



beauty *advice*

YOUR
GUIDE TO

ageless beauty

When it comes to getting the best out of your body and beauty, timing is everything. by CANDICE TEHINI

PLANNING YOUR BEAUTY TREATMENTS WITH LIFESTYLE CHANGES WILL ENSURE THAT YOUR BEAUTY REQUIREMENTS ARE CORRECTLY MET AND THAT YOU GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR ANTI-AGING PLAN.

Aging skin

As we age, a number of changes take place. Dr Alek Nikolic, anti-aging expert and aesthetic practitioner, explains that our skin loses collagen and elastin, the appearance of pores or enlarging of pores is common, and pigmentation is increased. There will also be a loss of moisture and you may develop a poor skin texture.

He points out that as we age, the fatty layer in the face starts to sag. This fat consists of separate and individual compartments that are vital to providing shape, definition, symmetry and support of the overlying skin. Muscles which naturally lift and support structures in the face begin to elongate. This, along with changes in the underlying bone structure, results in a sagging appearance.

“Throughout the age groups (and life stages) there is a trend towards aesthetic medicine and patients wanting to look and feel better about themselves,” says plastic surgeon Dr Charles Serrurier. “Young patients use Botox and fillers to slow aging, while older patients use these procedures to maintain the results of their surgeries.”

Fresh-faced 20s

In your 20s you still have a youthful, radiant and supple skin. Your body is young and healthy, and aging is not really a worry. “You may notice a couple of lines around your eye when you squint, but those aren’t really considered wrinkles,” says Janine Fernandes, brand manager at Elizabeth Arden. “Your skin’s oil production has slowed down and your skin is starting to change.”

She says that 20-year-old skin is the benchmark of great skin for women of all ages.

LIFESTYLE: “Many people at this age spend a lot of time outdoors,” says aesthetic practitioner at Laserderm Dr Natasha Begg-Spiro. “The most important advice is to apply sunscreen on a daily basis.” Most sun damage occurs even before the age of 20.

The after-effects of excessive eating, partying and lack of sleep also take their toll, and by simply cutting out fizzy drinks and fast-food, you will reap the benefits in years to come.

SKIN AND BODY: Begg-Spiro recommends starting a daily skincare regime that will help prevent aging. Her advice is to cleanse, moisturise and use sunscreen in the mornings, and cleanse, moisturise and use an eye-cream at night.

Sonette Donker from Dermalogica agrees: “A good SPF is the best anti-aging product you can invest in.” She recommends a low-maintenance homecare routine, and that you wash your make-up off before going to bed, no matter how late you get home.

While your body is usually still well-hydrated and taut at this age, you may have stretch marks from rapid growth during adolescence, and show signs of early cellulite. “Whether you’re short or tall, at

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your ideal weight or not, cellulite is the great equaliser,” says Dr Anushka Reddy, aesthetic practitioner, owner of Medi-Sculpt Aesthetic Solutions and president of the South African Association of Cosmetic Doctors (SAACD).

It is estimated that the prevalence of cellulite among women aged 20 and older is 80% of the population. It’s a good idea to start treating these issues as early as possible to ensure the best results. **NON-INVASIVE PROCEDURES:** It’s a good time to get rid of acne scarring. Dr Maureen Allem, cosmetic doctor and founder of Skin & Body Renewal, recommends deep-cleanse facials or laser to help reduce the size of the sebaceous glands and inflammation, reduce pore size, and improve the acne scarring and pigmentation. Or you can try a 15% TCA peel to improve the active acne lesion and scarring.

Allem also recommends photodynamic therapy, which uses red and blue light to improve acne by destroying bacteria and reducing inflammation in the acne lesion. It’s also the best time to start your hair-removal process and, if you have stretch marks, this would be the most effective time to treat them, as treatments are usually more effective on newer stretch marks, says Begg-Spiro.

Stunning 30s

“As we hit our 30s, the production of hyaluronic acid in our skin slows down, leading to a decrease in hydration, which causes skin to look more tired and fine lines start to appear,” says Begg-Spiro. Sun damage and hormonal pigmentation also become more evident.

