensation of touch, and protect us from foreign invaders like germs and bacteria.¹

The second layer of the skin is called the dermis. It contains collagen, elastic tissues and reticular fibers. It also contains many specialized cells such as hair follicles, sebaceous or oil glands, apocrine or scent glands, and eccrine or sweat glands. Blood vessels and nerves course through this layer. Different nerve cells transmit the sensation of pain, itch, temperature, as well as touch and pressure.²

The third layer is the hypodermis, also known as the subcutaneous tissue. It is largely made up of fat and connective tissues, and houses the larger blood vessels and nerves. This layer has a major role in the regulation of the temperature of the skin itself, as well as the body.



¹ <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/anatomyvideos/000029.htm>

² <http://dermatology.about.com/cs/skinanatomy/a/anatomy.htm>

Skin Changes Due to Aging

As we age, our epidermis thins, even though the number of cell layers in this outer layer of the skin remains the same. Our melanocytes, the pigment-containing cells, decrease in number. However, the remaining melanocytes increase in size. Because of these changes, aging skin appears thinner and more translucent. Large pigmented spots called age spots or liver spots begin to appear in areas of the skin that are frequently exposed to sunlight.

Sun-exposed areas, likewise, undergo solar elastosis, referring to changes in connective tissue that reduces the skin's strength and elasticity. Elastosis produces the leathery and weather-beaten appearance common to farmers, sailors, and other people who spend a large amount of time outdoors.

In addition, aging increases the fragility of the blood vessels in the dermis which causes bruising, senile purpura or bleeding under the skin, cherry angiomas, and other conditions.³

³ <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/004014.htm>

Skin Aging in Men and Women

A 2006 research conducted in Germany revealed that skin aging is more evident in women than in men of similar age. It was most marked in women who had been through menopause. Researchers attributed the acceleration in skin aging in women to declines in the sex hormones estrogen and progesterone after menopause.⁴

The decrease in women's sex hormones after menopause alters the rate of repair and synthesis of collagen, the structural protein in the dermis. Low estrogen levels affect the fibroblasts in the dermis. The fibroblasts are responsible for the production of collagen. Loss of estrogen leads to decreased amounts of fibroblasts which, in turn, leads to decreased collagen production and hydration of the skin.⁵ This consequently results to skin dryness, shrinking, and fine wrinkles.⁶

Men experience a gradual and steady thinning of skin every year of about 1 percent. Women's skin remains more or less constant until menopause, when it thins drastically. This thinning of skin is attributed to the decrease in collagen content in the dermis as one ages. Women have less collagen content to start with than men do.

⁴ <http://www.webmd.com/skin-beauty/news/20061004/womens-skin-may-age-faster>

⁵ http://www.ehow.com/about_5372263_aging-skin.html

⁶ <http://www.everydayhealth.com/womens-health/stopping-signs-of-aging-skin.aspx>

This maybe one reason why women may look older than men of the same age.⁷

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors of Aging

The different factors that cause aging can be loosely categorized as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic aging is called chronological aging,⁸ also referred to as the natural aging process. This refers to the slowing down of the production of collagen and elastin proteins in the dermis layer. Visible signs of intrinsic aging include fine wrinkles, thin and transparent skin, hollowed cheeks and eye sockets due to loss of underlying fat, sagging skin due to bone loss and shrinking away of bones from the skin, and dry skin.

Extrinsic factors, on the other hand, combine with the normal aging process to prematurely age the skin. Extrinsic factors include sun exposure, smoking, and sleeping positions.⁹

Between intrinsic and extrinsic factors, the ones that are readily controllable are the extrinsic factors. We will be discussing these different factors and how we can minimize their effects so as to keep our skin looking young and beautiful for as long as possible.

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ http://www.ehow.com/about_5372263_aging-skin.html

⁹ <http://www.skincarephysicians.com/agingskinnet/basicfacts.html>

Premature Skin Aging Due to Sun Exposure

When ultraviolet rays (UVR) from the sun hit our skin, specialized skin cells on the epidermis called melanocytes try to block the rays from penetrating the skin by producing melanin. Melanin production on our skin is the process that gives us a tan.¹⁰ Melanin transforms UV light particles into harmless amounts of heat without generating free radicals.¹¹ It acts as an umbrella over our skin cells and protects the DNA in our cells from being damaged by the sun's UVR. DNA damage in our skin cells is a matter to be taken seriously as it has been significantly correlated to the incidence of skin cancer.¹²

