FLARE

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Health

skin**tight**

YOU START AGING THE DAY YOU'RE BORN. *DIANE PETERS* TRACKS DOWN THE LATEST WAYS TO PUT LOOKING OLD ON HOLD

CREAMS

Starting from day 1, launch your antiwrinkle action plan with one key product: moisturizer. "Eighty percent of your aging comes from the sun," says Dr. Karen O'Neill, a Mississauga, Ont., dermatologist. Even small amounts of UV radiation damage collagen. Make the moisturizer action plan with one key product: moisturizer. "Eighty percent of your aging comes from the sun," says Dr. Karen O'Neill, a Mississauga, Ont., dermatologist. Even small amounts of UV radiation damage collagen. Make the moisturizer structural protein in the skin and cause accumulation of abnormal elastin (the protein that causes tissue to stretch). Choose a product with a sun-protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 that blocks UVA, UVB and infrared rays. Try Clarins Sun Block Stick Ultra-Protection SPF 30 or Vichy Capital Soleil Sunblock Lotion SPF 60.

Starting in your 30s, up the antiaging ante with creams that contain retinol, a derivative of vitamin A. Retinol exfoliates the skin, stimulates pores and fades age spots. Pair retinol with other exfoliants: alpha- and beta-hydroxy acids, vitamins B5 and B3 and antioxidants (vitamin C, grapeseed, green tea, seaweed and ►►

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Health

VITAMINS

Kill free radicals before they damage your skin with antioxidant vitamins and minerals, suggests Ilsa Ali, a naturopathic doctor who does research and development for Boiron Herbal Remedies. "Antioxidants neutralize free radicals, which are naturally occurring byproducts of metabolism that damage cells and are thought to play a significant role in the aging process," he explains. Caution: If you're pregnant, consult your doctor first.

Starting in your 20s, take vitamin C (1,000-3,000 mg/day), vitamin A or beta-carotene (10,000 IU/day), vitamin E (400 IU/day, since 25 mg/day) and selenium (75 mcg/day).

Starting in your 30s, bump up the ante to 25-50 mg/day and the beta-carotene to 100 mg/day.

Starting in your 40s, include soy since to 50-70 mg/day.

INJECTIONS

Starting in your 30s, soften lines around your eyes and mouth with Restylane (from Q-Med). A new hyaluronic-acid injection made by Q-Med that lasts 4-6 months (Hylaform, which is a naturally occurring substance in the skin that gives way to volume.) You'll need a local or topical anesthetic and you will have bruising for two days, but the results are instant. "It's a great option, with little downtime," says Dr. Sheedal Sachs, a dermatologist at the Institute of Cosmetic & Laser Surgery in Cupcake, Ont. (Cost: $250-$500, depending on how many lines you're replacing.

Starting in your 40s, try Perlane, another new hyaluronic-acid-based product from Q-Med that smoothes deep lines, folds and creases. (Cost: $300-$700 per treatment.)

Deeper lines, such as those from chin to lips (laugh lines and wrinkle bands in your neck) respond well to Botox, a therapeutic agent derived from the botulism bacterium. When Botox is injected into a muscle that is causing wrinkling, the overlying skin will temporarily flatten out, resulting in a more youthful look, explains Dr. Nowell Solish, a Toronto-based dermatologic surgeon. Because Botox weakens or stops muscle movement, it may help to prevent the formation of deeper lines or diminish existing ones. Botox injections may leave you with drooping for a day or two. (Cost: $300 and up, which is made up of tiny microinjections, is placed in a collagen solution. Once injected, it takes about three months for the body's collagen to permanently anchor the spheres in place. You'll be bruised for a couple of days. (Cost: $700-$5,000.)

Another option to plump up lips, cheeks, forehead and chin are micro-fat injections. "Using a needle, we remove fat from your knee or thigh," explains Dr. Trevor Born of the Toronto Institute of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. You'll be bruised for a week and slightly puffy for another week. (Cost: approximately $2,500.)

