

Beauty

anti-aging

6 Anti-Aging Products You Don't Actually Need

By Amber Brenza April 21, 2015



Firming creams, tightening serums, dark spot correctors—these days, drugstore shelves are packed to the brim with anti-aging products. But how many of them can really help turn back the clock? Turns out, not every single one. Here, 6 products you can definitely leave off your shopping list.

1. Growth-enhancing eyelash serums

If you're looking for some magic in that mascara wand, you won't find any, says Ranella Hirsch, MD, a board-certified dermatologist in Boston. "Most of those lash enhancing products are actually just conditioners, which provide moisture, and they often make growth claims beyond what can do," she says. The only true lash-lengthening product is FDA-approved Latisse, but you'll have to ask your derm for a prescription. But before you try it, know that a 30-day kit will run you about \$120 and can trigger red, itchy eyes and, rarely (but alarmingly), permanent darkening of the skin near your lashes or of the iris itself.

2. Targeted neck creams



Photo by i love images/Getty Images)

Using separate creams for your face and neck is a luxury, not a necessity. The cream you use to firm and moisturize your face can do the same for the skin on your neck. Just be sure to choose one that has either retinol or glycolic acid, not both. When combined, the pH levels of each active ingredient interact, which can result in the product becoming ineffective, explains Karen Hammerman MD, a board certified dermatologist at Vanguard Dermatology in New York City.

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3. Anti-aging cleansers

Cleansers are another product you can keep simple; since the product is on your skin for only a few seconds, there's not even time for anti-aging products to work. "Unless you have specific skin concerns, there's no point in over-spending on them," says Hirsch. But that doesn't mean any cleanser will do. Take into account your skin type before making a purchase: "Foaming cleansers are better for oily skin and non-foaming cleansers are better for dry skin," says Rebecca Kazin, MD, a board certified dermatologist at the Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery. Two of her recommendations: Cetaphil Gentle Skin Cleanser (\$11, cetaphil.com) and CeraVe Hydrating cleanser (\$11, walmart.com).

4. Anti-aging hair care

Unlike your skin, hair isn't actually a living organ. So it's just a marketing technique when products claim to slow the aging process, says Hirsch. One caveat: as you age, your hair does become drier, more brittle, and more vulnerable to damage, says Kazin. So while you can't reverse your hair's age, you should be caring for it carefully. Opt for hair products that protect your hair from the abuse of dyes, chemicals, and styling tools. A good everyday conditioner, like Pantene Pro-V Daily Moisture Renewal Conditioner (\$4, pantene.com) will help prevent some wear and tear, and prepping hair for styling tools with

a spray containing dimethicones, which shield strands from heat, is a must, too. Try John Frieda Frizz-Ease Heat Defeat Protective Styling Spray (\$7, drugstore.com).

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5. Novelty anti-aging makeup

(Photo by studio 504/Getty Images)

Color cosmetics used to be just for looks, but now you can find ones made with bona fide anti-aging ingredients like wrinkle-reducing peptides and skin-plumping hyaluronic acid. But if the area you're using the product on is small, you may be better off leaving it on the shelf. "When you use topical anti-aging products, you apply them thoroughly to the entire face," says Hirsch. With something like an anti-aging eye or lip liner, only a small portion of your skin is exposed to the product—which means you're not getting much bang for your buck. Total-coverage cosmetics like foundation, however, are worth springing for in anti-aging form.

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6. Anti-wrinkle patches

Many companies are introducing adhesive strips aimed at smoothing areas like your forehead or eyes by exposing your skin to ingredients like hyaluronic acid or peptides, or by simply physically preventing you from wrinkling your skin. While they're good at de-puffing under-eye bags and making skin look instantly dewy, you won't see wrinkle-erasing results, according to Hammerman. At best, the adhesive patches may temporarily smooth fine lines, but once the tape comes off and the skin relaxes, wrinkles will return.

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