



ANTI-AGEING SPECIAL. ELLE BEAUTY | ELLE BEAUTY ANTI-AGEING SPECIAL

DOCTOR SPECIAL
BEAUTY HELP DESK

Who better to answer your burning questions on anti-ageing than the experts? We turn to skincare brands, doctors, dermatologists and plastic surgeons for the inside scoop. By Renee Batchelor

TWIN TERRORS
Treat sagging skin and wrinkles – the key ageing concerns of most women – with these star buys.

Why are cigarettes bad for my skin, and how exactly do they contribute to skin ageing?
"It's not just the primers of smokers' wrinkled mouths speak a thousand words? Dr Low gives us the breakdown. "The nicotine in cigarettes causes the blood vessels to constrict. This impairs blood flow to the skin. With less blood flow, your skin doesn't get sufficient oxygen supply and essential nutrients for the skin cells to regenerate. The tobacco smoke also damages the skin's fibroblasts, which are the cells that produce collagen. Repeated facial expressions made when smoking such as pursing the lips and squinting the eyes, all add to the formation of wrinkles."

What's the optimal SPF level of sunscreen I should use on a daily basis?
"I recommend a minimum of SPF 30. If you're prone to pigmentation, I usually prescribe at least SPF 50," says Dr Patricia Wong, medical aesthetic director of LINC Aesthetic Clinic. "A good sunblock is one that goes on flawlessly, is non-comedogenic, and has a light texture."

I've seen older women with a lot of pigmentation spots and almost leathery skin on their hands. What can I do to prevent that?
"They've spent too long tanning their skin. If they don't wear sunscreen, you'll just have to be diligent. Dr Elton Tan, consultant dermatologist at Elton Tan Skin, Laser & Hair Clinic, advises, "Apply a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF of 30 and above and reapply to the face, neck, and décolleté. I've seen women with a lot of pigmentation spots and almost leathery skin on their hands. What can I do to prevent that?"

How Singaporean to want the best deal! Dr Tan Ying Chien, a consultant plastic surgeon from The Sloane Clinic Plastic Surgery Centre, says, "Our eyes are the first to show telltale signs of ageing. A common effect of ageing is the development of bags under the eyes. This not only makes the face look older, but it also gives you a tired and worn-out look. Through eye bag removal surgery (lower blepharoplasty), the patient can look younger and more wide-awake. It gives dramatic improvement and has the shortest downtime of one to two weeks, as compared to other surgeries performed to reverse ageing."

I have fine lines around my eye area. What are some of the ways to treat them before they worsen – and become crow's feet or wrinkles?
"Start using anti-ageing eye products now. Fine lines and wrinkles can be improved by quitting smoking, using good skincare products and maintaining a good level of skin hydration," adds Dr Elton Tan.

A lot of cosmetics brands are now introducing anti-ageing makeup, especially foundations that claim to lift and firm the skin. Do these actually work?
"While it has become more prevalent for cosmetics brands to incorporate anti-ageing ingredients in their products, these anti-ageing ingredients (secondary ingredients) are not of medical grade or high enough concentration, compared to your regular skincare products. They're not sufficient to be used as stand-alone skincare products," explains Dr Low. The bottomline? It doesn't hurt to use these cosmetics, but don't rely on them as your primary anti-ageing solution."

When I use skincare products such as serums and moisturisers, must I always apply them on my neck as well? "More than often, the neck and décolleté are among the most neglected areas of the body and can be the first parts of the body to show signs of ageing, as the skin is thinner on these areas," says Dr Low Chai Ling, medical director of The Sloane Clinic. "Most people tend to forget sunblock on these parts of the body, leading to loss of tone, pigmentation and a lined appearance." She adds that you don't really need a separate neck cream or serum — simply use whatever's left from your serum or moisturiser and apply it all the way down.

