

Larchmont Chronicle

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Q: I'm approaching 40 and I'm doing absolutely nothing in terms of anti-aging for my skin. Where do I even start?

"It's simpler than you think," explains Dr. Rebecca Fitzgerald. What she calls '**the golden three**', *Sunscreen, an Antioxidant and a Retinoid*, team up to slow the aging process. "Your body is wired to heal itself. But without some kind of damage control and prevention, you're acquiring damage faster than your body can repair, so **you want to slow down the damage and give yourself an edge on healing.**"

What we may think causes the look of aging is not from the passing of time as much from habits, she explains. "A 90 year-old monk who rarely goes outside is going to have surprisingly nice skin. That's because the **sun is a bigger culprit than the clock.**"

The sun causes us to accumulate freckles and sun spots and to **lose collagen** (protein in our skin). What we've learned through recent research is that **the more collagen we lose, the less our skin can reproduce**. This precious protein is what gives skin its tautness, strength and resilience from wrinkling.

The combination of specific skincare products performs the major anti-aging duties: blocking sun and protecting collagen. Smooth an antioxidant, such as vitamin C, CoffeeBerry or Idebenone over your face and neck each morning. Top that with a full spectrum **sunscreen of SPF 15** or higher to block UVA and UVB rays, she advises.

UVA rays are damaging your skin right through your car windows through the day, so **reapplying is key**. Mineral sunscreen (such as Colorescience Sunforgettable) can be dusted over your makeup midday to boost protection. **Round out your skin defense team with a Retinoid** to improve skin texture and appearance and further prevent collagen damage. "Starting with some kind of over the counter retinol is fine, then in time you can build up to prescription strength," suggests Dr. Fitzgerald.

Next on the horizon?

DNA repair serums have recently emerged at doctors' offices designed to repair sun-induced and environmental damage and stimulate collagen production. Serums can be used with 'the golden three' to maximize our own defense systems. It's all good news. **You are more in control of your skin's aging than you even knew.**