

LADIES' Home Journal

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YOUR BEST BODY AT 30, 40, 50

**+ DIET ADVICE
FOR WOMEN WITH
NO WILLPOWER**

**HOW TO PAY OFF
ALL YOUR DEBTS**

**BEST ANTI-AGING
PRODUCTS**

**23 WAYS TO
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CHECK YOU
SHOULD DO AT
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Great Skin

AT EVERY AGE

Acne in your 30s. Wrinkles in your 40s. Dryness in your 50s. Fight the hormones that sabotage your skin with the latest beauty breakthroughs.



FACE IT, YOU NEED A NEW ROUTINE

YOUR 30s

HORMONE HAVOC

■ **ACNE** As an adult, you get pimples along your jawline because pores become ultrasensitive to oil-triggering androgen hormones, says Diane Thiboutot, M.D., professor of dermatology at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. As androgen levels rise—usually right before your period—skin gets oilier and pores are more likely to clog.

SKIN-SAVING SOLUTIONS

■ **SALICYLIC ACID AND BENZOYL PEROXIDE** Use a cleanser with salicylic acid to dissolve oil buildup within pores and keep them clear. Then apply a cream containing up to 3.5 percent benzoyl peroxide, an antibacterial. Both ingredients can dry your skin, so follow up with a noncomedogenic moisturizer, which won't cause its own breakouts. Try St. Ives Green Tea Cleanser (\$6 at drugstores) and First Aid Beauty Blemish Eraser (\$16 at sephora.com).

■ PRESCRIPTION MEDS

For more serious cases of acne a dermatologist may prescribe a retinoid cream to reduce oil production, speed cell turnover and reduce inflammation. Or she could suggest hormonal intervention. Birth control pills are commonly prescribed, as is the diuretic spironolactone. Although officially used to fight fluid retention, the latter also has skin-clearing powers because it may block the androgen receptors, says Dr. Thiboutot.

HORMONE HAVOC

■ **MELASMA** This common pigmentation problem shows up as large brown splotches above your lip, on your cheeks or across your forehead. Anyone can get melasma, but pregnant women and those on the Pill are most at risk thanks to their high estrogen levels. But estrogen is only half the problem. While it ramps up the cells' melanin-making ability, sun exposure is what really flips the switch, says New York City cosmetic dermatologist Paul Frank, M.D.

SKIN-SAVING SOLUTIONS

■ **SUNSCREEN** Ultraviolet rays trigger the brown splotches—even if you're not pregnant or not on the Pill—and darken existing melasma. So use sunblock every day, avoid direct sunlight and wear a hat. Try Eucerin Everyday Protection Face Lotion SPF 30 (\$9.50 at drugstores).

■ **HYDROQUINONE** As a bleaching agent, hydroquinone halts melasma production in its earliest stages, Dr. Frank says. Look for over-the-counter hydroquinone combined with an exfoliating ingredient to increase penetration and speed up the sloughing of pigmented cells. We like La Roche-Posay Mela-D Skin Lightening Daily Lotion (\$52 at skincarelab.com). Or your doctor might prescribe TriLuma, a 4 percent concentration mixed with a retinoid and mild steroid.

YOUR 40S

HORMONE HAVOC

■ **WRINKLES** Fortysomethings are dealt a double whammy in the wrinkle department. You're in perimenopause, which means waning levels of estrogen slow down new collagen production, making sun damage more noticeable than it was earlier. And facial expression lines become more obvious, too, thanks to weakened collagen. The end result? Crow's-feet, forehead lines and creases between the brows.

SKIN-SAVING SOLUTIONS

■ **RETINOIDS** These vitamin A derivatives (found in prescription creams like Renova) are known to turn on collagen production and smooth wrinkles. If your skin is sensitive and you can't tolerate Rx retinoids, OTC retinol is a great first-line defense, says Tina Alster, M.D., director of the Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery. Try Roc Retinol Correxion Deep Wrinkle Daily Moisturizer

SPF 30 (\$22 at drugstores) or Peter Thomas Roth Retinol Fusion PM (\$65 at peterthomasroth.com).

■ **BOTOX AND DYSPORT** These injectables will stop you from making the facial expressions that cause and deepen wrinkles. Both are similar in that they temporarily block nerve impulses that allow muscle movement. One treatment lasts



for three to six months and costs between \$250 and \$600 depending on how many injections you need. If you're more interested in topicals claiming Botox-like effects, however, it may be

worth considering an eye treatment that contains the peptide GABA. Try Lift-Fusion Triple Threat Intense Target Magic Wand (\$39 at ulta.com).

■ **FRAXEL** Fraxel laser resurfacing stimulates collagen production within the skin. The heat triggers the skin's repair mechanism, which builds collagen and pushes new, healthy cells to the

surface. You'll see much more dramatic results from the laser treatment than from retinoids, says Seattle dermatologist Brandith Irwin, M.D. Cost: \$750 to \$1,500 per session.

YOUR 50s

HORMONE HAVOC

■ **DRYNESS** Menopause can leave your skin parched once you stop producing estrogen, which plays a role in how well skin holds on to moisture. Androgen hormone levels drop off precipitously, too, so your skin produces much less oil, Dr. Irwin says. But that's not all. "Cell turnover also slows down," she says. "Part of what you perceive as dryness may be a thicker layer of dead cells on your skin's surface." As a result, the skin becomes dull and loses its radiance.

SKIN-SAVING SOLUTIONS

■ RICH MOISTURIZERS

Look for super-emollient day and night creams packed with nut, seed and plant oils, which can replace skin's natural oils. Try L'Oréal Paris

Age Perfect Hydra-Nutrition (\$17 at drugstores). For an even bigger moisture boost, rub in a serum containing hyaluronic acid, a powerful humectant, before you apply your cream or sunscreen, Dr. Irwin suggests.

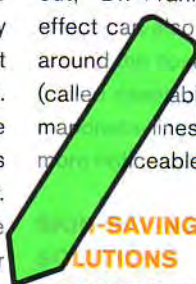
■ **ALPHA HYDROXY ACID PEELS** An at-home glycolic or lactic acid peel quickly clears the dead cells that pile up on the skin's surface. It also gives you a more youthful glow and helps your skin absorb moisturizer. Just limit your peels to once or twice a week, Dr. Alster says. Try MD Skincare Alpha Beta Daily Face Peel (\$28 for 10 packets at sephora.com).

HORMONE HAVOC

■ **SAGGING** Because of a lack of estrogen, your skin loses elasticity as well as some fat under the surface.



"It's like an overstretched balloon that had the air let out," Dr. Frank says. The effect can also cause lines around the eye and mouth (called periorbital folds and marionette lines) to become more noticeable.



SKIN-SAVING SOLUTIONS

■ FIRMING TOPICALS

Thick moisturizers and those with niacinamide will help skin hold on to water, which may give it a slightly firmer, plumper appearance. Creams and serums that contain peptide can also help, Dr. Alster says. Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting

Serum (\$25 at drugstores) contains both.

■ **SCULPTRA** Made of poly-L-lactic acid, this injectable stimulates cells to make collagen—lots of it—to fill out hollow facial areas such as nasolabial folds. You'll need two to four treatments. Results last up to two years, which helps offset the \$600 to \$2,000 per-session price tag, Dr. Irwin says.