There are two types of UVR: the shorter rays, termed UVB, are the ones directly responsible for sunburn. The UVA rays, on the other hand, are mainly the ones that cause skin damage linked to photoaging. The UVA's longer rays are able to penetrate deep into the dermis where the skin's collagen and elastin fibers are located. These fibers are the elements that give skin its youthful smoothness and resilience.¹³

The main function of collagen in the body is to protect tissues from stretching. It is the principal structural protein that holds the skin together. The other skin protein, elastin, is a protein found in all

¹⁰ <http://www.skincancer.org/what-is-photoaging.html>

¹¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunburn#Cause>

¹² <http://www.sunburn-magazine.com/melanin.html>

¹³ <http://www.skincancer.org/what-is-photoaging.html>

elastic connective tissue. It is responsible for the tissue's ability to resume its original shape after being stretched.¹⁴

UVA rays damage the skin's collagen fibers and lead to increased production of abnormal elastin. This in turn lead to the production of enzymes called metalloproteinases, which have been implicated in the degradation and destruction of collagen.¹⁵ The breakdown of the structural integrity of collagen leads to the skin's loss of its elasticity and strength, and results in sagging skin and wrinkles.¹⁶

Aside from wrinkles and fine lines, UVR can also cause age spots. Sometimes, melanin becomes clumped or is produced in high concentrations on areas that have been exposed to sun frequently and for a long time. Aging, even without excess sunlight exposure, may also cause excessive production of melanin.¹⁷

Preventing Photoaging: Sunscreens vs. Sunblocks

Sunscreens make use of a combination of organic and inorganic chemicals so that less sunlight penetrates the skin. The portion of the sunlight that is filtered out is the UVR. The following organic molecules absorb UVR and release it as harmless heat:

¹⁴ http://www.smartskinicare.com/skinbiology/skinbiology_elastin.html

¹⁵ <http://www.biomedsearch.com/nih/Matrix-metalloproteinases-collagen-catabolism/12228918.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.livestrong.com/article/150630-what-are-the-causes-of-collagen-degradation/>

¹⁷ <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/age-spots/DS00912/DSECTION=causes>

- PABA (para-aminobenzoic acid) absorbs UVB
- Cinnamates absorb UVB
- Benzophenones absorb UVA
- Anthranilates absorb UVA and UVB
- Ecamsules absorb UVA

Sunblocks, on the other hand, reflect or scatter light so that it does not reach the skin at all. The reflective particles in sunblocks usually consist of zinc oxide or titanium oxide. Modern types of sunblocks make use of tiny oxide particles that are invisible when applied to the skin, as compared to older varieties that visibly show up as white on the skin. Sunscreens usually include sunblocks as part of their ingredients.¹⁸

Unprotected skin has an inherent SPF, Sun Protection Factor, that depends on the amount of melanin on the skin. Fair-skinned people are likely to absorb more solar energy than dark-skinned people under the same conditions. Thus, the normal SPF of fair-skinned people would be much lower than that of dark-skinned people. The SPF in sunscreens and sunblocks is a factor that is multiplied to the unprotected skin's SPF and serves as a measure of the amount of solar exposure required to produce sunburn in a particular person.¹⁹

¹⁸ <http://chemistry.about.com/od/howthingsworkfaqs/f/sunscreen.htm>

¹⁹ <http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/CentersOffices/CDER/ucm106351.htm>

For example, if it takes unprotected skin 15 minutes before it gets burned, then with a sunscreen of SPF 10, we would be protected for a much longer time of 150 minutes.

The calculation of the amount of protection from sunscreens should not, however, be generalized to multiplying its SPF level to the amount of time of sun exposure. Solar intensity varies at different times of the day. An hour's exposure at 9:00 A.M. may have a total solar energy exposure equal to just 10 minutes at 1:00 P.M. Our SPF measurement should, therefore, be adjusted depending on the time of day that we are exposed to the sun.²⁰

Since the calculation of SPF is based on the amount of solar energy it takes a person to get sunburned, it will only measure protection from UVB rays, the specific type of UVR that causes sunburn. SPF does not provide any indication of protection against UVA, which is the radiation directly linked to skin cancer and premature skin aging. The labels of most sun protection products will, however, indicate if they are effective against a broad spectrum of radiation. This would give us an indication on whether we are being protected from both UVA and UVB.²¹

²⁰ <http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/CentersOffices/CDER/ucm106351.htm>

²¹ <http://chemistry.about.com/od/howthingsworkfaqs/f/sunscreen.htm>

Additional Sun-Protection Tips

Sun exposure does not solely happen when we are outdoors. We must keep in mind that UVA can penetrate glass. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to add UV-protective film to the side and rear windows of our cars, as well as the windows of our houses and workplaces. This type of film blocks up to 99.9% of UVR and lets in up to 80% of visible light.

