

THE BEAUTIFUL NOW

Anti-Aging Advice from a Veteran Beauty Editor

It's not all about wrinkle creams



As much as I like to think and act like I'm still in my late 20s, the reality is that I turned 45 in March. Looking through photos, it seems like just yesterday I was dancing on tables at Bungalow 8, getting married, having my first child. But then, invariably, I accidentally click on the self-facing camera and I am reminded—rather forcefully—that I am not as young as I feel.

The truth is, my skin doesn't look anything like it did in my 20s (or even early 30s) and that's ok. When I look at my face now, I don't see crow's feet and marionette lines, I see years of passionate living, loving and laughter. As I've gotten older, my interest in beauty has evolved from a relentless focus on looking perfect according to someone else's ideal to looking good enough for me. I've had what one makeup artist generously called "Charlotte Rampling eyes"

and a co-worker called “the type of droopy upper lids that are perfect candidates for blepharoplasty” since I was a baby. But why would I want to change that? It’s such a part of me that I would look like a completely different person if I ever did anything about it. And you know what the best thing about getting older is? At 45, I actually like myself and don’t want to see a stranger when I look in the mirror every morning.

All that said, what I do care about—way more now than I ever did in my younger years—is being (and staying) healthy. Wearing sunscreen everyday, eating a clean, whole foods diet, avoiding smoke (even second hand): These are the things that really make the most profound difference in how well you age. As Coco Chanel famously said, “At 20, you get the face that nature gave you, at 50, you get the face you deserve.” I have high hopes for 50!

When it comes to anti-aging, there’s no question I’ve benefitted from working in the beauty industry for the last 20 years. During my tenure as the beauty director of InStyle and later the executive editor, I tested thousands of products and interviewed hundreds of derms and I can say with conviction that I have a good sense of what really works (and what really doesn’t). So, without further ado, here’s my best advice.

1. EMBRACE RETINOIDS

If you don’t want to try Botox (in the immortal words of Sex & The City’s Samantha Jones, “that works every time!”) then your next best bet is a prescription retinoid (in fact, many people do both). Use these only at night because they make skin photosensitive and don’t play well with some other antiaging ingredients. Since they can be irritating, you should start out using them just a couple times a week to see how your skin handles it. Use only a pea-sized drop on your entire face—any more and you will definitely be inflamed. If that still seems too harsh, consider an over the counter retinol.

TBN product picks: Youth Corridor RetinUltimate Transforming Gel (\$450, netaporter.com); Olay Regenerist Intensive Repair Treatment (\$16, amazon.com). Studies show this product produces comparable results to .02% tretinoin after 24 weeks and is much better tolerated by sensitive skin. **RoC Retinol Correxion Sensitive Night Cream** (\$20, amazon.com).

2. PUT ON YOUR MORNING LAYERS

To protect skin from sun and pollution, you need to start each day with two layers: the thinnest product (the antioxidant serum) goes on first, then follow that with a broad spectrum sunscreen that won’t make you breakout.

TBN product picks: Skinceuticals C & E Ferulic (\$155, amazon.com). If you are looking for a less expensive option, try Boots No. 7 Protect and Perfect Serum, \$27, amazon.com. Like Skinceuticals, this serum contains a stabilized form of vitamin C (but costs less and contains hexapeptides that enhance its efficacy). Elta MD, \$33, amazon.com – this one absorbs instantly and won’t make you breakout.

3. AFTER 40, CONSIDER FILLERS

The late Frederic Brandt once told me that the biggest mistake many women make as they age is not doing anything about age-related volume loss. He believed that the changing structure of your face is what really makes you look old, not wrinkles. If you can afford it, the most natural way to preserve your appearance over time is to carefully combine small amounts of filler with small amounts of Botox (you should still be able to see wrinkles when you smile). This is what virtually every single actress in Hollywood knows but never talks about (in fact many of the ones who vehemently claim they never do Botox actually just use fillers). This will help preserve the buoyant cheekbones of your late 20s/early 30s without making you look like a statue at Madame Tussauds.

TBN recommends: Dr. Dendy Engleman (820 2nd Ave. NYC 212-661-3376); [Dr. Michelle Yagoda \(1025 Fifth Ave. NYC 212-434-1210\)](#); Derek H. Jones (9201 W. Sunset Blvd. LA, 310-246-0495)



Photo courtesy Harvard Health Publications

4. EAT A MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Mediterranean foods are low in sugar, high in fiber and lean protein. They're also loaded with antioxidants and other radiance-boosting phytonutrients. By contrast, the highly refined, overly processed diet typical of most Americans actually accelerates wrinkling and sagging. If you can't imagine radically changing your diet, consider investing in a clinically proven anti-aging supplement.

TBN product pick: **Imedeen Prime Renewal Skin Collagen Formula Beauty Supplement**, \$73, [amazon.com](#). Though nutritionists insist whole foods are always better, a recent double blind placebo controlled study proved this unique combination (marine complex 210mg, vitamin C 54mg, zinc 4mg) could provide “significant improvements in the appearance of facial photodamage.”



