

SMOOTHEN OUT YOUR PROBLEMS

SKIN

Here's the good news: Dr Low Chai Ling, a medical director at the Sloane Clinic, says Asians show signs of ageing later than Caucasians.

And most of the age-related problems that afflict Asians have solutions, and some of them are simpler than you think.

Problem: Wrinkles. With age, the skin's strength and elasticity is reduced. Sun-exposed areas such as the face and arms are especially prone to wrinkles.

Solution: Moisturisers containing anti-oxidants help to hydrate the skin and treat fine lines. But there's no sure-fire way to reverse wrinkles. Dr Low says laser skin resurfacing is a popular option for treating wrinkles, sun damaged skin and sun spots.

Ablative lasers, such as CO2 lasers and Erbium, emit a beam of light that removes all layers of the skin. But the raw skin after treatment takes up to three months to heal.

The less-invasive fraxel laser treatment treats the deep layers of the skin while leaving the top layer intact.

For expression lines caused by repeated movements such as smiling and frowning, Botox, a naturally produced toxin, can be injected to relax the small muscles temporarily.

Clinique Repairwear Deep Wrinkle Concentrate For Face And Eye claims to increase cell-activity



and hence the production of collagen. \$130, from all Clinique counters.

Olay Regenerist Perfecting Cream And Serum speeds up the skin's renewal process. \$34.80, from Watsons and Guardian stores.

Problem: Age spots. These are brown spots caused by years of exposure to the sun.

Solution: A good sunscreen can prevent further pigmentation and the formation of freckles. Lightening creams help to fade spots. Look for a product that includes hydroquinone and kojic acid, which help to inhibit

melanin production. Pigment laser or Intense Pulsed Light treatment can produce almost immediate results on larger spots.

Nivea Sun Face Whitening Sun Block SPF 30 with Bioactive reduces melanin production and comes with high-level sun protection. \$19.90, from major supermarkets.

Cle de Peau Beaute, Serum Anti-taches Brunes minimises the appearance of age spots. \$268, from Cle de Peau Beaute counters.

Problem: Sagging skin. As the skin matures, facial muscles weaken and its supply of collagen, which is responsible for supplementing the skin's support structure, diminishes.

Solution: Other than a facelift or neck lift, which is a major surgical procedure, Dr Low suggests Thermage, where radio waves are used to make the skin contract and produce more collagen.

SK-II Signo Up-Lifter enhances the skin cell's ability to bond with collagen. \$168, from SK-II counters.

Origins Youthtopia Skin Firming Cream contains Rhodiola, a plant used by athletes and the Russian military to enhance physical and mental endurance. It claims to replenish cellular energy. \$92, from Origin counters.

Problem: Dry skin. With age, people lose sweat and oil glands, which can

cause the skin to itch and flake.

Solution: Avoid overusing soaps or hot water to shower. Use a moisturiser. Dr Low advises looking for products which include anti-oxidants such as vitamin C, which promotes collagen formation, and coenzyme Q10, which protects your skin against sun damage and reduces fine lines around the eyes.

Nivea Body Firming Treatment Cream Q10 Plus helps in the skin's regeneration. \$10.90, from supermarkets and Watsons and Guardian stores.



Cle de Peau Beaute La Creme (above) claims to transform wrinkles, dull skin, uneven texture and sagging skin to one that is youthful, supple and luminous. \$862, from Cle de Peau Beaute counters.