

Eliminating Brown Spots

Even Out Your Skin Tone with Good Care

Many people develop brown spots on their skin over time, especially if they've had a trauma to their skin or spent much time in the sun. The term for these spots is hyperpigmentation, which describes an excess of pigment in the skin. Often an early sign of aging, they may first appear on the backs of hands. These spots can be faded, but patience for the process is required because repeated treatments will be necessary. It takes regular use of sunscreen to keep hyperpigmentation from returning. (Note that hyperpigmentation is different from hypopigmentation, which appears as lighter spots on the skin).

Hyperpigmentation arises when melanin

Hyperpigmentation takes different forms. These include:

FRECKLES/LENTIGENES.

These are the result of an inherited tendency; exposure to the sun will darken their color.

SOLAR LENTIGENES.

These darkened spots on the skin that some call age spots indicate overexposure to the sun that has resulted in ultraviolet light damage.

MELASMA.

Melasma is a response to hormone changes, such as those caused by birth control pills, pregnancy, and menopause, resulting in facial spots.

*Fear less, hope
more, whine
less, talk less,
hate less, love
more, good
things will be
yours.*

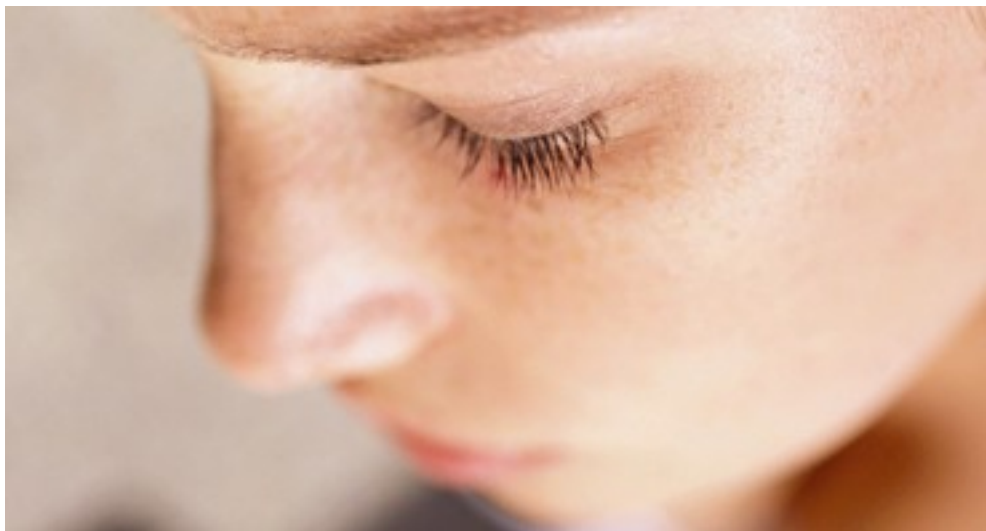
-Swedish Proverb

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Also known as hyperpigmentation, brown spots can be an early sign of aging or skin trauma.

in the epidermis becomes irritated, so to speak, and increases production, darkening the outer skin and becoming visible at the skin's surface. Regularly scheduled professional treatments, combined with a proper home care regimen, can calm the production of melanin and lighten the skin.

POSTINFLAMMATORY HYPERPIGMENTATION.

This is the direct result of an injury to the skin. The body's response to injury is inflammation. Some think this inflammation reprograms melanocytes to be hyperactive and to produce more melanin. It affects men and women equally. Some common pigmentation-

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causing injuries include: abrasions, cuts, and wounds; acne lesions and cysts, excoriations (picking pimples); aggressive chemical exfoliation (peels); aggressive extraction; ingrown hairs; insect bites; scratching; sunburn; and waxing.

There is another type of hyperpigmentation that is more diffused and appears as an overall darkening of the skin, rather than in patches and spots. This condition should be cared for by a dermatologist, as it may reflect a disease or systemic problem, like Addison's disease or scleroderma.)

Causes

Hyperpigmentation can be caused by certain prescription drugs, like antibiotics, antidepressants, barbiturates (depressants), and chemotherapy drugs. Some over-the-counter laxatives with phenolphthalein and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen, can cause hyperpigmentation. Be sure to record your use of these drugs on the intake form (or on an updated health history) when you arrive and verbally mention them to your esthetician before beginning a treatment.

