

Beyond Sunscreen: Reducing Sun-related Skin Damage From The Inside Out

Here's a bright idea to help you save the skin you're in: Stay out of the sun. Ultraviolet rays contribute to premature skin aging and even cancer.

What To Do. One way to help can be through the savvy use of sunscreen. Apply about a palmful of a water-resistant sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 15 or higher to your arms, legs, neck and face 30 minutes before going outside, no matter what the season or the weather. Reapply every two hours or more often if you have been swimming or perspiring.



More good news: You don't have to look older than your years due to sun overexposure from years before.

The secret to healthy skin aging, dermatologists say, lies largely in the body's ability to repair DNA—the complex molecules found in every cell that carry individual genetic “codes.” The condition of your DNA is essential to maintaining the healthy functioning of your body as you age. The body continually replaces cells in every organ, including the skin (the body's largest organ), that have served their useful lives and no longer function. In a constant cycle of regeneration, new cells take the place of old cells. If the DNA “code” becomes damaged, however, the new cells will carry the same damage.

According to top skin care professionals, such as Noah S. Scheinfeld, M.D., FAAD, a Yale-educated, board-certified dermatologist, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Columbia University Medical Center and author of numerous medical journal publications on dermatology, healthy DNA is one of the keys to avoiding the tell-tale signs of premature aging. “Dermatologists have established the link between excessive sun and DNA damage in skin cells,” states Dr. Scheinfeld. “The permanent effects of DNA damage to the skin—including hyper-pigmentation or brown spots, patches, premature lines and wrinkles and, in extreme cases, skin cancer, are clear,” he continues. “One obvious solution is to limit sun exposure and use sunscreen. But AC-11 may hold an additional answer.”

A Plant Has The Answer. Derived from a plant called *Uncaria tomentosa* found in the Amazon Rainforest, AC-11 is a safe, essentially alkaloid-free, all-natural, water-soluble extract that can be consumed orally or absorbed by the skin in a topical cream formula. Studies published in dermatology journals, including several by Dr. Scheinfeld, show that AC-11 measurably reduces DNA damage caused by non-oxidative stress (that is, overexposure to UV/solar rays), as well as oxidative stress (caused by free radicals and other factors such as chemical toxins, alcohol and tobacco). The dramatic, visible result is smoother, more supple and youthful-looking skin at almost any age.

— NAPS