Likewise, our outdoor clothing have varying degrees of UPF, or ultraviolet protection factor. The UPF is an indication of how much UVR can penetrate a fabric. For example, a shirt with a UPF of 30 means that only 1/30th of the sun's UVR can reach the skin. There are laundry additives that can be washed into regular fabrics to increase their UPF. In general, bright- or dark-colored lustrous clothes reflect more UVR than do pastels and bleached cottons. Tightly woven, loose-fitting clothes provide more of a barrier between our skin and the sun. In addition, broad-brimmed hats and UV-blocking sunglasses protect the sensitive skin on our head, neck, and around the eyes from sun damage.

Just in case we need to be outdoors between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M., let us remember to seek the shade.²²

²² <http://www.skincancer.org/understanding-uva-and-uvb.html>

Cigarette Smoke and Skin Health

The nicotine in cigarettes causes the blood vessels in the epidermis to narrow. This hinders blood flow to the skin. As a result, our skin will not get sufficient oxygen and important nutrients.²³ Cigarette smoke produces free radicals in the body of the person exposed to the smoke. The free radicals cause disease and damage to cell DNA.²⁴

Many of the over 4,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke damage the collagen and elastin fibers in the dermis. Cigarette smoke increases the production of collagenase which breaks down the supply of collagen to the skin.²⁵ Since the collagen and elastin fibers are the ones that give our skin its strength and elasticity, damaging them through smoking will cause the skin to sag and wrinkle prematurely.²⁶

Smoking also reduces the body's store of Vitamin A, which gives protection from skin damage. In addition, smoking hinders the absorption of vitamin C, an important anti-oxidant for the protection of the skin and over-all health.²⁷

Smoking has also been linked to wrinkling not only on the face, but on other parts of the body such as the inner arms, neck, and

²³ <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/smoking/AN00644>

²⁴ <http://www.simplyantiaging.com/820/smoking-and-skin-aging/>

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/smoking/AN00644>

²⁷ <http://www.simplyantiaging.com/820/smoking-and-skin-aging/>

decollete. Also, the repeated exposure to heat from burning cigarettes, the facial expressions we make when smoking, such as pursing our lips and squinting our eyes to keep out smoke, contribute to the formation of wrinkles.

Smoking does not just affect the skin and health of the smokers themselves. Though it may sound unfair, it is true that passive smokers also sustain damage to their skin and health. Whether we smoke, or just breathe in other people's smoke, in the long run, our skin will suffer the same symptoms of smoker's face, namely, gray, pale and wrinkled skin.²⁸

The effects of smoking on the skin are not immediately apparent. It takes about ten to twenty years after we start to smoke for some of the damage to become visible. Just because we don't see the damage now, does not mean it won't appear later.

Quitting smoking will not reverse skin damage. We will, however, keep the damage from getting worse. Also, if we consciously follow a good diet, take skin supplements and proper anti-aging skin care, we can look forward to a better-looking skin in the future, than what we would have if we continue to smoke.²⁹

²⁸ <http://www.simplyantiaging.com/820/smoking-and-skin-aging/>

²⁹ *ibid.*

Benefits of Exercise on Skin

The benefits of exercise on cardiovascular health has been well-documented. However, what has not been given much attention is the value of regular exercise in keeping skin healthy.³⁰

Cardiovascular exercise benefits all organs of the body by increasing blood flow. The skin, being the largest organ of the body, benefits from exercise as well. Blood serves as the medium for transporting nutrients to every cell of the body. It is also responsible for removing toxins and other cellular waste. Increased blood flow, therefore, makes the blood more efficient in performing its functions, including the delivery of oxygen to skin cells. Oxygen can help stop the formation of pimples and prevent skin from drying up.³¹

There are, however, instances when exercise can have a negative effect on skin. Chronic acne and inflammatory skin conditions, such as rosacea and miliaria, are exacerbated by exercise. The increased blood flow during exercise makes the redness associated with the inflammation much worse. The toxin removal process and increased oil production within the pores aggravates acne.³²