LIFESTYLE: Stay out of the sun, wear sunscreen and stop smoking. A diet rich in lean protein, fruit, vegetables and low-glycaemic-index foods will prevent cross-linking and gumming of your collagen, explains Allem.

Donker also advises increasing your water intake, as this will keep your skin better hydrated. She warns that dehydration can exacerbate wrinkle development, perhaps earlier than you expect.

SKIN AND BODY: Begg-Spiro advises investing in a skincare product that contains more active ingredients to replenish and nourish your skin.

“Look for products that contain antioxidants to combat free-radical damage, and exfoliating ingredients such as glycolic acid or alpha hydroxy acids,” she says.

Because pigmentation can be a big problem in your 30s, Nikolic suggests using creams that contain ingredients such as alphahydroxy acids, polyhydroxy acids, liquorice extract, kojic acid, bearberry extract and mulberry root extract.

Donker recommends incorporating an exfoliator and mask into your routine twice a week, as well as an eye cream to prevent deep lines and wrinkles in the eye area. “This is the decade when the cell turnover starts to slow down and the skin starts to look duller,” says Allem. The lines between the nose and mouth start to appear, forehead furrows start to develop and tiny lines start to sprout.

NON-INVASIVE PROCEDURES: “This is when most women start noticing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, and while this may surprise you, there is no better time to consider Botox,” says Reddy, who explains that, apart from the short-term effect of essentially erasing fine lines and wrinkles, continued Botox treatments – by an accredited physician – will prevent further aging of the brow and the crow’s feet area around the eyes.

To rectify pigmentation and skin texture, Begg-Spiro and Nikolic recommend trying peels and laser treatments, and hydrating facials. A great anti-aging facial for this age group is a Fraxel facial, a combination of microdermabrasion, Fraxel and photodynamic therapy, which helps to remove dead cells and build collagen.

INVASIVE PROCEDURES: “As we move into our 30s, we begin to see many breast augmentations, breast lifts and general body-contouring surgery like liposuction and tummy-tuck surgery,” says Serrurier. This is due to the changes that a woman’s body undergoes during pregnancy. Many women finish their child-rearing in their 30s and this is when these procedures are recommended.

Fabulous 40s

As we reach our 40s, cheek fat starts to drop downwards, leading to volume loss in the mid-face region and more pronounced nasolabial folds, describes Begg-Spiro. Our face loses subcutaneous fat, leading to fine lines and more angular features, and our lips start to thin, under-eye circles and bags become more pronounced, and our eyebrows seem to sag.

“In your 40s, sun exposure catches up with you,” says Allem. “Broken and dilated capillaries increase, pore size increases, lines appear around your eyes, forehead and mouth. There is a loss of firmness in the mid-face and especially around the jawline due to collagen shrinkage.”

LIFESTYLE: As the skin matures, the combination of time, stress and the environment undermines its natural ability to renew itself, explains Morris. Spending at least three days a week doing some form of exercise will help keep your blood circulating, bringing a fresh supply of oxygenated blood to your skin. It’s also a great de-stressor and releases your feel-good endorphins.

SKIN AND BODY: Begg-Spiro recommends using skincare products that contain growth factors and peptides to help boost collagen production. “Severely sun-damaged skins will benefit from products that contain retinol,” she says. “Adding a serum to your daily beauty regimen is advisable, as the percentage of active ingredients absorbed by the skin

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is significantly greater with a serum than a facial cream.”

Donker suggests switching to a richer moisturiser, as the barrier function of your skin is no longer functioning optimally, and stresses the importance of anti-oxidant-rich products. Loss of skin elasticity may lead to loose skin on the abdomen, inner thighs, upper arms and above the knees.

NON-INVASIVE PROCEDURES: Now is a good time to start on a long-term aesthetic programme designed to address your needs and keep you looking your best, advises Begg-Spiro.

Botox treatments may be recommended for lines and wrinkles, and this is the ideal age to start treating deeper lines and volume loss with soft-tissue fillers. These hyaluronic acid gels help to lift lines, restore volume and hydrate the skin.

