

5 myths about WRINKLES

Every day, we see ads for creams and new treatments that promise to smooth lines and wrinkles. There are loads of options... and a lot of misinformation. Before spending your money on supposed miracle products, see what the experts have to say about ageing skin – and what really makes a difference.

MYTH #1

Sleeping causes wrinkles

MYTHBUSTER You may have heard that sleeping on your back will help you avoid wrinkles, but studies are inconclusive, and since we change positions 16 to 20 times during an average night, it's hard to stay face-up. What we do know is that a good night's rest can prevent wrinkles. Our skin switches into a healing mode when we sleep – the body kicks up collagen production, secretes skin-thickening growth hormones and increases blood flow to the epidermis for faster cell turnover. "There isn't an injectable, laser or product that can do what sleep does," says dermatologist Dr Doris Day. So prioritise your beauty sleep, and your skin will look its best.

MYTH #2

My mum has lots of wrinkles, so I will too

MYTHBUSTER You're not destined to see your mum in the mirror. While genetics plays a role in wrinkles, other factors – especially sun exposure and smoking – hinder the production of collagen and elastin and so have a big impact on how your

face weathers the years. UV rays are responsible for as much as 80 per cent of the sun damage that ages us. Your ethnic background also plays a role. Caucasians are much more likely to show signs of ageing sooner, while Asian, Aborigine, African and Hispanic women may not develop wrinkles until as long as a decade later. But even if you have a darker complexion – ie, more UV-protective melanin – you still need sunscreen.

MYTH #3

Moisturising a lot will prevent wrinkles

MYTHBUSTER Moisturising makes the skin look and feel softer, but for wrinkle prevention, apply sunscreen early and often. Studies show that SPF may allow your skin to repair itself as well as prevent future damage. "Select a sunscreen labelled 'broad spectrum UVA/UVB 50+'," says Melbourne dermatologist Dr Adam Sheridan. In addition to your daily sunscreen, make sure to also use an antioxidant serum – resveratrol, retinol, and vitamins C and E are all effective – for a one-two punch against damage from sunlight. Need more food for thought? Raspberries, green tea and lutein-rich foods like broccoli, egg yolks and leafy green vegetables may also be protective.

MYTH #4

Injectables are the only true fix

MYTHBUSTER Nope – there are many treatments to choose from. Few ingredients have a better wrinkle-erasing record than retinol, a topical form of vitamin A that stimulates wrinkle-smoothing collagen. Peptides are similar to retinols, but aren't as strong or as irritating. And lasers deliver a targeted zap of heat that "essentially causes a bunch of little wounds, and the skin creates new collagen as part of the repair," which can add volume to skin, says dermatologist Dr Ranella Hirsch. Redness and swelling last for a few days, and multiple sessions are usually required.

MYTH #5

Facial exercises prevent wrinkles

MYTHBUSTER Exaggerated expressions meant to tone facial muscles don't fight off wrinkles. Puffing out your cheeks, sticking out your tongue and puckering your lips may even deepen the lines that naturally develop over time, warns dermatologist Dr Rachel V. Reynolds. Of course, that doesn't mean that you should aim to be expressionless, especially when it comes to smiling. Simply activating those muscles can bring on actual feelings of happiness. **E**