

Look Younger Now

Color Code

Ethnicity and race play a role in how resistant skin is to sun damage or irritation, and that in turn determines the best fixes for lines and discoloration. We asked top experts to suggest the ultimate skin-care ingredients for every shade.

Black

The problem: “Skin cells become sticky and don’t shed properly,” explains Susan C. Taylor, founding director of the Skin of Color Center at St. Luke’s and Roosevelt Hospitals in New York City. “You get uneven skin tone, such as dark patches on the cheeks and forehead.”

Top treatment: AHAs like glycolic, malic, or lactic acids. “They break the bonds between dead cells so they shed more easily, and they’re less likely to irritate dark skin than rough, granular scrubs,” says Taylor. She recommends DDF Glycolic 10% Exfoliating Oil Control Gel.

White

The problem: “Skin pigment provides some natural sun protection, but since fair skin has little, it’s more prone to free-radical damage from ultraviolet rays,” explains **Mary P. Lupo**, a professor of dermatology at Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans.

Top treatment: “Use antioxidants like vitamin C, green tea, and CoffeeBerry, then repair skin at night with retinol to smooth skin’s surface,” says **Lupo**. She likes SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic serum (antioxidant); and SkinMedica Tri-Retinol Complex, Philosophy Help Me (**Lupo** is a spokeswoman for Philosophy), or La Roche-Posay [R] Redermic Intensive Anti-Aging Corrective Treatment (retinoids).

East Asian and Southeast Asian

The problem: Seborrheic keratosis. “Studies have shown that Chinese and Koreans have large numbers of these



Women with dark skin are vulnerable to hyperpigmentation.

growths, which look like raised brown spots on the face,” Taylor explains. The only way to get rid of them is to have a doctor remove them. “It’s as simple as removing a mole.”

Top treatment: “One study showed that women who protected their skin from the sun had fewer growths,” says Taylor, who prefers sheer formulas like Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunblock SPF 30.

South Asian and Dark Middle Eastern

The problem: “Deep olive skin is especially prone to dark patches by the upper lip, on the cheeks, and on the forehead, and it can be exacerbated by sun exposure, irritating skin treatments, or picking at skin,” says Taylor.

Top treatment: Hydroquinone cream—over-the-counter or

prescription—morning and night, says Taylor. (We like Ambi Fade Cream.) Because it will lighten normal skin, precise spot application is crucial, she adds; try a lip brush.

Latina

The problem: Sagging and melasma. “Many Latinas have lighter skin and end up with photodamage, like Caucasian skin, and pigmentation problems, like darker skin,” says Taylor.

Top treatment: Retinol. “It stimulates collagen to firm skin, and it’s been demonstrated to help reduce excess pigmentation,” says Taylor. To minimize the irritation that’s common with retinol and can trigger even more pigmentation, use it every third night to start, and add one night a week until you build up to five nights a week, advises Taylor, who recommends RoC Retinol Correxion Sensitive Night Cream.

—MARY ROSE ALMASI