³⁰ <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/acne/acne-care-11/exercise>

³¹ <http://www.livestrong.com/article/151506-the-effects-of-exercise-on-skin/>

³² *ibid.*

For outdoor exercisers, keep in mind the dangers of the sun's UVR on the skin. Choose schedules that would limit sun exposure. Likewise, use UVR-protective clothing and water-resistant sunscreens.³³

Effect of Sleep on Skin

Sleep is important to our skin's well-being. It is during sleep that our body gets the chance to repair cells, including skin cells. Sleep deprivation lowers the amount of growth hormones in the body, and these hormones are the ones particularly needed in the cellular repair process.

It is also during sleep that the rate of production of new skin cells in the body is doubled. If cell regeneration drops because of lack of sleep, then our skin will tend to become more wrinkled and lose its tone over time.³⁴ Furthermore, sleep enhances the skin's capacity to hold water, keeping it moisturized and supple.³⁵

However, it does not necessarily follow that we should spend more hours in bed to improve our skin's appearance. Our sleep positions have a way of getting crease marks into our face, especially if we have the habit of sleeping on our side or face downwards. When we were younger, this did not pose a problem as our skin easily snapped

³³ <http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=79461>

³⁴ <http://www.healthylivinganswers.com/skin-care/how-sleep-affects-your-skin.html>

³⁵ <http://www.sharecare.com/question/how-sleep-affect-skin-aging>

back into place. With age, however, the skin loses much of its elastin fibers and it takes longer for the crease marks to disappear. If we continue to sleep in the same position every night, these marks can become permanent. To prevent this from happening, we can try sleeping on our back or get softer pillows with satin pillow slips to reduce the marks.³⁶

Anti-Aging Diet

The intrinsic changes that occur in our bodies as we age make up what we commonly call the natural aging process. We become more susceptible to the long-term effects of cellular inflammation and oxidative stress, a condition where the body basically has too many free radicals. Free radicals are unstable by-products of metabolism that react very quickly with nearby stable compounds to capture the electrons they need to regain molecular stability. The attacked molecule becomes a free radical itself and triggers a chain reaction leading to further damage in the body's cells.³⁷ The theory is that antioxidants, as well as anti-inflammatory compounds, help cells ward off damage from free radicals and minimize the impact of aging. Antioxidants are naturally-occurring nutrients that act as free radical scavengers.³⁸ To slow down aging at the cellular level, we

³⁶ <http://www.healthylivinganswers.com/skin-care/how-sleep-affects-your-skin.html>

³⁷ <http://www.healthchecksyste.ms.com/antioxid.htm>

³⁸ <http://www.knowabouthealth.com/top-20-antioxidant-richest-food-usda/>

must choose foods that are anti-inflammatory and rich in antioxidants.³⁹

If we have been unmindful of our diet in the past, now's the time to swap empty calorie dishes loaded with unhealthy fats with nutrient-dense, anti-oxidant rich alternatives.⁴⁰ The following anti-oxidant rich foods will provide us the nutrients we need to keep our skin looking young and beautiful naturally.

- Beans: Red, Black, Pinto, Kidney. Sample meals include beans and rice, beans in a burrito, split pea soup, and peanut butter sandwich. (Peanuts are classified as legumes.) Aside from antioxidants, beans are also rich sources of protein, B vitamins, potassium, and fiber.⁴¹
- Vegetables: Artichoke hearts, spinach, eggplant, asparagus, red cabbage, yellow onions, broccoli, tomatoes, carrots, lettuce. In some vegetables, cooking actually enhances the vegetable's anti-oxidant content. This is especially true in red cabbage, yellow onions, and broccoli.^{42 43}
- Berries: Cranberries, Blueberries, Raspberries, and Blackberries. Aside from antioxidants, berries are also rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals.
- Nuts: Pecans, Walnuts, Hazelnuts.

