

NORDSTROM NET LEAPS/2 TOUGH HALF AT NEWSSTAND/15

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Beauty



Face Off

NEW YORK — On the face of it, the skin care market is shaping up to be one of fall's busiest categories. Sonya Dakar will launch the UltraLuxe antiaging line, MD Skincare is adding an acne-control collection and Prevage is coming out with an eye treatment. For more, see pages 4 and 5.

MD Skincare Spots Dollars in Acne

NEW YORK — Spot on? If Dennis Gross has anything to say about it, it will be "spot off."

In October, his indie skin care brand, MD Skincare, will launch three new products specifically dealing with acne — but this isn't your seventh-grade pimple cream.

"There are two types of acne — flat and bumpy," said Gross, a New York University-trained dermatologist and skin cancer researcher who founded MD Skincare in 2000.

Why does that matter? "Flat acne, which is the beginning stage of acne, can be treated early — and that will minimize the chances that it will grow into bumpy acne," he said. In fact, he explained, flat acne can appear on the skin as many as 30 days before transforming into bumpy acne — acne that is inflamed and infected.

Given that acne can appear at any age — and can be made worse by factors like hard water — the market is "wide open," said Gross. "While prescription Accutane is effective in dealing with severe acne, it also carries a number of possible side effects and many doctors are reluctant to prescribe it. There is a real need for effective, topical, non-prescription solutions."

All-Over Blemish Solution is Gross' answer to flat acne. Although it employs an old favorite for dealing with acne, salicylic acid, it's the delivery system that's different this time, said Gross. A proprietary chelating complex blocks the actions of calcium and magnesium, which Gross said can cause one's own oils to form waxy plugs in the pores and cause breakouts. A potent form of salicylic acid then lifts the waxy plugs, while farnesol kills bacteria in the pores and bisabol (the active ingredient in chamomile) soothes redness and inflammation, Gross explained.

All-Over Blemish Solution will retail for \$94 for 1.7 oz. It can be used by any skin type, although Gross recommends that dry and combination skin be treated once at night; oily skin can be treated in both the morning and the evening.

Correct and Perfect Spot Treatment targets bumpy acne as it appears on the sur-

face of the skin. Gross explained that its formula is designed to pull blockage from the pores, "sort of like reverse osmosis." Sulfur is said to control the oil that feeds bacteria, while farnesol targets bacteria deep in the pores. It is \$28 for 0.5 oz.

All-in-One Cleansing Foam, \$36, contains chelators to help neutralize the damaging aspects of hard water, as well as witch hazel for a gentle drying effect, Gross said. "You don't have to dry out your entire face to get one particular spot," he said. In fact, that can actually make acne worse, he added, because the skin then goes into overdrive, producing even greater quantities of pore-plugging oil.

The myriad misconceptions about acne — that scrubbing with harsh cleansers will help it, for instance — have made Gross passionate about education. "The real trick to getting people better is educating them," he said. To that end, MD Skincare will relaunch its Web site, mdskincare.com, on Monday, said Carrie Gross, chief executive officer of the firm and Dennis Gross' wife. "It will be set up in a way that a new consumer can log on and get a prescription for their skin type — and exactly why it is right for them — as well as printable instructions," said Carrie Gross. "We will also continually update the site, and it will be a good source of information for everyone, from customers to salespeople."

The brand is available in about 775 specialty store and spa doors, including Nordstrom, Sephora and Bergdorf Goodman. It will also be carried in the Sephora stores-in-store at J.C. Penney, said Stefani Thionnet, executive vice president of MD Skincare. "However, spa doors are still very important to us, and we continue to add spa doors and professional treatment options for them," she said, adding that Bacara Resort and Spa, in Santa Barbara, Calif., and Miraval Spa in Tucson, Ariz., are two of the latest to carry MD Skincare. The brand is also growing its international distribution, and plans to add Space NK in the U.K. this fall. It is already sold in a number of countries outside the U.S., including at Mecca Cosmetics in Australia, and is expanding in doors in Japan, Hong Kong, Korea and Mexico.

While none of the executives would comment on projected sales, industry sources estimated that the acne line would do at least \$8 million at retail in the U.S. in its first year on counter.

— J.N.



Part of the new acne lineup.