By adding filler to your cheekbone area, you change the way that light falls on this area, leaving you looking much more refreshed and radiant, and giving you the appearance of a mini-facelift, she explains. Other facial treatments such as mesotherapy can help hydrate and nourish the skin with hyaluronic acid, growth factors and peptides, leaving it glowing and radiant, adds Begg-Spiro.

As textural changes, fine lines, wrinkles and sun spots become more evident, this is a good age to start treating your skin more aggressively.

“It’s around now that sunspots or facial pigmentation – from years of cumulative sun exposure and damage – start showing,” says Reddy. Luckily chemical peel treatments exist to reduce darker pigment spots, and at the same time even out skin and give you a smoother, more youthful-looking appearance.

INVASIVE PROCEDURES: “Plastic surgeons tend to perform more body-sculpting surgeries on men and women in their 40s, such as liposuction, tummy tucks, and thigh and buttock lifts,” says Serrurier. They do perform facelifts on people in their 40s, but this is far more popular with patients in their 50s.

FINDING AN AESTHETIC SPECIALIST WHO IS RIGHT FOR YOU

When considering a treatment, it is important that you are happy with both your choice of doctor and the quality of service you receive. There are two aesthetic organisations currently operating in South Africa: *the Aesthetic and Anti-aging Medicine Society of South Africa* (www.aestheticdoctors.co.za) and the *South African Association of Cosmetic Doctors* (www.cosmeticdoctors.co.za). You should ensure that the doctor you choose is affiliated with an association and is registered. Don’t be afraid to ask questions about your procedure, how many times the doctor has performed such a treatment, what you can reasonably expect and the downtime involved. It is also important to ask how many times you will need to undergo your chosen treatment, and what effect, if any, repeated treatments will have on you. The internet is a great tool – you can google to check and see if there are any reports, articles or concerns regarding the doctor in question and then discuss this with him.

Full-of-life 50s

“The changes that are evident in our skins in our 40s become even more pronounced in our 50s,” says Begg-Spiro, who explains that, with the onset of menopause, our oestrogen levels decrease significantly, causing marked changes in our skins. Hydration and elasticity decrease, and our skins start to thin and become crepey.

She also points out that volume loss and the effects of gravity lead to sagging and jowl formation, and skin texture deteriorates, with skin becoming rougher and drier to the touch.

LIFESTYLE: Spend more time outdoors; as we age, we tend to venture into the sun less and less. Fresh air and your daily dose of vitamin D will do wonders for your health and skin. Increase your daily fibre intake and keep on exercising. Meeting friends for dinner or a drink is a wonderful idea, but watch that you don’t top up your wine glass too many times.

SKIN AND BODY: By your 50s, expression lines are a fact of life, especially if you have dynamic facial expressions, explains Fernandes, who urges you to maintain good skincare habits by sticking to your daily skincare ritual.

Allem suggests double-cleansing your face at night to remove make-up, and exfoliating twice a week unless you have sensitive skin. She also says it’s good to invest in anti-aging serums that contain growth factors, peptides and vitamin C, and use them twice a day to stimulate collagen.

“You will need to use products that add moisture and oil to your skin,” says Donker, who also advises using a creamy, milky cleanser, a moisture and oil-rich mask, a rich oil-based moisturiser, and serums or boosters containing anti-aging ingredients – not forgetting rich eyecare products and daily sun protection.

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NON-INVASIVE PROCEDURES: Most people require some fillers to lift, hydrate, soften or improve certain areas. “Botox becomes less important as we age, and is often not the treatment of choice in this age group,” says Begg-Spiro.

She explains that if you divide the face up into thirds, it is often the mid-face and lower-face regions that are more aging in this group, and treatments directed at improving these areas usually make the most difference to a person’s appearance.

Keep skin looking soft and hydrated with treatments such as mesotherapy or hydrating facials, adds Begg-Spiro. Loose body skin such as jowls, bat wings and wrinkly arms can be treated with skin-tightening devices.