CHEMICAL PEELS

Starting in your 20s, get back the 20-year-old glow, fresh-less lines and correct sun-damage by resurfacing your skin with a chemical peel. Resurfacing sloughs off your outer layer of skin and encourages the lower layer to produce collagen. Most dermatologists offer glycolic, wood and alpha-hydroxy peels, although you might try lactic acid if you have sensitive skin or kinetic acid if you have excessive pigmentation, says Dr. David Ellis, a former plastic surgeon and a professor at the University of Toronto. Your face will be red with some peeling for 1-7 days. Dermatologists recommend a treatment approximately every 3 months. (Cost: $100-$700. Estheticians, many use glycolic acid peels. Suzanne Kleis, an esthetician from Perfect Complexions in Toronto, give yourself a peel at home. Try NeoStrata Exfoliating Firming Mask with 10 percent glycolic acid.

MICRODERMABRASION

Starting in your late 20s, try the routine of all facials, microdermabrasion," explains Dr. Stephen Mulholland of SkinMedica, a cosmetic surgery centre in Toronto. A jet of fine silicon crystals exfoliates dead skin cells from your face and neck, then vacuums, removing a light layer of skin. Your skin may be flushed for a few hours. Dr. Mulholland recommends treatments every 3-5 weeks. (Cost: $150. Dr. Born offers microdermabrasion in combination with ultrasonic skin therapy, a new approach that uses ultrasound waves to deliver antiaging ingredients in a cream to the skin.

PHOTO REJUVENATION

Starting in your late 20s or 30s, smooth fine lines, fade brown spots and minimize blemishes, heal acne scars and correct sun damage with photo rejuvenation. "The procedure, which uses a pulsing light source, is gentler than a laser," explains Dr. Francis Bringer, a cosmetic plastic surgeon at the Beaubotox, a health, wellness, antiaging and beauty facility in Toronto. Three treatments are recommended at least every 4-6 weeks. There's no downtime. Cost: about $300 per session.

LASERS

Starting in your 40s, get rid of fine lines with an erbium:YAG laser (considered less invasive than other lasers. You'll need a local anesthetic, since it vaporizes the surface of your skin. It will take two weeks to recover. Like all laser treatments, the smoothing effect should last for years. Cost: $2,000 for full-face treatment.

CO_2 lasers have been around the longest. Long-term studies show the beauty-stimulating collagen gain being dramatic results. You need 1-2 anesthetic, two weeks to recover and at least 12 weeks before the redness subsides. Cost: about $6,000 for a full-face treatment.

Dermabrasion resurfaces the skin with a rotating brush. Cost: $1,000. Dr. Born uses a new laser that doesn't damage the outer skin but goes to the lower layers to stimulate collagen. "We don't know if it stimulates enough collagen to be effective," says Dr. Lorne Segall, surgical director of the Institute of Cosmetic Surgery in Toronto. His view: we need long-term data to be sure. Cost: about $5,000. Dr. Born does a full-face treatment, at $6,000.

ELECTROSURGERY

Starting in your 40s, for the next stage of tightening, which uses electrical current to destroy damaged tissue and stimulate collagen. (Laser beam, also can treat damage elsewhere on the body, requires Dr. Shelton V. Rubens, a Toronto cosmetic dermatologist. Cost: $400-$4,000.)

SURGERIES

Starting in your 40s, lights gravity with a lift (surgery that tightens muscles, tissues and skin). Dr. Sachs, Toronto surgeon, an eyebrow lift (surgery that raises the eyebrows to a more youthful position). Expect a bit of a black eye and some swelling. Cost: about $5,000 each and they can be done with local or full anesthetic.

Dr. Born offers a mini-facelift (a full facelift for those who only need tightening of the underarea muscles and skin along the front of the face). When performed at stadiums and after the sun has set (to avoid heat), it takes about $10,000 and has an 8-week recovery. "You look like you had a very bad sunburn," says Dr. Born. "You'll have to stay at home for 2 weeks." (Cost: $7,000 each and they can be done with local or full anesthetic.

HOW OLD ARE YOU NOW?

ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS

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DR. TREVOR BORN | COSMETIC PLASTIC SURGEON