

Anti-Aging at the Drugstore: What You Need To Know Before You Go

Dr. Goldberg Offers Advice for Navigating the Aisles in Search of the Fountain of Youth, as he puts the Country's Most Popular Products to the Test.

Q: Dr. Goldberg, over the last decade, we have become a society obsessed with maintaining youthful appearance. To meet popular demand, manufacturers have inundated the shelves of drugstores, mass-market retailers and even supermarkets with a sea of anti-aging beauty products. The average consumer can spend an inordinate amount of time trying to sort through all of the claims and ingredients. One would almost need a degree in chemistry to understand some of the catch phrases on anti-aging skin care products. This begs the resounding question: What Really Works and What Doesn't?

A: Existing legislation does not require the cosmetics manufacturer to prove that the product will help the consumer. The burden of choosing falls on the consumer. The key to choosing correctly lies in being able to read and understand ingredient labels. There are many phrases used on the bottles and packaging of skin care products, particularly those marketed for anti-aging, which are meant to lure the consumer into purchasing the advertisement as opposed to the true product. To what degree is this marketing tactic fact or fiction? Legally, cosmetic manufacturers do not need to prove that the products do what they claim to.

Q: Then how do I go about choosing something that works?

A: First, it is important to note that the FDA requires that all cosmetics display a product ingredient label and specifies that the ingredients must be listed in order of their relative amounts as contained in the product. It is common to find that the ingredient that gets all of the media hype is the one contained in the smallest amount. By knowing this, it is easier to determine whether a small amount of an ingredient is worth the excessive difference in price between a designer name product or a similar, less expensive product.

Now, let's take a look at the most popular products and what they have to offer. This evaluation will give you a better understanding of the various ingredients and what you need to look for in a good and effective product.

<p>Olay Regenerist</p>	<p>Product Claim: "Olay Regenerist helps regenerate your skin's appearance without such drastic measures as chemical peels, cosmetic surgery or laser. Clinical tests have proven that amino-peptides can help regenerate damaged skin. Olay has now proven that Regenerist, using this technology, also regenerates your skin by renewing the outer layer to give you younger-looking skin."</p>	<p>Fact or Fiction?: "The Regenerist name implies it regenerates skin. It does not. The ingredients contained in this product here ARE good moisturizers and anti-oxidants, but these are found in many good skin care products," said Goldberg. "The product does contains several key ingredients to watch for that WILL improve the appearance of your skin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cyclopentasiloxane and Dimethicone make skin feel silky and increases water content of skin - Niacinamide increases fatty acids in skin lessening water loss - Panthenol increases skin hydration - Tocopheryl Acetate is Vitamin E and it binds water to the skin. It is also an antioxidant - Camellia is green tea and is also an anti-oxidant - Allantoin is an anti-irritant," adds Goldberg.
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<p>RoC®</p> <p>Retinol Correxion™</p> <p>Deep Wrinkle Night Cream</p>	<p>Product Claim: "This exclusive combination of pure Retinol and an essential mineral complex is clinically proven to visibly reduce deep wrinkles while you sleep."</p>	<p>Fact or Fiction?: "'Exclusive' and 'reduce deep wrinkles' are good marketing tools, but there is nothing in the ingredients to fill in wrinkles, especially deep ones," says Goldberg. "The product does contain key ingredients to watch for that WILL improve the appearance of your skin: Retinol and Vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid) produce new collagen, but are not exclusive to this product and will not fill in deep wrinkles," adds Goldberg.</p>
<p>Alpha Hydrox</p> <p>10% AHA</p> <p>Anti-Wrinkle Treatment</p>	<p>Product Claim: "Proven to significantly reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. Safely lifts dead cells from the skin's surface to revitalize and help restore youthful, healthy, radiant looking skin. Renews moisture, refines texture, improves elasticity and skin tone."</p>	<p>Fact or Fiction?: "The 10% pure Glycolic AHA contained in this product will reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. This is accurate. However, there is nothing in the ingredients that will renew moisture," states Goldberg.</p>
<p>Nivea® Visage</p> <p>Q10 Plus Wrinkle Control Eye Creme</p>	<p>Product Claim: "Within 4 weeks, the appearance of lines and wrinkles is visibly reduced. Contains Coenzyme Q10, one of your skin's own anti-wrinkle ingredients."</p>	<p>Fact or Fiction?: "Coenzyme Q10 applied topically is a good anti-oxidant. However, there is no substantial evidence that it reduces lines and wrinkles. The Titanium Dioxide included in the product is a sunscreen that could offer anti-aging properties, but there are many better sunscreens available.</p>
<p>Almay</p> <p>Kinetin Skincare®</p> <p>Advanced anti-aging series</p>	<p>Product Claim: "Almay Kinetin Skincare features kinetin, an anti-aging discovery found in green leafy plants and recommended by dermatologists. After 8 weeks of clinical testing, has shown to: reduce the appearance of fine wrinkles by 45% and fade the look of blotchiness and uneven skin tone by 47%."</p>	<p>Fact or Fiction?: "The key to this product is the kinetin. It is a vital ingredient that is completely for real," says Goldberg. Kinetin is a naturally occurring compound found throughout nature. Kinetin is a cytokinin, a class of plant growth factors that delay senescence (aging) in plants. Kinetin, because it is an anti-oxidant, protects the skin from environmentally-induced free radicals produced by exposure to the sun, smoking and pollution and improves the skin barrier function, increasing its ability to retain much needed moisture," adds Goldberg.</p>
<p>L'Oreal Plenitude Line Eraser™</p>	<p>Product Claim: "Line Eraser with all the age resisting power of retinol, the purest form of Vitamin A. Actually helps reduce the appearance of lines, wrinkles and the signs of time for a years-younger look. In just 2 weeks, skin is smoother and complexion is more even in tone. In 4 weeks, fine lines are significantly diminished."</p>	<p>Fact or Fiction?: "Retinols are the weaker versions of Retin A™. It's effect may be seen after months of use, not in 2 weeks The smoother seen after use of this product is more likely from the glycerin, a water binding product or squalene, an oil that is a good emollient. This effect is temporary and will stop once the product is no longer used," says Goldberg.</p>

Q: Any final words of wisdom?

A: Yes, educate yourself as to what a product's ingredients are, what effect they have on an individual's skin, and whether or not they are necessary. You may find that they have to reassess what you have been using, and spending, and start again using very simple, basic products.

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Dr. Goldberg on the Road:

9/11/2004 International Society of Cosmetic Laser Surgeons Annual Meeting, Las Vegas. "Thermage Skin Rejuvenation of the Aging Face"

10/1/2004 American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Annual Meeting, San Diego. "The Science behind Radiance as a Filler Agent"

10/7/2004 International Society for Dermatologic Surgery, Annual Meeting, Barcelona, Spain. "Lasers, Fillers and Botulinum Toxin for the Aging Face"

10/15/2004 American Society for Dermatologic Filler and BOTOX Workshop-Course Director. "Fillers and Botulinum Toxin Injections" Laser Hair Removal, Workshop Director, Dallas, TX

10/16/2004 American Society for Dermatologic Filler and BOTOX Workshop"-Course Director, NYC. "Filler Agents and BOTOX"

10/31/2004 South Beach Dermatology Annual Meeting, Miami Beach. "Past, Present and Future of Filler Agents"

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