

gorgeous skin in your 20s 30s 40s

■ OUR DECADE-BY-DECADE GUIDE TO A LUMINOUS COMPLEXION

what's happening now

IN YOUR 40S... Collagen and elastin are diminishing, causing skin to sag. Expressive areas like the eyes and mouth no longer bounce back, showing wrinkles; age spots become more prominent. With the onset of perimenopause, decreasing levels of estrogen cause moisture loss. "Drier skin is vulnerable to irritation, so expect increased sensitivity," says Soren White, M.D, a dermatologist at SkinKlinic in New York City.

Skincare Rx:

• build up thin skin

The fatty layer under the dermis thins as we get older, and collagen production slows down. Skin needs extra stimulation to maintain a youthful appearance. "That's why we advocate regular facials and procedures such as microdermabrasion," says New York City cosmetic surgeon Robert Guida, M.D. (www.drguida.com) The increase in circulation not only helps grow healthier new cells, it temporarily plumps skin and imparts a rosy glow." Products that contain collagen stimulators such as omega-3 fatty acids, copper and chai hu extract may also give skin a boost. TO TRY: Shiseido Future Solution, \$220, and Neutrogena Visibly Firm Face Lotion, \$19.

• don't let your face fall

Fight gravity with a new skincare ingredient that's been proven in clinical studies to reduce sagging. The compound di-methylmea, or DMAE, mimics a nutrient found in our bodies that aids firming but naturally diminishes with age. "It penetrates the surface of the skin, visibly restoring suppleness," says Kelly Huang, M.D.,

principal scientist for RoC Skincare. TO TRY: N.V. Perricone, M.D. Cosmeceuticals Amine Complex Face Lift, \$85, and RoC Protient Lift Night Firming Cream, \$19.99.

• pamper sensitive skin

The products that used to perform well may be too aggressive now. Steer clear of harsh cleansers, including those containing antibacterial agents, warns Dr. Brandt. "They strip the epidermis, which can make skin even more sensitive." Use makeup removers and moisturizers that contain soothing botanicals like chamomile or lavender. TO TRY: Beverly Sassoon VitaOrganic Eye Cream, \$45; Avalon Botanicals Organic Moisture Plus Lotion With SPF 18, \$11.95.

• target age spots

Dark patches on the face, as well as the chest and hands, are a result of years of sun exposure. Products containing hydroquinone or glycolic acid work gradually over many months but won't have much effect on darker spots. TO TRY: DHC White Lotion, \$29; Trish McEvoy Glycolic Lotion, \$38. While chemical peels can also work over time, Dr. Guida says the most effective method is an ablative laser treatment that targets the top layer of skin to "burn" off spots (however, this procedure requires recuperation time).

• don't neglect your body

"Women usually focus on their face, but the neck, chest and hands often show age sooner," says Dr. Grossman. Those thinner-skinned areas are usually sensitive, so treat them gently. If you're using a retinol product, start by applying it every other- or even every third-day. Use your facial products on the neck and chest, but look for richer formulas for hands, which need

extra emollients. TO TRY: Eucerin Daily Replenishing Lotion, \$6.99; Vaseline Intensive Care Healthy Hand Essentials, \$3.25.

