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THE BEAUTY EXPERT

AUGUST 2008

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like Neutrogena Healthy Skin Face Lotion SPF 15 and Remergent Advanced Retinol Therapy)—just don't use the creams within an hour of an AHA or salicylic acid peel, to avoid irritating skin (by doubling up on the acids) or negating the effects (salicylic acid and AHAs can weaken retinol).

## HYPER-PIGMENTATION

**THE CAUSE:** Hyperpigmentation is the clinical term for brown spots, freckles, and dark patches—all caused by an overproduction of melanin. Sun damage is typically to blame for small, individual brown spots, while a rise in estrogen levels in your body—often brought on by preg-

ment (like Neutrogena Healthy Skin Face Cream for Normal Skin.) In fact, because AHAs and retinol help speed up cell turnover, they prompt skin cells to produce more melanin, the darker cells while also stimulating melanin production so you get clusters of pigment. (Try Dr. Dennis P. Copeland Skin Care AHA Face Cream or L'Oréal Paris Advanced Age Reversing Anti-Wrinkle Concentrate Serum.)

It takes four to eight weeks of consistent use of a lightening agent to fade a dark area completely, and brown spots and freckles are notorious for recurring. "I'll tell you what will tell me that the bleaching agent doesn't work, and then I'll find out I'm not wearing sunscreen," says Dr. Brandt, a cosmetic dermatologist in New York City and Miami. "Unless you use a broad-spectrum sunscreen and avoid prolonged sun exposure,

**THE TREATMENT:** You need a good moisturizer, but a thick, rich cream could clog your pores when you're young. "Your moisturizer should sink in quickly but leave skin feeling supple," says Bank. Try a lightweight lotion with ceramides (which help build up the lipid barrier), such as Dove Sensitive Skin Facial Lotion or CeraVe Moisturizing Lotion. If your skin still feels dry, begin next time with a hydrating serum such as Vichy Laboratoires Aqualia Thermal Serum or Bioelements Moisture x10, then apply your moisturizer.

## DRYNESS

**THE CAUSE:** Oil is in overdrive when you're a teenager, then nearly runs dry as you get older. "Your skin gets about 10 percent drier every decade," says Bank. While oil production decreases, the lipid barrier of skin, which traps and holds in moisture, becomes increasingly defective over time. "You've got a double whammy of less moisture production and less ability to hold moisture in the skin," says Bank.

## WEATHERED NECK AND DÉCOLLETAGE

**THE CAUSE:** Call it the forgotten territory. Even those who diligently apply sunscreen to their face often forget their neck and chest—and because the skin there is thinner and has fewer oil glands than the face does, it's particularly susceptible to early signs of aging such as horizontal neck lines and brown chest spots. And once again, blame it on the sun.

**THE TREATMENT:** The same ingredients you use to treat lines and dark spots on your face will work on your neck and chest—but because the skin here is thin, it's more sensitive. To minimize irritation, apply face cream to your neck and chest just two or three times a week. If you're particularly sensitive, use a neck cream—it typically has a lower concentration of active ingredients, like retinols and lightening agents, than face creams do. (We like Cellex-C Advanced-C Neck Firming Cream.) And we may sound like a broken record here, but a broad-spectrum sunscreen applied daily to this area—even in the wintertime—is your best defense against further damage. ♦

The skin on the neck is thinner and has fewer oil glands than the face, making it a prime candidate for wrinkles.

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