



# FACING *the* FACTS

We separate fact from fiction when it comes to starting your anti-aging regimen.

BY NICOLE LIPPAY

**W**hile beauty trends come and go, there is one ideal that remains constant: the desire for luminous, youthful skin. When we

begin to notice wrinkles and fine lines, it can be tough to undo damage that's already done. Instead of playing offence, playing defence might be the best way to tackle the anti-aging game: Many cosmetic lines are introducing products that are targeted at younger women to slow the process of aging from the get-go. We spoke with Dr. Anatoli Frieman, MD, FRCPC, DABD, a dermatologist who specializes in medical, paediatric, surgical and cosmetic care of the skin at the Toronto Dermatology Centre, to better understand the defensive stance on anti-aging.

## Q WHICH ANTI-AGING HABITS SHOULD I START EARLY?

**ANSWER:** At any age, but particularly in your early years, it's important to start with strong, healthy skin. "The one habit to adopt early is sun protection," explains Dr. Frieman. "People really underestimate the importance of wearing sunscreen. Sun protection can be many things: wearing sunscreen, staying out of the sun at peak hours, wearing sun-protective clothing. To be well protected, you need a minimum of SPF 30 and to ensure that it's broad spectrum." Sun protection has come a long way since the pasty, white products we remember from our childhood. Textures, fragrances and residues have improved considerably, so there's no reason to be negligent!

**TRY:** Clinique Broad Spectrum SPF 50 Sunscreen Face Cream (\$26, Hudson's Bay, Sephora, sephora.com) to keep your skin protected



PHOTO: THINKSTOCK



**TRY:** Ole Henriksen Empower Featherweight Moisturizer (\$42, Sephora, sephora.com), which contains arctic cloudberry, omegas 3 and 6, and vitamins A, C and E to nourish the skin

## Q WHICH ANTI-AGING INGREDIENTS SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN MY PRODUCTS?

**ANSWER:** According to Dr. Frieman, there aren't any ingredients that are specifically formulated for younger versus older skin: It's more a matter of finding the right balance. "Vitamin A, or retinol, is one of the biggest ingredients that helps with anti-aging, but it's also one that can actually be the culprit of irritation. If you want to start using a product with vitamin A, start with a small area of the skin, like a test patch, to ensure it doesn't cause any irritation." Vitamins C and E are very common, as they brighten and nourish, respectively. You can't go wrong with antioxidants either, as they fight off oxidation and free-radical damage, which prematurely age the skin.

## Q IS IT OKAY TO USE RETINOL ON YOUNGER SKIN?

**ANSWER:** As hormones are (finally!) stabilizing in our early 20s, our skin can still be a bit unpredictable and can often be acneic. "It's important to note that a lot of people have acne-prone skin, and some of the anti-aging products are too drying. This can lead to what we call "acne-cosmetica" [or acne induced from topical treatments]. Some anti-aging creams are made for more mature skin, which tends to be drier, and can irritate and cause further acne breakouts, which you're trying to get under control." Make sure your products are still hydrating, regardless of their anti-aging properties. A sweeping Asian beauty trend, watery lotions, or essences, are a great way to help the skin retain water, as they penetrate deeply into the skin and deliver the anti-aging goods closer to the dermal level.

**TRY:** Prevage Anti-Aging Antioxidant Infusion Essence (\$120, Hudson's Bay, Shoppers Drug Mart) to help boost the skin's natural moisture content while delivering seven powerful antioxidants



**TRY:** SkinCeuticals Metacell Renewal B3 (\$110, medical spas and doctors' offices), a cosmeceutical corrective daily moisturizer that prevents premature photoaging

## Q SHOULD I SEE A DERMATOLOGIST BEFORE STARTING AN ANTI-AGING ROUTINE?

**ANSWER:** Just like you'd speak to a dentist for the most informed opinion on your oral health, it's a good idea to see a dermatologist if you're starting a new skin-care routine that you plan to stick with. As Dr. Frieman explains, "When it comes to anti-aging, is it mandatory to consult a dermatologist? No, but it is recommended to see someone to get you on the right regimen because that way, you'll get the proper instructions for the proper products. It's helpful to get a baseline routine, set you on the right path for proper skin care and assess your skin. A lot of people have sensitive skin, so you want to ensure that you have suitable products." If you've been using anti-aging products consistently for a few months and haven't seen any noticeable results, this is also a sign that you should visit your dermatologist to make sure you have the best products to suit your skin. ☺