

Best Skincare Regimen for Your 20s, 30s, 40s, and Beyond

Kelli Acciaro • Sep 4, 2017

Mastering the perfect [skincare](#) routine for your complexion is a tall order. Add the specific needs that come along with your changing lifestyle, hormones, or the expected signs of aging and things can get a bit tricky. We consulted the best derms in the biz for their tips and recommendations for what beauty products and regimens you should consider in each major decade of your life. Whether you're in your twenties, thirties, forties, or fifties, we've eliminated the guesswork so you can get back to your life — with better skin, naturally.

In Your Twenties

During those roaring twenties, most women have outgrown pesky acne issues. Since having a clear, radiant complexion is [skincare #goals](#), focus on products and practices that will ensure that covetable glow. "The biggest predictor of how our skin will age is our lifestyle, says board certified dermatologist Estee Williams of [MADFES Aesthetic](#). "Make sure to wear sunscreen year-round, avoid cigarette smoking, and keep a healthy diet. If you're still battling acne, consider seeing a dermatologist for prescription medication that modulates hormone levels."

Your Morning-to-Evening Plan:

DAY: In the morning, use a gentle cleanser like [Neutrogena Ultra Gentle Daily Cleanser](#) (\$8) or [Cetaphil Daily Facial Cleanser](#) (\$6), followed by a moisturizer with sunscreen like [EltaMD Facial](#) (\$33). "Even if you plan to wear a BB or CC cream, it's always better to have more than one layer of sun protection," adds Williams. "No one ever OD'ed on sunscreen!"

NIGHT: This is the time to establish a healthy skin routine — like removing makeup thoroughly before washing your face and going to bed. If you have a normal-to-oily complexion, use a face wash containing alpha- or beta-hydroxy acids such as [Jan Marini Bioglycolic Face Cleanser](#) (\$35) or [Epionce Lytic Gel Cleanser](#) (\$36). "I don't recommend those acid cleansers for the morning for two reasons: If your skin is too dry, it lacks radiance, and sebum (oil) helps delay aging by absorbing free radicals," warns Williams. "Look for treatments that gently exfoliate and clarify the skin, without much downtime, that are popular for women of this age." These include mechanical microdermabrasion, micro needling, and light chemical peels. Consider services with a blend of acids and retinol (e.g. Theraplex beta Lyft Peel, SkinCeuticals Micropeel 30, Skinmedica Vitalize Peel) as you dip your toe into the world of medispas, or opt for both with combos like a HydraFacial.

In Your Thirties

“Once you enter your 30s, your estrogen levels start to decline slightly, making you more prone to classic hormonal acne,” says [Dr. Rachel Nazarian](#) of Schweiger Dermatology. “A second focus in this decade is anti-aging and repair.”

Your Morning-to-Evening Plan:

DAY: For flare ups that occur around your period and result in a slew of pimples near your jawline and neck, try products from [BioClarity](#). “This line is soothing to sensitive skin, and works to minimize breakouts, thanks to a combination of classic acne medication with calming ingredients such as green tea, chamomile, and oat kernel,” advises Nazarian. “Of course, sunscreen should never take a backseat — keep it part of the regimen for life.”

NIGHT: “Women in their thirties should start using a retinol cream nightly to help stimulate collagen production, which will combat the skin aging process that can cause fine lines and slight sagging to occur,” adds Nazarian. “Retinols can be found in many over-the-counter products, like [Neutrogena Ageless Intensives Deep Wrinkle Night Moisturizer \(\\$21\)](#).”

In Your Forties

“In your forties estrogen levels start to drop and without this potent youth hormone, skin begins to look more dehydrated and loses its elasticity,” says Williams. “Prepare to up your moisturizer game and look for products with dimethicone, ceramides, vitamin C, and retinol. You should also increase your intake of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids in the form of wild salmon and roasted soy nuts.”

Your Morning-to-Evening Plan:

DAY: If you are battling sun damage caused by a decade on the beach, look into the [Lumenis M22](#) photo-facial treatment that works every three months to keep sun damage at bay. A yearly resurfacing laser session (e.g. ResurFX or Fraxel) is also a smart preventative measure if you are starting to face unwanted dull skin. “Anyone with early jowling (sagging in the lower face) who needs maximal tightening, should look into treatments that combine micro-needling with radio-frequency like [Intensif](#) because results are phenomenal,” adds Williams.

NIGHT: A word to the wise — avoid over-using acids and retinols, which are found in many anti-aging products. “If you overuse them, your skin will dehydrate faster and lose luster,” warns Williams. [Senté Dermal Repair \(\\$95\)](#) is another fitting choice for twice daily use — it contains heparin sulfate, which aids in repairing sun damage and skin aging.

IN YOUR Fifties

Loose sagging skin and wrinkles are usually top of mind when you're in this stage, so Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank, Founder of the [PFRANKMD Skin Salon](#), recommends avoiding trying new products and sticking with what works. "At this point the skin starts to become lax, so there really aren't any products that work for skin tightening — treatments are the most effective."

Your Morning-to-Evening Plan:

DAY: Try non-invasive skin tightening or Dr. Frank's signature Ultratight, which will re-define the jawline and strengthen the skin. Using a novel internal ultrasonic device, this machine is able to decrease deep pockets of fat and simultaneously clench superficial skin that has lost its elasticity. Keep in mind that you should avoid products with AHA's. Mature skin is thinner and can become irritated from products with acids.

NIGHT: Choose cleansers such as [Dove Sensitive Skin Beauty Bar](#) (\$8) to prevent over-drying at this point in life and to maintain a healthy skin barrier. You can also use serums that boost collagen, like [SkinCeuticals CE Ferulic](#) (\$165).

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