



COSMOPOLITAN

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
BY MYRTHE  
GIESBERS

BY BETH  
GILLETTE AND  
DEANNA PAI

Friends, it's a wild skincare world out there right now. There's a new! latest! life-changing! treatment every other TikTok post. But the truth is you can't try *everything* (also, hi, that's what we do for you). Here are the only products, treatments, and trends you need to care about right now.

HAI TACHIBANA/MAKEUP MAKEUP; LOS REYES MANICURE; ELIZABETH GARCIA

## Peptides Are Your MVPs

It's not a trip to Sephora without walking through shelves of peptide-infused lotions, creams, gels, everything. The wildly popular ingredient, a type of amino acid also found naturally in skin, may help "reduce the appearance of wrinkles, improve the skin barrier, ease inflammation, and promote elasticity," says Melanie Palm, MD, a dermatologist in San Diego. Not all peptides are created equal though. Enzyme inhibitor peptides block the stuff that breaks down skin-firming collagen. Signal peptides encourage your cells to produce *more* collagen, elastin, and other proteins. Carrier peptides can transfer other actives, like copper and magnesium, into your skin for better results. And neuropeptides can halt some of the muscle contractions that cause lines and wrinkles, leaving your skin smoother and more supple, explains NYC dermatologist Claire Chang, MD. The delivery method is up to you, but you can't go wrong with a peptide-rich serum or moisturizer.



Laboratoires Florga  
Time Filler Shot 5XP,  
\$76, florga.com



Alpyn Beauty  
Instant Bright  
Eye, \$52, alpyn  
beauty.com



StriVectin SD  
Advanced Plus  
Intensive  
Moisturizer, \$82,  
strivectin.com

## FYI, You Can Now Inject Your Moisturizer

The newest kind of hydrating hyaluronic acid serum, Skinivive by Juvéderm, comes in a syringe.

### WHAT IT IS

"Skinivive doesn't change your facial shape or add volume," says Claire Chang, MD. "Rather, it's used to give a longer-lasting boost of hydration." When injected into the cheeks, it aims to deliver a lit-from-within look. "Light reflects better off the cheek area and provides the appearance of a lasting glow," explains Melanie Palm, MD. Skinivive can also increase aquaporin, a protein that helps water flow in and out of cells, keeping your skin moisturized.

### HOW IT WORKS

A doctor will inject Skinivive into your face via a micro-droplet technique, using a tiny needle to distribute the hyaluronic acid evenly right below the skin's surface. The effects will last about six months.

## Ectoin Will Help You Save Face

Would you slather on bacteria in the name of calming your skin? Then, welcome, you're in the right place. Ectoin, a member of the peptide family, is an extremolyte, a science-y name for a small but mighty molecule found in certain bacteria. In microorganisms, ectoin creates a physical barrier against potentially damaging stressors like extra-hot temperatures or, say, the ice-cold Arctic. And it can do similar for you by helping shield your skin cells from environmental stressors like UV radiation, pollution, and blue light and by sealing in moisture to keep your complexion healthy. Look for serums, cleansers, and creams with ectoin at the top of the ingredient list, and use them twice daily to help soothe inflammation, protect your skin barrier, and reduce splotchiness, says NYC dermatologist Marisa Garshick, MD. Pro tip: Ectoin is even more effective when it's paired with treatments like retinol. Because it helps hydrate and protect from irritation, it can allow your skin to tolerate powerful active ingredients without burning, itching, or peeling side effects.

1. IS Clinical Retinol+ Emulsion 0.3, \$105, dermstore.com. 2. Byoma Barrier+ Treatment, \$19, ulta.com. 3. Alastin Skincare C Radical Defense Antioxidant Serum, \$196, alastin.com. 4. Skinfix Barrier+ Ceramide + Ectoin Gentle Gel Cleanser, \$30, sephora.com.



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## Your Favorites Are Now for Everyone

For decades, most mainstream skincare products were tested—for performance and safety—only on fair-skinned people. All others had to gamble that a formula would also work for them, because things like oil production, moisture levels, and even signs of aging can differ across skin tones and ethnicities. “For example, women with melanin-rich skin produce three times more sebum than those with lighter skin tones,” says Rolanda Wilkerson, PhD, a principal scientist at Olay. As a result, she says, they need products that address extra sebum and that support their skin barrier. But because the majority of formulas have historically been created with lighter skin in mind, when it comes to, say, oil-control products, women of color have been left with options that just aren’t effective enough. Now? Companies have finally adjusted their testing practices. Olay evaluated its new tab-to-foam cleanser (that’s it to the right) on a diverse group of skin tones and types to make sure it could eradicate excess oil while still being gentle. And Mary Kay runs its clinical tests on all skin tones, from light to very deep, in order to ensure its products work for everyone, says Lucy Gildea, PhD, chief innovation officer for product and science.

1. **Mary Kay Mineral Facial Sunscreen Broad Spectrum SPF 30**, \$28, [marykay.com](http://marykay.com). 2. **Olay Cleansing Melts**, \$10 for 32, [olay.com](http://olay.com).



