

# WASHINGTONIAN

## Look GOOD

### Plasma: For Hands?

**What it is:** This latest innovation, trade-named Portrait, uses the same gas common in flat-screen TVs. A device sends plasma energy into the dermis while leaving the surface intact. Over time, new epidermis emerges as old skin sheds.

It's quick and relatively painless but pricey. Dr. Alster, the only provider in Washington, says it is her preferred method for areas other than the face, especially hands, where lasers can scar.

**Best for:** Fine lines, deep wrinkles, moderate sagging, and enlarged pores. Safe for all skin types but may produce prolonged discoloration on darker skin.

**How long it lasts:** Some improvement in tone within

a day or two; gradual tightening can continue for a year. Some experts are not impressed with the results, and the procedure has not been in wide use long enough to produce long-term studies. The manufacturer says its clinical tests suggest results last several years.

**Pain factor:** The procedure takes 5 to 30 minutes under topical anesthetic. Lower levels produce mild redness and flaking for a day or two; higher levels will brown the skin and cause peeling for three to five days. Downtime and recovery are quicker than with ablative laser.

**Cost:** \$1,200 to \$3,000 a session; may require up to four.

### In Your Twenties

The twenties are the time to focus on prevention. "You don't see signs of aging, but it's a good time to think about it because there is a lot of free-radical exposure," says DC dermatologist Tina Alster.

To combat this, use topical antioxidants like vitamin C (often listed as ascorbic acid) or products with vitamins E or B (niacin). Dr. Isaac likes antioxidant products by **Kinerase** as well as **Oil of Olay Total Effects**.

Acne, a common annoyance at this age, has one benefit: Using a retinoid like Differin to fight acne can prevent future wrinkling.

### In Your Thirties

Past age 30, skin can get drier and duller. The first signs of aging—fine lines and uneven texture—appear because of slower cell turnover.

By  
Laren  
Soat

Alster says this is the time to stop using gel cleansers and scrubs and use a more moisturizing cleanser. Topical vitamin C will help with fine lines around the eyes.

Many doctors advise patients in their thirties to use a prescription retinoid like Retin-A, Tazorac, or tazarotene; the vitamin A improves fine lines and speeds cell turnover.

Retinoids can irritate sensitive skin. Nonprescription retinol is another option. Bajoghli says that over-the-counter retinol has not been scientifically proven to do anything beyond moisturizing. But, says Isaac, "something in the family of vitamin A is better than nothing." She likes **RoC Retinol Correxion Deep Wrinkle Night Cream** and **Neutrogena Healthy Skin Anti-Wrinkle Intensive Serum** with retinol.

If you're a woman who is nursing, pregnant, or considering becoming pregnant, some physicians advise against using retinoid or retinol products.

### In Your Forties

This is when it's smart to add a firming and anti-wrinkle treatment. Lines become more visible as collagen and elastin fibers

decrease and cells retain less moisture. A few physicians we spoke with like **SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic**. Alster likes a new line by **Nia24** that contains niacin, a B vitamin, and encourages cellular renewal.

Alster recommends adding an eye cream that contains plumping ingredients like **hyaluronic acid**. Green-tea extracts help lighten dark circles and decrease puffiness.

She also suggests using a product with **glycolic acid**, a fruit acid that causes cells to turn over more frequently and is less drying than Retin-A.

### Fifties and Beyond

Look for a moisturizer with something more. Alster suggests products with hyaluronic acid, while Isaac recommends growth factor or pentapeptides, which, she says, stimulate collagen production.

One such product is **Topix Citrix 20-Percent Serum With Growth Factor**. And in its January issue *Consumer Reports* rated **Olay Regenerist**, which contains pentapeptides, the best wrinkle cream.

Alster also likes **Remergent DNA Repair Formula**, which, she says, helps prevent and may reverse sun damage

Beautiful Skin at Any Age

FEBRUARY 2007



\$3.95 washingtonian.com

# Feel GOOD



Another physician favorite: **Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunblock**.