

SKIN CARE FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The answer to fighting the signs of aging is not to wait until you need surgery, but to feed your skin the nutrition of modern skin care.

Thank your lucky stars you were born in the 20th century. Not that long ago, the only defense against wrinkles was complete avoidance of the sun and lead-laced skin foundations. One isn't very practical and the other was deadly. Today we can all take comfort; advances in the world of "cosmeceuticals" – pharmaceuticals with cosmetic benefits – has made the dream of younger, fresher, smooth looking skin a reality.

Your skin is a living, breathing, constantly changing organ. In fact it's the largest organ on our bodies composed of millions of cells floating in a salty, watery liquid. Just like all the other parts of our bodies – bones and all – skin is continually renewing itself.

The big question for all of us is... "Why does skin age?"

Skin ages in two distinct ways. Firstly there's genetics; if your mother's skin aged early, then your skin will probably show the signs of aging early. But truthfully, the genes you inherit are responsible for less than 10% of the total signs of aging. It's lifestyle, or extrinsic aging, which accounts for most of the visible signs of aging. And the number one cause of aging – responsible for at least 80% of the damage to our skin – is the sun. So in fact, if your mother's skin aged early, it's a better bet that it was too much sun and not bad genes.

The sun "fast-forwards" the aging process.

There's no denying it: the sun feels good. It warms the skin and brightens the mood, yet we've just pointed out that the sun is responsible for more than 80% of all the signs of aging. That's the sun's conundrum: we love it, but its consequences – dry dehydrated skin with fine lines, wrinkles, leathery surface, broken capillaries, uneven skin tone and age spots, to name just a few – are inescapably bad.

Sunshine has different kinds of ultra-violet radiation: UVA and UVB. It's the UVA rays that do most of the damage to the structure of the skin. These rays penetrate deeply into the skin, through the *epidermis* (the top layer of skin) into the foundation of the *dermis* (the second and most important layer of our skin).

As the years roll by and the sun keeps shining, UVA rays cause a break down in the structure of collagen and elastin fibres in the dermis. It's this destruction that causes wrinkles to form. Aging skin loses its elasticity, becoming saggy and wrinkled.

UVB rays cause the skin to tan or burn. A tan may look attractive, but it's the skin's way of crying for help. UVB rays also over stimulate cell division throughout the epidermis creating more cells than the skin can shed leading to a thick, lack-luster, leathery surface with uneven skin tone and age spots. It's too late to take back those baby-oil sun-worshipping afternoons in the back yard or down at the beach.

Okay, we know the sun isn't good for our skin, but even if we made a pact today to avoid any excess sun exposure, most of the damage has already been done (we get an estimated 80% of our lifetime sun exposure by the age of 18). What can you do once the damage has been done?

The 1980s saw the advent of a number of new and effective skin care products. Designed to address the need to exfoliate the excess skin cell buildup in the epidermis caused by the sun's UVB ray, first Retin-A (originally marketed for the treatment of acne), then AHA (alpha-hydroxy acids) and now BHA (beta-hydroxy acids) creams are changing the face of cosmetics. By dissolving the "intercellular glue" that binds dead, flaky skin cells on the surface of our skin, these new products peel away the uppermost layer of the skin – revealing a newer, more youthfully glowing complexion underneath.

Yet even as effective as these new creams are, they do nothing for the lack of firmness and suppleness caused by the breakdown in the structure of the dermis. The only way to truly slow down or even reverse the signs of aging is to find something that will revitalize the skin's ability to produce collagen and elastin in the dermis.

"Dermatologists are seeing an increasing number of patients who are seeking ways to make their skin look younger," says dermatologist, Dr. Charles Lynde, assistant professor, University of Toronto and a member of the board of the Canadian Dermatology Association. "There are a number of techniques and products available to help make sun damaged skin look better. These really only change the upper part of the skin – the epidermis – they don't do anything about the deeper part of the skin – the dermis – where we would like to do something about the collagen and elastin."

Nutritional approach to wrinkles starts from within the skin.

Help may be close at hand. The latest developments in the science of anti-aging are dietary supplements for skin. Just such a tablet, IMEDEEN, can be found at the cosmetics counters of better pharmacies and other retailers across Canada. Devotees, from around the world, claim IMEDEEN helps relieve dryness, plumping out the skin and reducing fine lines.

Manufactured by a Danish pharmaceutical company, daily use of IMEDEEN has been clinically shown to significantly improve the look of sun-damaged skin, visibly reducing the signs of aging. Easily absorbed and metabolized by the body, the nutrients in IMEDEEN, carried to the dermal layer of the skin by your body's blood system, provide aging skin with the nutrients needed to revitalize collagen and elastin production.

"I was skeptical when I first heard about IMEDEEN," says Dr. Lynde. "However after examining the independent clinical studies and evaluating their methodology, I'm confident IMEDEEN will be very beneficial for my patients. Right now, several of my patients have been taking IMEDEEN for 3 to 6 months and both they and I see a significant improvement in their skin."

Give it some time

As with anything that creates a real and lasting change, it takes time. Generally, people who take IMEDEEN daily see an improvement in the drier areas such as elbows, hands and around the eyes, in the first 90 days. Over the next three months skin becomes softer, the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles reduce, skin tone evens out and skin feels firmer. After six months, the entire face registers visible improvements with better density, more translucent tone, smaller pores and fading broken capillaries and age spots.

Imedeen Time Perfection and Imedeen Classic are manufactured by Ferrosan A/S, Denmark, and are exclusively distributed in Canada by Nordic Selfcare Institute.

Imedeen Time Perfection and Imedeen Classic are widely available at the cosmetic counter of selected pharmacies and other exclusive retailers across Canada. Please visit www.nordicselfcare.com or call 1-877-IMEDEEN (1-877-463-3336) for specific retail locations.

- 30 -

About NØRDIC SELFCARE INSTITUTE

Located in Toronto, Canada, NØRDIC SELFCARE INSTITUTE is Canada's leading cosmeceutical source with emphasis in the areas of women's health, nutrition and beauty. The products NØRDIC SELFCARE INSTITUTE brings to market are backed by extensive scientific research and clinical studies and are for both consumer and professional use. NØRDIC SELFCARE INSTITUTE is thoroughly committed to the products they carry and strives to build a strong consumer base for each brand.

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