



RUTH GRIFFIN

The big change

The menopause can cause all kinds of havoc on skin, but these tailor-made products offer cool, calm relief



Menopause can be a challenging time, but skincare specifically for menopausal and post-menopausal skin can aid this transition and soothe a changing complexion. A recent study of Irish women found that the average age of menopause is 53. A third of this group felt that their skin has changed as a result of menopause, with 61pc citing dry and dehydrated skin, while 59pc reported a loss of firmness.

Why does this happen? Specialist in Cosmetic Dermatology, Dr Katherine Mulrooney, explains: "These changes occur during the menopause because oestrogen (the female skin-protecting and anti-ageing hormone) declines rapidly. "Decreasing collagen levels result in the appearance of more lines and wrinkles, a decrease in oil production and the skin's natural barrier means the skin tends to get drier and more sensitive. Decreased cell turnover results in duller, lacklustre skin, while the hormonal imbalances of the menopause can trigger hot flushes."

So, what can be done to combat these changes? "It's really important to cleanse gently and follow with a hydrating and replenishing moisturiser twice a day, coupled with SPF in the morning time. Wearing SPF daily dramatically minimises the negative side-effects of skin ageing. I always advise patients who are suffering with hot flushes to use minimal products at night and keep their bedroom cool and aerated. The Vichy Neovadiol range is specifically created for menopausal skin and I recommend that to clients."

Dr Mulrooney recommends an inside-out approach to menopausal skincare: "A good diet and plenty of exercise are key to feeling good throughout the menopause, as they are at every stage of life. Key nutrients include plant oestrogens, good fats derived from plants and fish, B vitamins, iron and biotin. Ideally eat a diet rich in brightly coloured fruit and vegetables and lots of oily fish, nuts, seeds, lean protein, minimal alcohol and no smoking. And aim for 30 minutes of light cardio exercise per day."

"Wearing SPF daily dramatically minimises the negative side-effects of skin ageing"

← HAPPY HERBS

If you're looking for an all-natural, deeply hydrating skincare alternative, try Dublin Herbalists Hydrating Face Serum with argan oil and sweet orange, €25, from health stores and Avoca nationwide



PICTURE: CLARINS

Recent studies in Japan have found that soy products can lessen the symptoms of menopause. Scientists discovered that women who took a soy-based supplement called S-equol had fewer menopausal symptoms. Soy is rich in isoflavones, which is a compound that acts similar to oestrogen.

Three firming wonders

Roll on

Amanda Byram jetted into Dublin recently to launch a brilliant new firming serum from No 7 Labs — their Firming Booster Serum is a genius little roller gadget that's applied in an upward motion to the lower half of the face to help firm up and tighten sagging face and neck contours that can occur in the perimenopausal and menopausal age bracket. Apply under your normal moisturiser.

DETAILS: €49 from pharmacies nationwide



Sublime serum

A serum will travel deeper into the skin than topical moisturisers. Anyone over 35 should seriously consider using one, and women going through the menopause should definitely add one to their routine. Olay Regenerist 3 Point Super Firming Serum is a fast-absorbing, non-greasy formula with highly concentrated amino-peptide complex specially designed to give you firmer looking skin on the face, neck and décolletage.

DETAILS: €26.50 from pharmacies nationwide.



Coming up roses

Our skin loses radiance and glow as we age, especially post-menopause. The solution? A rose-toned moisturiser. A great option is Clarins Rose Radiance Cream. Gentle hibiscus sabdariffa flower acids encourage the quick and delicate removal of dead skin cells, to boost complexion radiance, encourage skin renewal and preserve a tighter skin texture.

DETAILS: €49 from department stores and pharmacies nationwide.





Sculpt and soothe

After a whopping 20 years of research, Vichy have developed a whole skincare range specifically made for menopausal skin. Their **Neovadiol Phytosculpt** is their first neck and face contour treatment that restores elasticity, tightens the skin and re-sculpts facial contours during menopause. The secret ingredient is Dehydroepiandrosterone, or DHEA, which keeps skin youthful. The skin loses up to 90pc of this hormone during menopause, resulting in a decrease of skin density. €30, from pharmacies nationwide.

In the neck of time

There's a boom in neck cream sales thanks to the phenomenon that is 'Tech Neck' — the lines and sagging occurring in increasingly younger women as a result of constant downward gazing at devices. During middle age and menopause, our necks' foundational structure decreases in strength. To really look after your neck, check out PRAI Beauty. They are known as the 'Neck-Xperts', with a collection of seven targeted products specifically for the neck and décolletage area. The **PRAI Ageless Throat & Décolletage Creme** restores elasticity and firmness using Sepilift, shea butter, hyaluronic acid and Vitamins A, E and F. €32, from Marks & Spencer and Boots stores, nationwide.



Inside-out protection

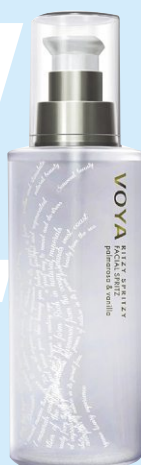
If you fancy giving yourself a booster to counteract the effects of the menopause on your skin, maybe try a nutraceutical like **Hush and Hush Time Capsules**. This is a new beauty supplement from the makers of IMAGE skincare that protects your body from the inside out with a blend of antioxidants, amino acids and vitamins that shields against external aggressors and regenerates from head to toe. There are zero fillers, additives or synthetic ingredients. €65 from hushandhush.ie and salons and skin clinics nationwide.



Six of the best products for menopausal skin

Mist-ical properties

Hot flushes, sweats and red faces are all too common during menopause; for relief, try spritzing with a thermal water mist. A great option for on-the-go instant cooling is **Voya Ritzy Spritz Facial Spritz**, €27.50, from Avoca stores nationwide, health stores nationwide and voya.ie



Heavyweight hydration

Lacura Caviar Illumination Night Cream is a long-term favourite of mine and is ideal for anyone looking for a serious dose of hydration. Collagen levels dramatically decrease during the menopause, resulting in the appearance of more lines and wrinkles. The decrease in oil production and the skin's natural barrier means the skin tends to get drier and more sensitive, so adding an enriched moisturiser like this one is a must. €8.99, from Aldi stores



Beauty big guns

Does it seem like your skin has stopped responding to your regular skincare during The Change? Does it seem dry and thirsty no matter what you use? If so, it's time to bring out the big beauty guns. You only need to use the tiniest amount of **Shiseido Benefiance Wrinkle Smoothing Cream** which visibly smoothes out wrinkles, plumps up lines, and moisturises intensively, to give your face a softer, smoother look and feel. €105, from department stores and pharmacies nationwide.



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