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### Sorry, the Spa Facial Is Officially Dead

True, she felt great. But she didn’t ever do much beyond clear some gunk out of your pores. The next-gen replacement happens in a dermatologist’s office and combines multiple treatments in a single session to actually improve dark spots, acne, fine lines, and dullness. Typical are techniques like dermabrasion, LED light therapy, microcurrent, and radiofrequency, some of which provide immediate results and require no downtime.

#### TRY THESE

##### 1. DiamondGlow

A 45-minute treatment that infuses hydration into your skin. \$150 to \$350

##### 2. Hydrafacial

Thirty minutes of skin-cleaning and serum-infusing. \$200 to \$250

##### 3. Glo2Facial

A three-part treatment that uses oxygen bubbles and sculpting massage. \$200 to \$500

## Bodycare Just Got Way Better

We’ve said it before and we’ll say it again: **The skin on your bod should get the same TLC as the skin on your face.** And you just ran out of excuses, thanks to the latest actives-infused formulas. By “infused,” we mean “absolutely packed with” because body skin tends to tolerate a lot more action than sensitive facial skin, says Dr. Garshick. Cosmetic chemist Javon Ford points to hero exfoliators like glycolic acid for sloughing off dead skin and to salicylic-acid-spiked washes, peel pads, and retinol-infused serums for erasing keratosis pilaris bumps, ingrown hairs, and breakouts. Vitamin-C-rich lotions help ease post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation on your chest, stomach, and legs. **The tech has also caught up, with devices once reserved for the face now heading south.** Microcurrent, which powers at-home devices like the Nu Skin RenuSpa iO, uses low-level electrical currents to stimulate and tone your muscles, which may firm sagging skin and smooth out dimples. And LED masks emit wavelengths of light that may reduce fine lines and wrinkles on your neck and chest over time.



**Murad Retexturizing Body Pads**, \$49, [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)



**Nécessaire The Body Vitamin C**, \$55, [necessaire.com](http://necessaire.com)



**Solawave Neck and Chest Rejuvenating Mask**, \$299, [solawave.co](http://solawave.co)



**Nu Skin RenuSpa iO**, \$375, [nuskin.com](http://nuskin.com)

## This Makeup (Really) Does the Most

The biggest—and best, according to makeup artist Daniel Martin—trend in cosmetics is one you’re probably already partaking in. It’s all about hybrid makeup-skincare products that look great on you and are great *for* you (or, okay, for your skin, at least). You can now find blush, bronzer, and even setting powders full of active ingredients like peptides and vitamins that deliver brighter, bouncier skin. Some proof: The fermented arnica in Haus Labs’s cream blush can help quell inflammation and reduce redness, evening out your skin over time. Ingredients like antioxidant-rich prickly pear seed oil make up a whopping 78 percent of makeup artist Lisa Eldridge’s skin tint, while OleHenriksen’s under-eye concealer deploys vitamin C to make dark circles disappear. What we’re really saying here is that what used to take multiple steps and more than one formula can now be accomplished with a single swipe of a single product. Lazy people, it’s your time to shine.



**Saii Dew Bronze**  
Soft Focus Effortless  
Liquid Bronzer, \$25,  
sephora.com



**OleHenriksen**  
Banana Bright+  
Vitamin CC Eye Stick,  
\$35, sephora.com



**Haus Labs by Lady**  
Gaga Color Fuzee  
Glossy Blush Balm,  
\$34, sephora.com



**Lisa Eldridge**  
Seamless Skin  
Enhancing  
Tint, \$49, lisa  
eldridge.com

## Skin Tightening Has Gotten Smart

Restoring smooth, taut skin once required ye olde nip and tuck. Today, noninvasive treatments (as in no scalpel needed) are seemingly everywhere. Many use heat to trigger new collagen growth and help tighten skin, says Melanie Palm, MD. Radiofrequency devices like Thermage and radiofrequency and microneedling tools like Morpheus8 and Secret by Cutera work by targeting the dermis, or your second layer of skin. Ultrasound treatments like Ultherapy and Sofwave, as well as newbie Emface, target even deeper skin layers for better results, with zero damage left behind. All of the above work best for mild to moderate skin sagging, and (honestly, you knew it was coming) they’re pricey. Costs vary depending on your provider (who ideally is a doctor), location, and exact treatment but average out around \$2,300 per session.

## Exosomes Are Your New Superpower

And not just because they sound like something out of a sci-fi movie. These little molecules, typically found in blood platelets, are basically teeny-tiny capsules that “play a role in cell communication and regeneration,” says Claire Chang, MD. They’re becoming mega-popular in doctors’ offices for the way they may help your skin heal after professional treatments by reducing inflammation and increasing production of collagen and elastin. If you’ve heard of the vampire facial (a treatment that involves drawing your blood, separating platelets, and injecting them back into your skin), this is kind of like that. Except minus the needles. And the blood donation. And the vampires.

1. Plated Skin Science Daily Serum, \$258, platedskinscience.com. 2. SickScience ShapeShift V Line Jaw Defining Serum, \$58, sickscience.com.



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