



## Understanding Skin Aging

### What are the biggest culprits in skin aging?

The most important culprit in skin aging is environmental exposure. Ultraviolet radiation, cold weather, pollution and dirt all contribute to an aged appearance. The most harmful element, however, is the sun. Protecting your skin against the sun will go a long way in avoiding the most preventable cause of skin aging.

### What are the most common signs of aging?

Aged skin has a typical appearance. It looks thin because of a loss of collagen. It looks dull because a thickened keratin layer gives a poorer light reflex. It looks wrinkly due to a lack of volume and it has brown spots due to poor cellular turnover. All of these conditions can be improved with a good skincare routine.

### What role do genes play in the aging process?

Nothing beats having good genes. People with great skin usually have a parent with great skin. But there is a lot we can do to prevent aging. Good skin care is about optimizing our genetic potential by taking care of our skin to keep it healthy and looking beautiful our entire lives.

### What at-home anti-aging skincare routine do you prescribe for your patients?

The basic steps in any skincare program are cleansing, toning, treating, moisturizing and protecting. Consumers should look for a multi-step program with elements that are designed to work together and complement each other. At The Plastic Surgery Clinic we recommend our Miracle 10 skincare line.

### What can people do to slow skin aging?

Get plenty of sleep. Sleep with your head elevated to improve the venous return from the face which reduces puffiness. Keep skin hydrated by drinking lots of fluids and using a good moisturizer. And, finally, wear sunscreen every day.

### What has been the biggest breakthrough in anti-aging treatments?

The biggest anti-aging breakthrough of the decade has been the understanding that Vitamin A (also known as Retinol) acid cream or gel can significantly improve the skin's appearance. Lines, wrinkles, pore size and discoloured patches have all been scientifically proven to improve with the use of Vitamin A acid.

### What lies ahead in the field of anti-aging treatments?

The future lies in our understanding of the skin as an organ system. It's about going "back to the future" and understanding that skin, like any organ system, needs to be stimulated to perform at its peak. If we want a strong heart we need to make it beat fast with exercise. If we want strong muscles we need to lift weights. Likewise, if we want great skin, we need to stimulate it. Cellular turnover and collagen production can be stimulated by great skincare and that means doing more than just washing and moisturizing. It means challenging our skin with a well-designed daily program.

### What are the top-performing ingredients to look for in skincare products?

The top anti-aging products should contain an SPF, be pH-balanced and free of perfumes, PABA and Parabens. They should also contain some form of acid such as Alpha Hydroxy, either as a direct ingredient or in fruit acid form like Grape Seed, Apple or Pear extract. Beta Hydroxy Acids such as Salicylic Acid are also excellent. Look for products with anti-oxidants such as Vitamin C and rejuvenators like Vitamin A, also called Retinol. ©

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