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5 New Retinol Trends You Need to Know About

Liz Ritter | October 5, 2016



It's more than solidified itself as the "gold standard" anti-aging ingredient, but now retinol is having a big-time resurgence—this time finding its way into new product formulations that make it easier than ever to get your daily dose. Here are five really interesting applications to get this A-list active into your routine.

Wearing Retinol During the Day:

It used to be that retinol was only a nighttime ingredient, but now there are products on the market that claim they're safe for daytime, too. While that all sounds fantastic for better skin, there's still some debate surrounding the subject:

DON'T do it: "I don't care what they say! Retinol breaks down in sunlight, so it's only a nighttime product," Santa Monica, CA, dermatologist [Ava Shamban, MD](#), stresses. Plus, because retinol is photosensitive, Pepper Pike, OH, plastic surgeon Lu-Jean Feng, MD, says you absolutely must practice safe-sun protocols whenever you use it. "I still recommend that if you are using an OTC retinol product, you only apply it at night."

DO give it a try: Las Vegas plastic surgeon Goesel Anson, MD, says she doesn't view it that way. "We used to think that retinoids should be used only at night because they make skin more sensitive to the sun. Rather, the product/formulation itself was unstable in light, sun and air."

Modern packaging keeps the product more stable, so this is less of a concern today.” Richland, WA, dermatologist Sidney B. Smith, MD, says he is also OK with recommending retinol for daytime application. “I have my patients use their retinol/retinoid in the morning with at least an SPF 30 sunscreen or at night with hyaluronic acid or a good moisturizer. Both options are very effective.”

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Applying It Around Your Eyes + All Over Your Body:

Dr. Feng says these two applications are the big ones when it comes to new releases. “For the eyes, it’s about minimizing wrinkles; for the body, I’ve been seeing targeted offerings that help with pigmented areas and sun damage.”

Combining With Other Active Ingredients:

“The current trend today is using a combination of ingredients, such as retinol and stem cells,” Dr. Feng says. “This combination allows a sensitive patient to experience the benefits of retinol while minimizing irritation and inflammation.” Another big one: mixing it in with other antioxidants.

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A Surge in Plant-Based Versions:

Dr. Anson admits that the problem with retinoids is that they all have some tendency to cause inflammation and irritation. “Interesting new plant-based topicals from various sources are being developed that have retinoid-like properties without the irritation.”

Encapsulating It:

Amandine Isnard, head of product development for EVE LOM, says the number-one new trend for retinol is the encapsulation of it. “This enables a safe, stable and targeted delivery and has been the most advanced innovation recently,” she explains. “You basically enclose the retinol molecules within a microscopic sphere to protect it from light, oxygen and other aggressors. This not only stabilizes the retinol molecule and ensures its maximum potency, it also facilitates a controlled delivery and drives the active ingredients deep beneath the skin.”

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