

Which OTC Skin-Care Products Really Work? Dermatologists Weigh In

BY TRAE BODGE

We polled top dermatologists and plastic surgeons to see which skin-care products they personally recommend and use. No appointment or co-pay required!

Best skin calmer



"I encourage my patients to add an antioxidant layer to their skin regimen, like YourGoodSkin Balancing Skin Concentrate. Antioxidants work to calm and protect the skin by preventing oxidative cellular damage due to environmental stressors, the sun, and even internal stress. This one comes from a fantastic new and affordable product line, Your Good Skin, and contains a combination of several potent antioxidants, including vitamin C, vitamin E, and green tea extract. I've been using it recently and find it feels great on and makes my skin calmer and less reactive." —*Jacqueline Berliner, MD, of Marmur Medical in New York City.* These are the 17 skin-care tips dermatologists use on themselves.

Best for improving skin evenness



"SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic Vitamin C Serum for Skin is my go-to to help lightly reduce pigmentation and give radiant skin and stimulates collagen production. It's the best antioxidant on the market." —*Alexander L. Blinski, MD, founder and injection specialist of Plump Cosmetics & Injectables in New York City*

Best facial scrub



"An exfoliating scrub should be an essential part of a patient's everyday skin-care routine. By using a gentle exfoliator like Aveeno Positively Radiant Skin Brightening Daily Scrub, patients can expect improvement in skin tone, texture and clarity, ultimately providing for brighter looking skin." —*Stephen T. Greenberg, MD, FACS, cosmetic plastic surgery specialist with Greenberg Cosmetic Surgery in New York City*

Best retinoid



"Any dermatologist will tell you that a topical retinoid is an essential part of any anti-aging routine. Retinoids, which dermatologists use primarily for acne, also have potent anti-aging benefits, including the elimination of fine lines and wrinkles. Until recently, retinoids could only be purchased with a doctor's prescription. Now there is one available over the counter! Differin Gel 0.1% is a gentle, effective topical retinoid that can help with acne and prevent skin aging. A little goes a long way with these products, so you only want to use a pea-sized amount to the entire face nightly." —*Joyce Imahiyerobolp, MD, director of cosmetic dermatology at South Shore Medical Center in Norwell, Massachusetts.* Get the scoop on the best anti-aging secrets dermatologists won't tell you for free.

Best moisturizing cream



"CeraVe Moisturizing Cream contains glycerin, hyaluronic acid, and ceramides, which are excellent for adding additional moisture to the skin. Use on a slightly damp face to bind water to your skin. My skin tends to get very dry in the winter, and

this product is effective since it has both hyaluronic acid and ceramides, which is a perfect combination to bind water to my skin and hydrate it in the winter months." —*Debra Jaliman, MD, board-certified dermatologist in New York City and author of Skin Rules: Trade Secrets from a Top New York Dermatologist*

Best lip balm



"In the winter months, I suffer from dry lips and use Aquaphor Lip Repair for relief. It's fragrance-free and very effective in bringing moisture back to the lips. I often recommend it to avoid severe dryness. A common mistake is the use of flavored lip balm when we are suffering from dry lips. Unfortunately, most of these flavored lip balms cause an allergic contact dermatitis and worsen dryness." —*Kristina Goldenberg, MD, a dermatologist at Goldenberg Dermatology in New York City.* Find out the truth behind other horrible skin-care advice dermatologists hear all the time.

Best brightening mask



"Acure [Brilliantly] Brightening Mask is one of my favorite products to travel with, as it refreshes and brightens dull, dry skin after a long flight! This mask utilizes green clay to draw out impurities, Moroccan argan oil and CoQ₁₀ to provide moisture, and chlorella, a type of green algae, to brighten and rejuvenate. The exceptional benefits of co-enzyme 10 make this one of my favorites." —Gary Goldfaden, MD, a dermatologist based in Hollywood, Florida, and founder of skincare brand Goldfaden MD

Best facial cleanser



"The Amarte Daily ExfoliPowder foaming cleanser is a game-changer in the physical exfoliant market. The foam cleansing effect lifts oils and soluble debris while the super-fine grain powder exfoliates the outermost stratum corneum. I love it because it cleanses thoroughly *and* exfoliates to a polished finish without irritation." —Craig Kraffert, MD, a board-certified dermatologist and president of Amarte in Redding, California. Here are more of the 10 best dermatologist-recommended products for every skin-care concern.

Best moisturizer



"I love using NEOCUTIS BioCream because it's an excellent moisturizer and a versatile product. It can be used for anti-aging, applied post procedure, and is safe for sensitive skin types. The product uses revolutionary PSP, which is a protein blend of human growth factors that revitalize the skin, reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, and provide nourished looking skin in a non-comedogenic manner. It's my go-to night care product." —*Amy B. Lewis, MD, a New York City-based dermatologist*

Best anti-itch lotion



"I keep Sarna Original Anti-Itch Lotion in my medicine cabinet at my country house upstate for use on itches and bites. I also recommend this simple OTC anti-itch lotion to all my patients with itchy rashes like eczema, poison ivy, insect bites, etc. The menthol and phenol cause a cooling sensation that supersedes and thereby stops itching. It works in just ten to twenty seconds and can be used as often as needed." —*Neal Schultz, MD, New York City-based dermatologist, host of DermTV.com, and creator of skincare brand BeautyRx by Dr. Schultz*

Best body moisturizer



"As a busy mom and full-time physician, I don't have a lot of time to fuss with my skin care, but I know how important it is to keep skin well-moisturized. I personally use Eucerin Intensive Repair Lotion and also recommend it to my patients who have very dry skin. It's got alpha-hydroxy acids to help exfoliate while supporting the protective barrier of the skin with natural moisturizing factors. This is a great product to help smooth rough, very dry skin. One of the best drugstore skin-care products out there." —*Elizabeth Tanzi, MD, a dermatologist at Capital Laser & Skin Care in Chevy Chase, Maryland*

Best sunscreen



"My favorite sunscreens are physical blockers (mineral-based) containing only two key ingredients: zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide. These ingredients reflect sunlight and are less likely to cause skin sensitivities or allergies. The Neutrogena Pure & Free Baby Sunscreen Broad Spectrum has a light texture and is suitable for all skin types." —*Lisa Xu, MD, board-certified dermatologist in Valencia, California.* Next, find out the sunscreens dermatologists use on themselves.

Best facial spray



"A little spritz of La Roche Posay Thermal Spring Water during the day can soothe and perk up people whose skin is dry and sensitive to chemicals. I keep a bottle of this on my desk and use it to spritz my face as a pick-me-up during the dry winter months." —*Anthony Youn, MD, FACS, a holistic plastic surgeon based in Troy, Michigan.* Don't miss these other 20 drugstore beauty products dermatologists swear by.