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16 secrets to aging well

great advice for
body *and* soul

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Aging Beautifully

BY RONA BERG

When it comes to aging well, here's a thought: **"IT'S WHAT YOU DO EVERY DAY THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE,"** says Lara Davidson, spa director at California's Spa at Pebble Beach. "Getting enough sleep, exercising, eating right — the fundamental things your mother always told you to do." Excellent advice, but what if you didn't always listen to mom and are now seeing the proof? Don't worry, there is still plenty you can do to play catch-up. Here's how to handle the 10 most common visible signs of aging — and some advice for your mind and soul as well.

* DULL COMPLEXION

As we age, our skin-cell turnover slows, and our new cells don't grow as fast as they did when we were younger. Much like dry autumn leaves blocking your drainpipes, the buildup of dead cells can lead to dull, flaky skin, especially on the cheeks and around the hairline. But the solution is easy: routine exfoliation. Depending on the degree you seek, you can do anything from a simple at-home scrub to an in-spa oxygen facial, chemical peel or silk peel (a relatively new procedure where a diamond-tipped device is used to exfoliate and infuse physician-strength vitamin C serum to plump and brighten).

Makeup can also make a difference. Keep it creamy, advises celebrity makeup artist Rose-Marie Swift, founder of the 100 percent natural luxury makeup line RMS Beauty. "Powders will slowly settle into fine lines and pores, but cream-based makeup containing organic oils such as jojoba [closest to human sebum] will add the needed moisture to make skin look flawless," she says. Use a highlighter or luminizer to warm dull skin. "A light sweep across the cheekbones and a dot on the lids gives a glow of light and creates a dewy, three-dimensional finish," says Swift. "It is the quickest way to give instant life to skin and enhance the natural glow that may be missing." **TRY:** Ren Micro Polish Cleanser, \$30, sephora.com; RMS Beauty Living Luminizer, \$38, rmsbeauty.com

* SAGGING SKIN

Deep below the surface, as the bonds between connective tissues loosen, skin becomes thinner, which makes it lose its snap. But wait, there's more: As our bodies lose calcium our bones shrink but the surrounding skin doesn't. "The effects of gravity are most obvious around the jawline," says Dr. Jody Levine, director of dermatology at Plastic Surgery and Dermatology of New York City. Effective noninvasive treatments include galvanic facials (which rely on electrodes to plump and tighten) and the more dramatic microcurrent facials in which a machine sends an electrical impulse deep into muscles and skin to stimulate cellular reproduction and tightening. A series of 10 treatments is recommended for optimum effect; results can last from one to three months.

"For mild sagging, use Thermage CPT," says Debra Jaliman, M.D., a Manhattan board-certified dermatologist and assistant professor at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. "It uses radiofrequency to stimulate your body's renewal of collagen. Patients immediately see tightening up to 10 percent, then more over the next six months until they get the final effect. For deeper sagging, laser photorejuvenation, which stimulates collagen, is an option." Firming creams can also be helpful. Look for ones with retinol, peptides and hyaluronic acid, which binds in moisture. **TRY:** Lavera Hydro Lifting Serum, \$95, lavera.com



* EYE LINES

"The skin around the eyes is where you see the earliest signs of aging," says Levine. That's why eye cream is really important, both to plump out the area and to keep the skin hydrated. Look for tightening ingredients like spirulina and seaweed, nourishing peptides and essential fatty acids. Acupressure treatments like lymphatic drainage massage, which releases lymph fluid and increases circulation, will give the area a lift.

Choose your eye makeup wisely, warns Swift. "Avoid using aggressive eye makeup removers and under-eye concealers; over the long term, they can dry out the skin and age it," she says. Instead, "look for makeup that is moisturizing and healthy for the skin, containing healing natural oils such as jojoba and coconut, and natural butters like shea and cocoa." **TRY:** RMS Un Cover-Up concealer, \$36, rmsbeauty.com; Suki Eye Lift Cellular Renewal Cream, \$55, sukiskincare.com

* HANDS

The skin on the backs of the hands is always exposed, which leads to dark spots and thinning. "Most aging is caused by sun damage, and your hands get daily UV exposure that breaks down the collagen," says Helen Storer, spa director at the Peninsula Spa Beverly Hills. She suggests a broad-spectrum sunscreen and moisturizer with antioxidant ingredients such as coenzyme Q10, licorice extract, green tea and vitamin C, which lighten dark spots and improve uneven texture and tone. Another tip: While going through your daily skin-care routine, "take a drop of whatever you're using for your face and wipe it on the backs of your hands," says Storer.

