

The Skinny on Skincare

Interview by Lauren Douglass

We all know the basics of skincare: slather on the sunscreen, drink plenty of water and please, avoid the tanning bed! But what about those not-so-obvious healthy skin habits? Here to answer our questions about wrinkles, stretch marks and acne is Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank, Cosmetic Dermatologist and founder of 5th Avenue Dermatology Surgery and Laser Center.



What's one simple thing woman can add to their daily routine to take better care of their skin?

It's important to stay hydrated and get your rest! Use sunscreen or a tinted moisturizer that contains SPF. Even during winter, you should use moisturizer with sunscreen, though you can switch to a thicker cream because skin is very susceptible to drying out during the winter.

What causes wrinkles? How can women prevent them?

Wrinkles typically result from age, genetic predisposition and most importantly, sun damage. Also, collagen and fat production in the face decrease as we age, resulting in sagging and wrinkled skin.

Once you have wrinkles, are they there for life or can you reverse them?

Lasers are a popular treatment to resurface wrinkles on the face. Currently, the state of the art technology is called fractional skin resurfacing. The Fraxel Restore and Fraxel Repair lasers are the gold standard for wrinkle resurfacing as far as safety and efficacy.

Belotero is another wrinkle treatment. It's a hyaluronic acid filler and is the only fine line filler on the market. Belotero rehydrates your skin and integrates with your dermal tissue to provide evenness and enhance facial contours, which gives you natural looking results. It's administered by dermatologists to treat fine lines around areas such as the eyes and mouth, cheekbones, lips, the back of hands, bridge of the nose and frown lines. Typically, results last anywhere from six to 12 months, though some patients experience results that last for over a year.

Does a women's skincare need to change as she ages?

Mature skin may need additional moisture, both day and night, especially when it's cold. Mature skin doesn't necessarily mean dry skin, though. Use anti-aging products and products that help with hyperpigmentation like retinols or creams containing AHAs. These products encourage cell turnover and leave the skin smooth and exfoliated.

What's the biggest mistake you see women make in regards to their skin's health?

Don't moisturize unless you need to. Someone with oily skin doesn't need to moisturize.

What's the number one threat to women's skin?

A big threat is actually constant traveling. It can really cause skin to freak out. Flying takes a toll on skin due to the recycled oxygen in planes and the altitude, both of which dehydrate skin. Skin is also damaged by the the drastic changes in weather and climate when you travel from one destination to the next. It sends it into shock.

What can we do to keep our skin healthy while traveling?

It's important to stay hydrated. A one liter bottle of water is enough to drink during a flight, but get a head start and begin hydrating the night before. Depending on where you're traveling, you should tweak your skincare routine. If you're heading somewhere cold and windy, for example, refrain from exfoliating for a few days prior to your trip and use a heavier moisturizer.

What about stretch marks? Any tips on preventing or reducing those?

Topicals like Retin A will play a role if there is brown in the stretch mark because it helps lighten the discoloration. When stretch marks are red and relatively new, the VBeam pulsed-dye laser can remove the redness, improve the texture and stop the scar's progression in its tracks. More recently, Fraxel Restore has been shown to effectively improve white or brown stretch marks without risk to the skin. In only four or five treatments, 85 percent improvement can be seen.

How does diet affect the health of your skin?

Foods that cause inflammation such as dairy, sugar and carbohydrates are the most damaging to the skin. If you're acne prone, minimize dairy, sugars and simple carbohydrates. Replace these foods with more proteins and vegetables that are rich in color. A diet that has a lot of dairy in it is 'pro inflammatory,' meaning that it can exacerbate any condition, like acne, that involves tissue inflammation. Fish and fish oil is very beneficial for healthy glowing skin. A diet rich in healthy fats such as almonds, avocado and fish will have a big impact on the overall health of your skin, too.