³⁹ <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/guide/anti-aging-diet>

⁴⁰ <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/diet/about-anti-aging-diet>

⁴¹ <http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=56120>

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ <http://www.testcountry.org/top-5-anti-oxidant-foods-that-can-benefit-your-health.htm>

- Spices: Ground cloves, Cinnamon, Oregano, Garlic
- Tea: Green Tea, White Tea⁴⁴

Anti-inflammatory foods and anti-aging foods are similar because the process of aging can be inflammatory. Many neurodegenerative diseases include inflammatory processes. Foods that cause inflammation include saturated fats, refined sugars and starches. Foods that have anti-inflammatory effects are the following:⁴⁵

- Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Salmon, Tuna, Mackerel
- Turmeric: commonly found in curry powder
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Shitake Mushroom and Kelp
- Papaya
- Antioxidant rich foods that are also anti-inflammatory: Green Tea, Blueberry, Broccoli, Walnut.⁴⁶

The Importance of Drinking Water

Another intrinsic factor to aging is cellular hydration. Hydration is essential to younger looking skin, and drinking water is vital to that process. The skin, just like all the other parts, are made up of cells, which are almost entirely made up of water. Loss of hydration on

⁴⁴ <http://www.testcountry.org/top-5-anti-oxidant-foods-that-can-benefit-your-health.htm>

⁴⁵ <http://www.livestrong.com/article/374138-anti-inflammatory-anti-aging-foods/>

⁴⁶ <http://theconsciouslife.com/top-10-anti-inflammatory-foods.htm>

the skin results in dryness, tightness and flakiness. Dry skin has less resilience and is more prone to wrinkling. Aside from maintaining skin moisture, water is also the medium for delivering nutrients to the skin. The body loses a large amount of water every day. It is of course necessary to replace it.⁴⁷

Some tips for keeping ourselves hydrated include:

- Drinking water throughout the day at regular intervals
- Eating fresh fruits and vegetables, which add a lot of water to our diet aside from a host of nutrients
- Drinking milk and fruit juice as additional source of water
- Taking essential fatty acids and glucosamine to hold moisture in cells
- Using a good daily moisturizer⁴⁸

The amount of water we should take depends on varied factors such as our age, where we live, and the amount and intensity of exercise that we perform. However, in general, it is recommended that we take around 8 to 9 cups of water each day.⁴⁹

While it is good to drink lots of water, it is advisable to limit drinking excessive amounts of water within 2 hours of going to bed to avoid morning puffiness that promotes facial sag.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ <http://www.simplyantiaging.com/56/drinking-water-skin-benefits/>

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ <http://www.livestrong.com/article/320933-drinking-water-skin-wrinkles/>

⁵⁰ <http://www.simplyantiaging.com/56/drinking-water-skin-benefits/>

Anti-Aging Products and Treatment

In addition to sun protection, sufficient exercise and sleep, enough water, and a nutritious diet, there are a multitude of topically applied products that are commercially available that promise to help us regain the vitality and youthfulness of our skin. To determine which of these products really work, we need to consider what active ingredients they contain. Here is a list of topical ingredients that have been found to retard the signs of aging on skin:

- Vitamins C and E – Long-term use of these two vitamins have been found to reduce photodamage, wrinkles, and improve skin texture. Furthermore, these antioxidant vitamins have been found to protect against DNA damage on the skin's collagen and elastin fibers caused by free radicals, the harmful byproducts of sunlight, smoke, and pollution. Topical vitamin C, in its L-ascorbic acid form encourages collagen production. This is the only form of vitamin C that can penetrate skin layers and actually do the job.⁵¹ Vitamin E can be found in foods such as vegetable oils, nuts, seeds, olives, asparagus, and spinach. Some people take it in supplement form. As an oral supplement, we must limit daily ingestion to 400 international units or less as some researches point to potential harm in taking large doses of vitamin E. In topical

⁵¹ <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/features/skin-nutrition>

applications, that is, in cream, lotion, or serum form, they have been proven to soothe dry, rough skin.

- Vitamin A - Topical vitamin A in creams has been shown to reduce lines and wrinkles, control acne and relieve psoriasis. Vitamin A in retinol form, combined with vitamin C, has been demonstrated to reverse skin alterations due to chronological aging and photoaging.
- Vitamin B Complex – The most important B vitamin for the skin is biotin. This nutrient is essential for the skin, nail, and hair cells. Biotin deficiency causes dermatitis. It is, however, present in a lot of foods, such that it is easy to get sufficient amounts from a regular diet. Topically applied niacin, another B vitamin, has been found to help skin retain moisture, making the complexion look plumper and younger. Niacin has anti-inflammatory properties that soothe dry, irritated skin. It can also be used as a lightening agent to even out a blotchy skin tone.⁵²
- Vitamin K – This vitamin is commonly known for its role in blood coagulation. In eye creams, Vitamin K has been found to be effective in reducing dark under-eye circles.⁵³
- Selenium – In topical form, helps protect skin from sun damage.