For severe spots, try laser resurfacing or photorejuvenation. For crepey skin, look to skin-tightening techniques with lasers or oxygen infusion to stimulate collagen. **TRY:** Luzern La Defense SPF 30, \$45, luzernlabs.com; Le Mieux Vita C Serum, \$65, lemieuxcosmetics.com



* LAUGH LINES

You call them laugh lines: the verticals etched in from the outside of the nostrils to the corners of the mouth. But the technical term is nasolabial folds. Whatever the name, the lines that once required a face-lift to erase are now filled in and smoothed with hyaluronic acid injections, Sculptra or Radiesse fillers, or fat extracted during surgery. "The only truly effective way to plump deep nasolabial folds is with fillers," says Jaliman. For lighter lines, pat on a plant stem-cell cream or serum beneath your sunscreen in the mornings; it will plump up the lines temporarily. **TRY:** Dermelect Resurgent Stem Cell Firming Activator, \$39, dermelect.com



❖ CELLULITE

Known as “orange peel” due to its unfortunate resemblance, cellulite afflicts up to 90 percent of women, young and old, overweight or not. Cellulite forms when fat cells within connective tissue enlarge and restrict blood and lymph circulation. “It’s genetic,” says Levine. “Fibrotic bands separating the fat cause ups and downs in the skin.” You can temporarily diminish cellulite’s appearance with a spa wrap or slimming treatment. “Wraps with ingredients like caffeine, citrus and warm mud help flush out fluid and increase circulation,” Davidson says. Applying at-home cellulite creams can be time-consuming, but if used regularly with the right technique — vigorous, circular massage (a small brush can help) — you may see improvement in two to three weeks.

For a more aggressive approach, Levine recommends a new procedure, recently approved by the FDA, called the Bella Contour. A combination of ultrasound, microcurrent, galvanic and massage techniques, “it opens up the fat cells to allow fat to move into the bloodstream where it can be broken down,” Levine says. You will see tightening right away, but 10 treatments are recommended, twice a week for five weeks; effects last up to a year. Follow-up treatments are recommended every year or so. **TRY:** Amala Detoxifying Firming Treatment, \$44, spiritbeautylounge.com, Tara Spa Body & Massage Oil, Detoxifying, \$21, taraspa.com

✿ HAIR LOSS

"Our hair gets thinner as we age due to hormones and a loss of estrogen," says Jaliman. "The amount our hair thins depends on how much hair we start with, as hair loss is genetic." Regular heat styling (blow drying, flat ironing, hot curling) will make it worse, so use heat-protection products. Tight styles like braids, chignons or slick ponytails may also lead to breakage. When it comes to styling, "avoid any type of cut that involves razoring," says Philip Pelusi, celebrity hairstylist and founder of Tela Beauty Organics. "This will drastically compromise the health, wealth and longevity of your hair. Also, opt away from a one-length cut. Instead, embrace shorter layers in the front where hair is traditionally thinner and more delicate."

Another tip: Massage the scalp to stimulate blood flow to the follicle. "I recommend doing it when the hair is wet or when you are applying conditioner in the shower," says Pelusi. "When you massage your scalp when your hair is wet, the pressure applied is less harsh on the hair." If hair loss is severe, consult your dermatologist for prescription medication. Biotin, a B vitamin, has also been known to help healthy hair growth. **TRY:** Healer, \$36; telabeautyorganics.com; Peter Lamas Chinese Herbs Regenerating Scalp Serum, \$45, peterlamas.com

✿ HAIR GAIN

It's a cruel trick of aging: You lose some, you gain some. "While loss of estrogen can cause hair loss, it can also trigger unwanted hair," says Jaliman. "You can temporarily treat it by tweezing and waxing." Depilatories, bleaching creams or professional waxing are good options, but beware if you use glycolic acids or chemical peels: these can make skin extra sensitive. After waxing, soothe skin with a botanical face oil.