I'm a heavy smoker. Why are cigarettes bad for my skin, and how exactly do they contribute to skin ageing?
Tsk tsk! Don't the pictures of smokers' wrinkled mouths speak a thousand words? Dr Low gives us the breakdown. "The nicotine in cigarettes causes the blood vessels to constrict. This impairs blood flow to the skin. With less blood flow, your skin doesn't get sufficient oxygen

supply and essential nutrients for the skin cells to regenerate. The tobacco smoke also damages the skin's fibroblasts. As a result, skin begins to sag and wrinkles starts to form." If that weren't bad enough, Dr Low also adds, "Repeated facial expressions made when smoking such as pursing the lips and squinting the eyes, all add to the formation of wrinkles."

In your opinion, what procedure gives great bang for your buck – the best anti-ageing results with minimum downtime?
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I've heard that less-invasive facelifts are available now. How do they work?

The Endotine facelift is the latest facelift technique. "This procedure is ideal for women who need a moderate adjustment but do not wish to undergo a major surgery," says Dr Tan Ying Chien. "This procedure only requires a small incision along the lower eyelash line, unlike a traditional facelift which requires a much longer incision in front of the ear. The recovery time is much shorter — about one to two weeks — and leaves no discernible scars. Most people are back at work within a week. This is best for those in their 40s, who don't require a full facelift, but would benefit from subtle correction. With care, results can last for at least five years."

SPECIAL CARE Don't forget night creams, neck care and radiance boosters.

BOOST UP These new boosters kickstart your skincare routine and energize skin.

EYES SURPRISE The experts all agree that the eyes are one of the first places to show aging.

ELLE BEAUTY ANTI-AGEING SPECIAL

What are the three most popular plastic surgery procedures women in Singapore are getting done to reverse ageing?

"Upper blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery) to address excess, droopy upper eyelid skin, eye bag surgery and facelifts are the most popular plastic surgery procedures performed at our clinic," Dr Tan Ying Chien reveals. "All three are extremely effective in reversing the signs of ageing."

I'm in my 20s and unsure whether to start using anti-ageing skincare. What are some early signs of ageing seen in Asian women that I should look out for?

"Many of the skin changes commonly associated with ageing, such as pigmentation, sunken nose, and deep wrinkles, are actually the result of sun exposure," says Dr Wong. "Other signs include lack of moisture, irregular dark or light pigmentation." The best time to start using anti-ageing skincare is when you notice these signs.

I've got lines on my neck that won't go away! What are the causes of such lines?

"We need to investigate that the neck is a continuation of the face," asserts Dr Wong. "A common neck problem is the horizontal lines appearing on the neck, which can occur in Asian women all over the world. It is actually due to the structure of Asian skin, which differs from that of Caucasians. Some of us tend to have less collagen within the skin that cause these horizontal lines to appear." To solve this, Dr Wong recommends a non-invasive skin-tightening treatment called radio frequency. This treatment uses radio frequency technology to tighten and smooth out wrinkled, sagging skin.

What's the best way to apply eye cream and get on the eye area? Should I apply product on my eyelids, too?

"When applying eye cream, always be gentle," advises Tan Yungchi, scientific communication manager, global SK-II central relations, P.R.I. "The eye cream should be applied sparingly by gently patting the cream from the inner corner of your eye towards the outer corner. Ensure that eye cream is applied on the area above the eyebrow and top of the cheek, and not too close to the eyes."

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Are there any food or supplements I can consume to help in my anti-ageing regimen?

"You are what you eat," says Dr Low. "While there is no way to stop your body from ageing completely, there are certain foods you can eat to boost your health, prevent cell degeneration and slow down your biological clock. Cut down on salt and sugar. Limit calorie consumption and saturated fat intake, and eliminate alcohol and smoking from your lifestyle." ELLE

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Dr Low adds, "The Sloane Clinic's Revitalift treatment, which is a series of tiny hyaluronic acid injections, can be done on the neck and décolleté to replenish the skin with vital hyaluronic acid, instantly improving skin age and appearance." And if you've got dreaded crepe-y neck skin, Dr Low recommends Thermage, a non-invasive skin-tightening treatment utilising radio frequency technology to tighten and smooth out wrinkled, sagging skin.

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