Occasionally, people mistake darkness under the eyes for hyperpigmentation, but this condition is a reflection of the blood vessels through the surface of the skin. These circles have a variety of causes and can sometimes be treated with peptides.

While hyperpigmentation generally affects all races, some forms of it appear more often with certain skin colors and tones. For example, melasma and postinflammatory hyperpigmentation are more prevalent in darker skin. Solar lentigenes are more prevalent in lighter skin (ninety percent of white adults older than 60 have age spots); they also are more common in women than men.

Prevention

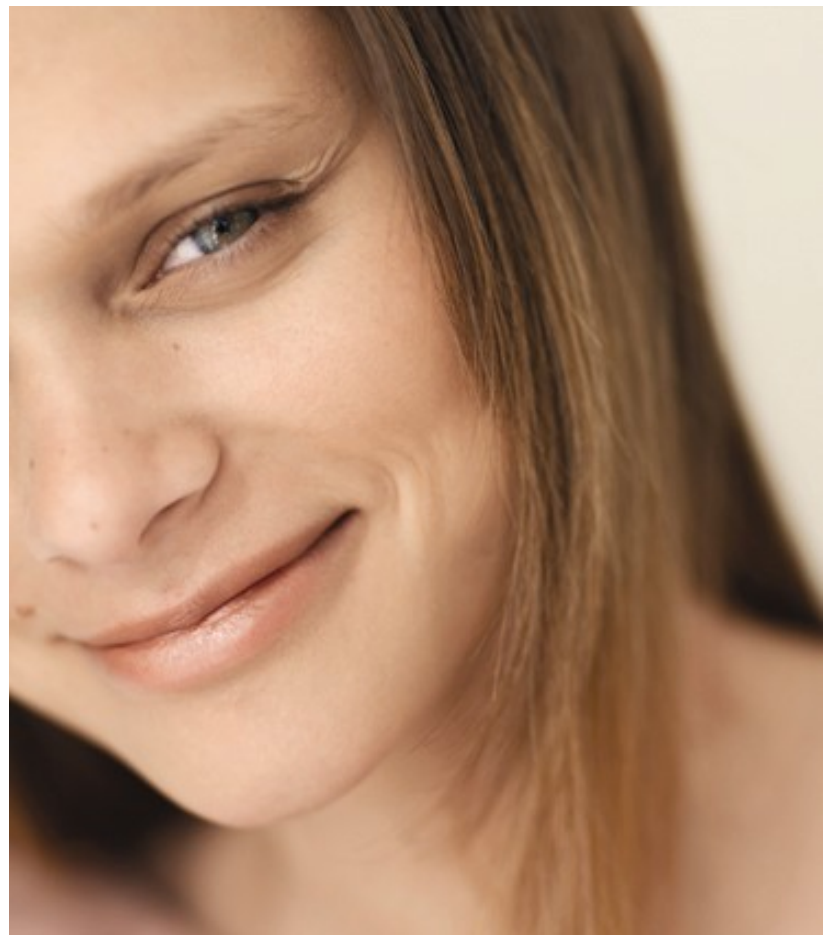
It's very important that you follow the instructions of your skin care professional in preparing for any skin treatments. Your skin care professional will take steps to avoid inducing

pigmentation when he or she performs chemical exfoliation, extractions, or waxing. For example, you may be advised to undergo preliminary treatments or to use skin care products, or both, for several weeks before chemical exfoliation (peels) or microdermabrasion. This preparation will reduce the odds of postinflammatory hyperpigmentation and give you better treatment results when you do receive peels or microdermabrasion.

To prevent sun-induced hyperpigmentation and other skin damage, sunscreen is the most important product to use. Diligent use of sunscreen can prevent further sun damage, but it cannot repair damage already done. Experts strongly recommend using generous amounts of SPF 15 (or higher) sunscreen at all times, reapplying it every few hours. Sunscreens with avobenzone, titanium dioxide, or zinc oxide provide the most complete coverage. Even more importantly, sunscreen reduces ultraviolet light exposure, which reduces the risk of skin cancer.

Treatment

As a member of Associated Skin Care Professionals (ASCP), your esthetician is prepared to help address questions you have about your skin and to work with you to determine the most useful care that meets your needs. The treatment of brown spots can be highly effective, but it takes a bit of time. Professional treatments for hyperpigmentation may include chemical exfoliation or microdermabrasion in combination with topical products. Or, topical treatments may be used alone. Your esthetician can best determine what will bring you the greatest results. Again, following the directions for home care after professional treatments is very important to your success. Make the most of the time and money you've invested in your treatments by following up on your esthetician's instructions.