⁵² <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/features/skin-nutrition?page=3>

⁵³

<http://dermatologytimes.modernmedicine.com/dermatologytimes/article/articleDetail.jsp?id=317587&sk=&date=%0A%09%09%09&pageID=2>

- Copper peptides - In topical form, stimulate the production of collagen and enhance the action of antioxidants. They also enhance wound healing.
- Hydroxy acids - Alpha, beta, and poly hydroxy acids act as exfoliants that remove the upper layer of dead skin, and stimulate the growth of smooth, evenly pigmented skin. It is necessary, however, to wear sunscreen when using these acids as they can increase our susceptibility to sun damage.
- Coenzyme Q10 – Topical applications have been shown to reduce fine wrinkles around the eyes and protect against sun damage.
- Tea extracts – Green, black, and oolong tea contain compounds that have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. These are used as ingredients in wrinkle creams.⁵⁴
- Alpha lipoic acid – This powerful antioxidant is said to be a hundred times more potent than vitamins C and E. It neutralizes skin cell damage caused by free radicals and is available as a food supplement or in creams.
- Dimethylaminoethanol (DMAE) - Another powerful antioxidant that deactivates the power of free radicals to harm skin cells. It also stabilizes the cellular membranes to reduce damage from the sun and cigarette smoke.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/wrinkle-creams/SN00010>

⁵⁵ <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/features/skin-nutrition?page=5>

There are some topical skin care products that include collagen and elastin among their ingredients. However, the molecules of these substances are too large and don't penetrate the skin, so they just get wiped off at the end of the day.⁵⁶

When preventive measures are too late, or if you are interested in getting fast results to regaining a youthful look, you might want to try cosmetic dermatology services.

- Botox Cosmetic – Botulinum toxin type A, an FDA-approved treatment for moderate-to-severe frown lines between the eyebrows.⁵⁷ Strategic placement of Botox by a skilled dermatologist can also gently lift the lower third of the face. By inducing a temporary weakening of the treated muscles, the skin becomes more relaxed and facial wrinkles and lines are erased.⁵⁸ The wrinkle preventing effect lasts from 3-4 months.⁵⁹
- Facial Fillers – A variety of materials are used as injectable facial fillers. They last for different lengths of time and have different effects and uses. Commonly used fillers include ArteFill, Belotero, Collagen, Fat Fillers, Juvederm, Perlane, Radiesse, Restylane, and Sculptra. ArteFill has a permanent

⁵⁶ <http://www.articlesbase.com/womens-health-articles/preventing-aging-skin-the-number-1-concern-of-women-over-40-665127.html#axzz1PD68OtRU>

⁵⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botulinum_toxin#Cosmetic

⁵⁸ <http://www.nydermatologygroup.com/cosmetic-dermatology/botox-cosmetic>

⁵⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botulinum_toxin#Cosmetic

- effect, while the others last from 3-9 months. Radiesse and Sculptra can last up to two years.⁶⁰
- Chemical Peel and Microdermabrasion – These are procedures that aim to exfoliate and rejuvenate the skin. In chemical peel, the dermatologist chooses a chemical peeling agent depending on the patient’s skin type to remove superficial dead cells on the skin.⁶¹ Microdermabrasion is a mechanical skin-care technique that uses tiny rough grains to buff away the surface layer of the skin.⁶²
 - Laser Toning – This technique uses various types of laser and light energy to stimulate the production of collagen. A series of treatments tightens the skin, reduces fine wrinkles and small scars, and brings back a youthful glow to the face.⁶³
 - GentleWaves – This technique uses low-intensity light-emitting diodes (LEDs) to stimulate production of collagen and elastin. It suppresses collagenase, the enzyme that breaks down collagen and accelerates aging.⁶⁴

Summary

Our skin is a reflection of the inner condition of our health. If we choose to live a healthy lifestyle, we will reap the benefits of a beautiful and youthful looking skin even through our later years!

⁶⁰ <http://www.yourplasticsurgeryguide.com/injectables-and-fillers/>

⁶¹ <http://www.chemicalpeel.org/microdermabrasion.aspx>

⁶² <http://health.howstuffworks.com/skin-care/beauty/skin-treatments/microdermabrasion.htm>

⁶³ <http://www.moreyouthful.com/laser-toning-of-the-skin/>

⁶⁴ <http://skintreatment.com/Cosmetic-Procedures/GentleWaves>