“It is not only that skin becomes thinner and sags, but rather that this loss in elasticity is aggravated by the dropping of the fatty pads and the elongation of muscles within the face,” adds Nikolic.

INVASIVE PROCEDURES: “Patients in their 50s concentrate far more attention on their faces,” says Serrurier. “We perform facelifts and corrective eyelid surgeries more on this age group than any of the other age groups.”

As you head to your 60s and beyond, it’s time to focus more on your health. This is the time to give yourself permission to do things you may not have done before’

Splendid 60s

In your 60s, skin cells have 30% less natural moisture than when you were younger, so the skin is noticeably drier, thinner and flakier,” says Allem.

Despite your best efforts to nurture your skin, as gravity takes over, jowls begin forming and the proportions of your face shift, explains Reddy.

LIFESTYLE: It is still important to eat a balanced diet, drink plenty of water and stay out of the sun.

Venturing outdoors should, however, be part of your daily activity, as it’s still the best source of vitamin D.

Exercise is also necessary, but can be scaled down to a more manageable level. If your diet is not well balanced, consider taking a suitable multivitamin.

SKIN AND BODY: “Many 60-year-olds who have looked after their faces find that their hands or décolletage give away their true age,” says Begg-Spiro. She recommends investing in both skincare and hand products that are anti-aging and hydrating, and contain anti-oxidants, growth factors, peptides and retinol, which will all be beneficial.

NON-INVASIVE PROCEDURES: Reddy explains that a procedure called the 3D Vector Lift works by introducing Sub-Q dermal filler into strategic locations on the face, augmenting volume in those areas and creating lift in others. The procedure is made possible by the advanced composition of Sub Q, whose high viscosity and elasticity ensure that it is able to predictably hold tissue in a lifted position.

Allem adds that while most skin-rejuvenation strategies, like skin-tightening lasers, will still work, they do so at a slower rate.

While spider veins may plague some people for life, for most people they start becoming most annoyingly apparent in their 50s. The good news is that the treatment for this condition, known as sclerotherapy, is surprising simple.

“It takes just 20 minutes and is highly effective,” says Allem. With sclerotherapy, a solution is injected into the affected veins, causing them to collapse and fade from view.

INVASIVE PROCEDURES: “When we reach 60 years of age, we find that some patients may already have had successful surgeries on areas of concern,” says Serrurier. This is the age group that is most likely to opt for facial rejuvenating surgery. This surgery is major, but the results are usually excellent and will last for 10 to 15 years before repeat surgery may be required. ■

INVASIVE PROCEDURES

Plastic and reconstructive surgeon Dr Anton Potgieter advises that some procedures are fine to do all year round, such as Botox and fillers, while others, like IPL and laser, are more suited to times of the year when the sun is not so harsh.

"Some procedures lend themselves to certain seasons; holidays are convenient, but difficult times, due to the recovery period coinciding with family activities," says Potgieter.

He says that while a blepharoplasty, or eyelid surgery, might be nice during a holiday break, an abdominoplasty, or tummy-tuck, would be unpleasant.

If you have a special event and want to look good for it, you should plan your procedure three to six months in advance.

"As a general rule, patients tend to request surgery approximately three to six months after the ideal time," he says.

Facelifts and rhinoplasty take three to six months for the swelling to resolve and the tissues to settle; this is the case after most cosmetic procedures. He says that there is an increase in requests for breast augmentation and liposuction procedures in September to November, but would be good surgeries to undergo in mid-winter, when you can cover up and recover.

BOTOX AND YOU

While many years of research have gone into using Botox, both locally and abroad, this is still considered a contentious issue; a slight slip of the hand can make a big difference. Dr Alastair Clark, an aesthetic physician, warns that the facial nerves and muscles are very delicate and intricately linked.

It is therefore important that you have Botox injections done only by an aesthetic specialist who is experienced in this therapy and has a good knowledge of the anatomy of the facial nerves and muscles.

It is also imperative to give your doctor a full medical history, as Botox can be contraindicated in some instances.

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