

Forbes

ForbesWoman Guide To Great Skin At Every Age

By MEGHAN CASSERLY



No matter her age, when most women look in a mirror, what she usually notices are her imperfections. Even Jennifer Aniston, who has long been thought to have hit the genetic jackpot in terms of glowing, seemingly ageless skin, has recently been shown to have been [airbrushed to within an inch of her life](#). A retoucher for Madison Magazine rid her face of uneven pigmentation, smoking lines and crows feet.

If the 41 year-old Aniston, has skin imperfections, she's done a great job of managing her skin as it routinely looks glowing on red carpets and late night interview shows. Her secret? Neutrogena Soap. "I've washed with the same soap I've used since I was a teenager," she told People Magazine. To be fair, the

celebrity's regimen isn't as proletarian as simply a \$2.79 bar of soap; Aniston's moisturizer of choice, Dr. Hauschka is \$40/bottle while her and eye cream SK-II runs \$110 per half ounce.

In Pictures: Best-Bet Skincare Products For Every Age

But what about the rest of us mere mortals? At 27, I'm plagued by a different set of skin issues than the 41-year-old Aniston, my thirty-something ForbesWoman editors, and my mother who has just weathered her first year of menopause (congrats, Mom!). With friends whose skincare regimens run from obsessive use of the Clarisonic exfoliator (ow) to one who swears by washing her face only every third day (ew), I turn to the experts for advice on the best skin care regimes for different age groups.

TWENTIES

The Dilemma

At this age, according to Stacy Cox, who's covered beauty and skincare for "The Doctors" and Style's "What I Hate About Me", women deal with "unpredictable complexions: acne one minute, dry skin the next. Twenty-something skin is as hard to pin down as their lifestyles," she says. The 20s are the decade when everything in a woman's life is done to extreme: long hours at work, too much sun, late nights out, too many workouts (or none at all), too much alcohol and "social" smoking. "Your complexion is 'herky-jerky, and is always trying to double back and pick up the slack," says Cox. At the same time, adds [Dr. Paul Friedman](#), author of the new book [Beautiful Skin Revealed](#), our bodies stop producing ceramides, the molecules that surround and nourish our skin cells, and this results in dryer, flakier skin than we saw in our teens.

The Solution

To battle dry skin that can come as a result of the "hard-living" 20s, skincare experts from Johnson & Johnson recommend a routine that hydrates skin without clogging pores (which can

send your skin careening to the opposite end of the moisture spectrum). The bottom line for 20-something skincare is balance. Balance the fine line between dry, flaky skin and oily, clogged pores.

To that end, Dr. Ariel Ostad says to look for non-comedogenic skincare products. “Invest in a reliable SPF 15 or higher moisturizer and use it every day,” says Cox, “Don’t go to sleep with makeup on, drink lots of water and get eight hours of rest nightly!”

Both Ostad and **Dr. Friedman** recommend adding a topical exfoliant to your skincare routine in your twenties to buff away flaky skin to keep your skin looking fresh. Look for glycolic and alpha hydroxy acids to even skin tone. Lastly, as your body stops producing elastin, the protein that keeps skin smooth and wrinkle-resistant, at 21, introducing an eye-cream now can fend off crows feet until their inevitable appearance the following decade.



THIRTIES **The Dilemma**

When you enter your 30s, collagen and elastic fibers begin to break down in your face. Sam Tucker, associate director in research and development at Johnson & Johnson says that women in their 30s are usually experiencing the first signs of aging. As a result, fine lines and wrinkles become more and more apparent. “These are usually very minimal and tend to be noticed first around the eyes,” says **Dr. Friedman**. “The inevitable forces of gravity are subtly emerging,” agrees Cox. “Worry lines on our faces are the subtle indications that we’re not in Kansas anymore.”

The Solution

The arrival of worry lines and crow’s feet are when many 30-somethings start entertaining the idea of injectables such as Juvederm CL or Botox but **Dr. Friedman** says it’s not too late to repair skin before resorting to cosmetic surgery.

“Vitamin C is an antioxidant that is important for collagen production,” says Dr. Ostad. A vitamin C-based product will both protect and brighten the skin. Look for the ingredient on labels like Reti-C from Vichy and the Obagi-C skincare system. To stave off the urge to go under the needle, Ostad and Friedman recommend products with retinoids. Researchers at Johnson & Johnson are convinced that retinol is the single most effective non-prescription anti-aging treatment. It increases cellular renewal and reduces fine lines and wrinkles while leaving skin with an overall youthful appearance. Look for antioxidant-rich products to diminish signs of aging as well as products high in retinols and retinoids like the Retinol Correction moisturizers from ROC and Peter Thomas Roth.

Cox also recommends a peptide- and glycerin-rich primer to stave off wrinkles. Glycerin is a humectant that attracts moisture to the skin while peptides promote collagen production. “I like Covergirl Olay’s Simply Ageless Serum Primer, which gets a boost of peptides and glycerin from the Olay Regenerist line. It’s a work-horse—a multitasker that firms and moisturizes simultaneously.” For those of us who aren’t makeup lovers, Cox says this product is great both prior to putting on makeup and on its own.



FORTIES

The Dilemma

Our experts agree that the biggest concern among women as they enter their 40s are dark spots, which can cause skin to look uneven. “Chasing after your kids in your 20s and 30s and the overexposure to the sun’s rays has caught up with you, and now age spots and freckles are dotting your face, neck and the backs of your hands,” says Cox.

Additionally, your skin begins to lose volume in your forties, and some wrinkles and lines can start to appear deeper and more permanent.

The Solution

Treatment for sunspots can include skin bleaching products (look for hydroquinone, which is found in many lightening and clarifying products) and, retinoids. However, at this stage of life, **Dr. Friedman** says prescription-strength products might be the ticket, so talk to your dermatologist about the extent of sun damage.

To stop future sun damage, keep slathering on the sunscreen. “Protection of the skin becomes more important [in the 40s] because the skin is more fragile and dry with age and sun exposure,” says Ostad.

“For the most part, deep wrinkles will not be dramatically affected by topical moisturizers, serums or creams,” says **Friedman**. As a result, some women will look for more permanent treatment options. “Injectable fillers and Botox treatments will help to improve these changes,” says Cox, adding that she and **Friedman** note there are other options include chemical peels and laser resurfacing.

MENOPAUSE

The Dilemma

“After a woman goes through menopause, natural hormonal changes can have a profound effect on the skin,” says **Friedman** who adds that studies have shown that the lowered estrogen levels that come with menopause can lead to excessively dry skin. “Menopause drives your hormones out of balance, and makes your body work overtime trying to normalize and stabilize everything from your body’s temperature to oil production,” adds Cox.

Many women will also notice that once firm skin is now sagging, a result of facial fat pads shifting under the skin. “Wrinkles tend to set in as permanent fixtures, which can cause make-up to crack and cake,” says **Friedman**.

The Solution

“Dryness is better combated with creams rather than lotions [at this age] to retain the moisture throughout the day, says Ostad. Cox recommends a cream to calm the inflammatory stress that can accompany dry skin during the hormonal years of menopause and beyond. She recommends La Roche Posay Redermic products. “After four hours women noticed a 30% improvement in hydration and after four weeks a 30% reductions in crow’s feet,” she explains.

To address the effects of the “shifting facial fat pads” that **Dr. Friedman** warned us about, European skincare giant Vichy has introduced a cream that they say can both densify and resculpt the face. According to research, the company’s Neovadiol Gf cream has been formulated “specifically to address the needs of women experiencing the effects of the hormonal slowdown of menopause.