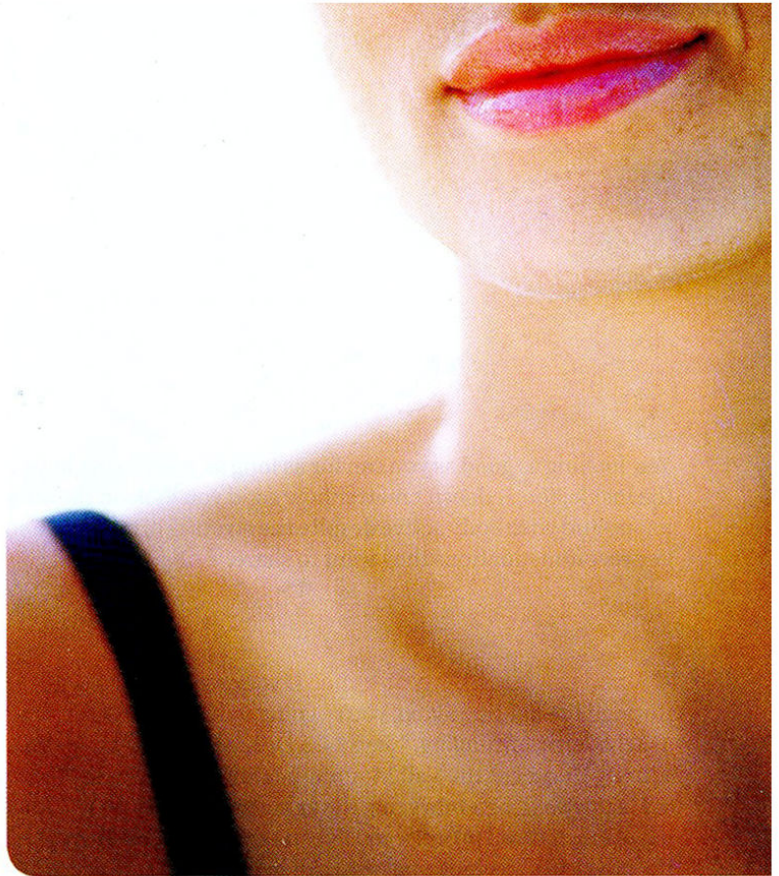
"For permanent reduction, you can opt for laser hair removal or electrolysis," says Jaliman. (Note: Laser hair removal doesn't work on blond or grey hair; the hair needs some pigment.) After six laser treatments you should have a permanent 80 percent reduction. **TRY:** No! No! Hair Removal Device, \$270, my-no-no.com



* NECK

There's a reason fashion editors over 40 made turtlenecks chic year-round. Because it is so often neglected, the neck (and décolletage) can be the first area to age. Storer says women who take great care to protect their faces from UVA exposure easily overlook the neck. Crepey skin is easy to prevent and hard to improve. "Keep up on the broad-spectrum sunscreen," she recommends. The neck is especially vulnerable in women who have gained and lost weight, says Levine. "The skin gets stretched and loosens," she says.

Once the damage is done, if you want to avoid surgery, Levine suggests a skintight laser or laser lipo treatment, where a laser is inserted into a tiny nick to tighten the skin. The least aggressive approach is to find a cream that is "active enough but also moisturizing," she says. Apply it in upward strokes. "I'm a big fan of retinols to help thicken and firm the skin, and peptides to promote collagen growth," Levine says. **TRY:** Patyka Biokalifin Repair Night Serum, \$110, patyka.com



* LINES AND WRINKLES

"Lines from facial expressions can become more noticeable as collagen weakens," says Jaliman. On the forehead and between the eyes, an expressive face, along with sun exposure and the resulting breakdown of collagen and elastin, can lead to lines and wrinkles. That's why it's so important to use sunscreen and keep skin moisturized — from the inside out. Drink eight glasses of water every day; it helps cells remove toxins (through sweat) and soak in nutrients. Diet counts too: Eat lots of yellow and orange fruits and vegetables, rich in vitamin A, and antioxidant-rich berries to protect skin from cell-damaging free radicals.

On a topical level, "moisturizing skin well and using retinols [vitamin A] and peptides will help improve skin texture overall," says Levine. Used once or twice daily, creams with added ingredients such as argireline, vitamin C (ascorbic acid) and hyaluronic acid can help reduce the depth of wrinkles. But if the lines are really deeply embedded, "you need to fill them," says Levine.

To maintain healthy, happy skin, she suggests a three-pronged approach: Eat clean, protect your skin from the sun and use a retinol or antioxidant cream to protect against free radical damage that breaks down healthy skin and leads to lines and wrinkles. **TRY:** Absolution La Creme du Jour, \$69, spacenk.com; Immunocologie Treatment Cream Venomax Light, \$195, immunocologie.com