Photo Comedy Central

5. STOP SMOKING & CUT DOWN ON BOOZE

Smoking constricts blood vessels which impairs blood flow, so less oxygen and fewer vital nutrients reach your face. Picture Magda, the chain smoking old lady in *Something About Mary* and you get the idea of what this does to your complexion over time. Alcohol is the other major beauty thief. A major diuretic, it causes the body to retain water, leaving skin dry and puffy, which, over time, leads to more wrinkling. It is also a hepa toxin which compromises the functioning of your liver, the body's main detoxification system. And all that late night peeing? It's not just wreaking havoc on your beauty sleep, it's also robbing your skin of radiance by sending key beauty vitamins (A,C, E, D and K) down the toilet. If you don't want to totally kick the habit, derms recommend sticking with clear liquors that are relatively low in congeners and sugar such as Vodka, tequila or gin. They get out of your skin more quickly and are less likely to cause a spike in blood sugar, which causes wrinkles.

TBN recommends: If you drink more than 2 glasses of wine, take a B-complex vitamin supplement plus extra thiamin (100 mg). Consider also taking a milk thistle supplement. Studies show it can help detoxify the liver. Siymarin, which is the active component in milk thistle has anti-fibrotic, anti-viral, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties which help protect liver cells from damage caused by alcohol.



Photo courtesy Smart Brow

6. FILL IN YOUR BROWS

Sad but true: As we get older, the hair in our brows, like the hair on our heads, gets thinner. Brows add structure and symmetry to your facial features, so you don't want that scaffolding to get shaky. The most effective fix: microblading, a new type of brow tattooing procedure (Olivia Palermo is reportedly a fan). Check out how it's done [here](#).

TBN product picks: Guerlain Universal Eyebrow Kit (\$53, [amazon.com](#)); Smartbrow (\$60, [amazon.com](#)), a semi-permanent brow filler which uses a blend of polymers and microscopic hair-like fibers fill in any thinning or sparse spots.



9. Zap Your Jowls

There was a time, not long ago, when the doctor's office was the only place where you could really expect to see a meaningful change in your skin. But the technology for at home gadgets has come a long way in recent years and now there are a slew of them that totally work—maybe not as well as a professional treatment but well enough to be worthy of an investment.

TBN product picks: Nu Face Toning Device (\$325, [amazon.com](#)). It uses electrical waves to stimulate the muscles in your face, causing an instant lifting and firming effect.

7. LOSE THE EXTRA BAGS

As we get older, the fat pads under our eyes shift, causing a once temporary problem (induced by say, polishing of a bag of Barbecue Pop Chips before bed) to become a bit more intractable. So what can you do if you wake up looking like the bottom of a jar of Gefilte fish? Apply chilled spoons or a gel ice pack to eyes for at least five minutes. The cold causes blood vessels to constrict, reducing swelling. Products with caffeine, albumin, or hexapeptides (argireline) can also temporarily tighten the eye area. Zapping this area with some targeted electrical stimulation helps, too. If you already own the Nuface toning device (above), simply buy the attachment for eyes.

TBN picks: Sudden Change Under-Eye Firming Serum (\$9; walmart.com). You have to apply it very carefully—think one small drop under the eye then pat, pat, pat with your ring finger. Nuface Trinity Ele Attachment, \$149, amazon.com



8. JUST SAY NO TO THE MESSY BUN

I used to wear my hair in a messy bun almost every day in my twenties and thirties. And then at some point in my early 40s, I started noticing that I no longer looked cool and jaunty—I looked like a disgruntled librarian who hadn't washed her hair in a week. When I interviewed Jennifer Aniston recently for the cover of InStyle, she told me a ponytail is her “go-to everyday style.” And for good reason: It visually pulls the cheekbones up, making the whole face look more lifted. Bonus points if you add soft bangs and/or long layers around the face, which soften hard lines and downplay any asymmetry.

10. INVEST IN A LASER TREATMENT

The other great piece of anti-aging advice [Jennifer Aniston](#) gave me? Take advantage of non-invasive techniques like [Fraxel](#) (fractional laser), [Thermage](#) (radio frequency) and [Ultherapy](#) (ultrasound). These treatments help tighten skin, reduce fine lines and improve skin texture. If you want to improve the radiance of your skin, there is nothing more effective.

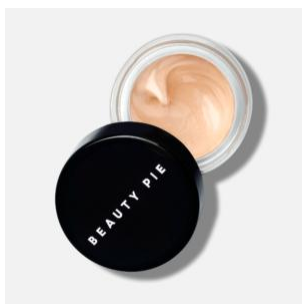


Image courtesy of Beauty Pie

10. STOP USING POWDER

Unless, of course, you DO want to look like Miss Havisham from *Great Expectations*. Even loose “translucent” powder should be approached with caution. Whatever skin products you use should be dewy and illuminating, not drying and shine-zapping.

TNB product picks: Beauty Pie Triple Beauty Liquid Luminizer (\$28, \$2.88 members, beautypie.com) Uma Ultimate Brightening Face Oil (\$150, amazon.com).

11. USE LESS MASCARA

Three words: Tammy. Faye. Baker. Spidery lashes don’t look good on anyone, let alone women over 40. Heavy mascara on the bottom lashes can cast shadows under your eyes, which exacerbate circles. Some women find they look younger by forgoing mascara altogether. My advice: Use a light hand and a tiny wand for natural, non clump lashes.

TBN product pick: L’Oreal Telescopic mascara (\$8; amazon.com)



11. MEDITATE

Spending 20 minutes a day training your brain to be less reactive to stress is a great investment in your sanity—not to mention your ability to age gracefully. To this end, I highly recommend downloading the life-changing app, OMG I Can Meditate (free on itunes.com). Headspace is another great app for meditating on the fly.