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MORE THAN SKIN DEEP

These days, perfection's just a nip and tuck away. But we find out why good ol' skincare products are hardly passe. JEANNE TAI reports.



Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Serum (left) and Olay Regenerist Superstructure Cream SPF30, \$59.90 each.

Creams and serums may sound a little unsexy next to the instant results of, say, microdermabrasion or a facelift. But Dr Cheong Wai Kwong, a dermatologist at the Specialist Skin Centre, believes that a good product can go places where certain cosmetic procedures can't. "Cosmetic procedures can't slow the ageing process, nor can they help your skin produce new collagen," says

Dr Cheong, who is a member of Olay's cell technology research centre in Asia. "This is where good creams play a significant role." It's an approach he calls "early cell care". While procedures like microdermabrasion target the surface layer of cells, a good serum or cream dives deeper to target the heart of skincare problems - specifically, the biological processes within your cells. Olay's popular anti-ageing Regenerist line for instance, contains an amino-peptide complex that teaches cells to produce more collagen and elastin - the proteins that keep your face firm and supple. Its new Regenerist serum contains the highest concentration of this cellular "instruction manual", making it the most potent in the range. Together with the serum, the brand has launched a new Regenerist Superstructure Cream. It's a day cream with SPF30, loaded with vitamins E and C. The cell care approach also applies to Olay's existing White Radiance range. The new Cellucent White Essence and Cream both contain

Sepiwhite - a new ingredient that blocks melanin synthesis so dark spots don't stand a chance to form. While such products won't mimic the effects of a cosmetic procedure, they're non-invasive options with a friendlier price tag. Dr Tan Ying Chien, a plastic surgeon with The Sloane Clinic, also thinks that while home products can never replicate the results of invasive cosmetic procedures, they can complement the latter.



Olay White Radiance Cellucent White Essence (right) and Olay White Radiance Cellucent White Cream, \$59.90 each.

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HAIR PHOTO: FREDERIC FERRARI (HAIR); MAKEUP: PIERRE MICHAEL