

## Beauty

### skin care

# 3 Simple Steps To Younger-Looking Skin For Women Over 40

By [Wendy Korn Heppt](#) September 16, 2015



When women talk about aging skin, the first thing they mention is wrinkles. But the loss of radiance or a youthful glow can add years to a woman's look, too, according to recent research. "The luminosity of skin is dependent on how well it absorbs and reflects light," says Paul Matts, PhD, a scientist with Procter & Gamble.

That can be a problem for over-40 faces because the collagen fibers that mirror light back to the skin's surface tend to break down with age. Dead skin cell buildup and dark spots triggered by UV light also interfere with skin's light-reflective ability. To amp up collagen production, even out skin tone, and increase luster, try this simple skin care regimen for radiant skin. It will improve luminosity and diminish mild dullness and discoloration without being overly aggressive. (Is menopause changing your skin? Then check out *[The Natural Menopause Solution](#)* to ease your most frustrating menopause symptoms.)

#### **1. Smooth skin.**

"Sweeping away surface cells gives you a more light-reflective complexion and allows the products you'll apply next to penetrate better," says Deborah Sarnoff, MD, an associate clinical professor of dermatology at New York University School of Medicine. Use a cleanser that contains alpha- or beta-hydroxy acid; these gentle skin care exfoliants are less likely to inflame skin than gritty scrubs for that radiant-skin look. Try Jan Marini Bioglycolic Facial Cleanser (\$30, [janmarini.com](http://janmarini.com)).

#### **2. Even out tone.**



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To help clear hyperpigmentation, apply a lotion with 2% hydroquinone (HQ). "HQ works inside the pigment-producing cells to suppress the production of melanin, the substance that gives our skin color," says Alexa Boer Kimball, MD, MPH, director of the clinical unit for research trials in skin at Harvard Medical School. For speedier radiant-skin results, choose a skin care product that contains HQ and an over-the-counter retinoid like retinol (a form of vitamin A that repairs collagen and inhibits melanin production) and use it at night—vitamin A creams can lose potency when exposed to UV light. Try Avon Banishing Cream Skin Discoloration Lightener (\$8.50, [avon.com](http://avon.com)) or Rodan & Fields Reverse Skin Lightening Lotion (\$99, [rodanadfields.com](http://rodanadfields.com)).

Be diligent: It generally takes at least 2 months to notice improvement, but don't use HQ longer than instructed on the label—up to 60 days, no more than three times a year. If used improperly, serious side effects can result, including increased skin irritation and permanent darkening.

### **3. Moisturize and protect.**

Keeping skin hydrated always helps boost a blah complexion, but new lotions made with niacinamide do more than that. This form of vitamin B also helps prevent the transfer of skin-darkening melanin into skin cells. Find niacinamide in Patricia Wexler MD Skin Brightening Daily Moisturizer SPF 30 (\$39.50, [bathandbodyworks.com](http://bathandbodyworks.com)). The SPF in skin care lotions is also a must to shield skin against UV-triggered collagen breakdown and melanin production.