Your esthetician can provide options for evening out skin tone and eliminating brown spots.

Managing Arthritis

Exercise and Bodywork Keep Joint Pain at Bay

The word arthritis strikes fear in the hearts of older adults. It often signifies aging, pain, inactivity, and disability. However, new research shows moderate physical exercise can actually ease arthritis symptoms by decreasing pain and increasing a person's likelihood of living a normal life.

Understanding Arthritis

The most common form of arthritis--osteoarthritis, or also known as degenerative arthritis--affects more than twenty million Americans. Osteoarthritis (literally meaning "bone-joint inflammation") is caused by wear and tear on joint surfaces and most frequently involves the hips, knees, lower back, neck, and fingers. More than half of people over sixty-five have some evidence of osteoarthritis on X-rays, although it doesn't always manifest as symptoms.

Many problems arise from a sedentary lifestyle. Joints lose flexibility and muscles lose strength, feeding the cycle

of pain, inactivity, and more pain.

Exercise Offers Sweet Relief

Vigorous walking, swimming, and bicycling boost the release of powerful endorphins, the body's natural painkillers. When done four to five days a week, these aerobic activities improve general cardiovascular health and aid in weight management (obesity is the single biggest risk factor for osteoarthritis).

Strengthening and stretching exercises targeted at maintaining joint flexibility and muscle strength--especially for at-risk joints--slow the progression of degenerative arthritis. Yoga classes and moderate weight lifting programs are excellent ways to improve strength and flexibility. Bodywork can also provide relief.

If arthritis is slowing you down, get serious with your exercise plan. Consult your physician; work with a professional trainer, physical therapist, yoga

instructor, or bodyworker; and start a gentle, progressive exercise program. Your joints will reward you for it, and you'll free yourself from arthritic pain.



Stretching can slow degenerative arthritis.

Good News About Ginger

Shelley Burns

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is known to aid digestion and strengthen the immune system. It is used as a home remedy (flat ginger ale) when feeling under the weather or nauseous, and is blended with honey and lemon in a drink to ward off a cold or flu. Now ginger has come back into the spotlight, this time to promote healthy skin.

One of ginger's active enzymes--zingibain--reduces inflammation, therefore reducing the risk of acne, psoriasis, and other inflammatory skin conditions. Ginger's antimicrobial and antiseptic properties can also kill the bacteria that causes acne. It promotes skin elasticity and firmness due to its antioxidants gingerol and shogaol, which have both been shown to fight skin-damaging free

radicals.

To achieve these skin benefits, I advocate using actual ginger root. Why take capsules when you can use the root? It is cost-effective and has a great return on investment.

It's easy to use the root to make a cup of ginger tea. Peel the ginger root and cut it into thin strips. Steep the strips in a cup of boiled water for 10-15 minutes. If need be, sweeten the tea with other warming spices such as cinnamon and clove, along with agave nectar.

When you are unable to brew a cup of ginger tea, add a drop of ginger essential oil to your daily moisturizer. If you are

looking at using it for other health benefits, such as reducing the pain of arthritis, you can massage the painful area with the essential oil. Please note essential oil is not for internal use.

Several new studies have also shown that ginger may help reduce anxiety. Not convinced yet about the benefits of ginger? Some say it could also work as an aphrodisiac, due to its promotion of blood circulation.

*Our ideas, like
orange-plants,
spread out in
proportion to
the size of the
box which
imprisons the
roots.*

-Edward Bulwer Lytton

I get asked about chemical peels often and clients are intimidated by the name Chemical.

The word "chemical" can often evoke negative connotations. Chemicals used in chemical peels jumpstart the skin's natural process of rejuvenation. Chemical peels have been helping people get beautiful skin since the times of ancient Egypt and Rome! Ancient Egyptian women used sour milk (a source of lactic acid) to rejuvenate skin, while women in ancient Rome exfoliated with grape skins (a source of tartaric acid). To get the best results pre- and post-care is important to reduce the chances of irritation. Also, most light-to-medium peels typically require at least six treatments over a three-month period to see optimal results.

Don't be intimidated any longer book your peel today!

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