THE NEW AGE OF AGEING

WORDS BY
JANNA JOHNSON O'TOOLE
Forget forever young.
The new name of the game is forever fresh.

In our current culture of self-care and acceptance, discussing ageing with an “anti” vibe is, well, antiquated. Mindsets are finally shifting and women are no longer looking to erase every sign of a childhood summer well spent (we’re looking at you, freckles). But there’s also no denying that the desire to feel our best is linked to looking our best—even if the definition of “best” is becoming a hell of a lot more gracious. With the oldest cohort of millennials reaching 37 this year, it’s no surprise that the global anti-ageing market (their words, not ours) is growing. According to Research And Markets, the worldwide anti-ageing business will reach a staggering $88 billion over the next five years when the first millennials enter their early forties. This booming business means there’s a flood of new, innovative products and technologies that usher in ageing with a gentler, friendlier touch. The days of looking “done” are well and truly done, but the days of looking your best? Those are yet to come.

“Skin is not just a beauty device, it’s also our largest functioning organ,” says orthopaedic surgeon turned skincare guru Dr Barbara Sturm. It’s easy to forget it serves a much higher purpose than just being a canvas for creams and makeup—the skin is busy protecting us from infectious microorganisms, regulating our body temperature and producing vitamin D, among other important duties. In short, it’s the ultimate multi-tasker, and if it’s forced to devote resources to an additional chore (say, calming a sunburn or fighting off free radicals), something else has to give. “When you weaken the skin cells for one reason or another, the skin barrier functions are basically screwed,” says Sturm. “It can’t do its job protecting, and it lets UV and pollution in. That causes inflammation and a host of issues.”

Simone Vescio, co-managing director of skincare brand Dermaviduals, says it’s about taking a different approach. “I want to dispel the myth the stratum corneum [outer layer of the epidermis] is a conglomeration of ‘dead’, useless skin cells—it’s not! These cells are a living structure capable of self-regulation and integration with other layers of the skin. The underlying cells and systems of the skin rely on the stratum corneum to function in harmony.” Skin health starts and ends with a healthy barrier function.

Sun exposure is cumulative, so there’s still plenty of time to prevent environment-inflicted damage, especially because there’s a lot more than just UV causing our skin grief. As well as pollution, Sturm is particularly worried about the glare from our ever-present mobile phones. “They emit high-energy visible [HEV] light, or blue light, which is a short wavelength. It won’t give you a burn but it goes deep into the skin layers and causes inflammation,” she explains. Research shows that overexposure to blue light accelerates the oxidation process, damaging that ever-important skin barrier and worsening wrinkles, fine lines and hyperpigmentation. It’s another reason to consider not only a digital detox but also a powerful antioxidant to prevent HEV from penetrating the skin. Select a broad-spectrum SPF laced with antioxidants, or layer a mineral SPF over your antioxidant serum. “I prefer mineral sunscreens over chemical,” says Natalie Abouchar, registered nurse and founder of Sydney’s Privée Clinic. “Zinc is very healing for the skin.” Vescio also deems zinc

First, a word on our skin

“My top three tips? Number one: sun avoidance. Number two: sun avoidance. Number three: sun avoidance.”

— Dr Stephen Mulholland, plastic surgeon

Prevention (it’s not too late)

Sun exposure is cumulative, so there’s still plenty of time to prevent environment-inflicted damage, especially because there’s a lot more than just UV causing our skin grief. As well as pollution, Sturm is particularly worried about the glare from our ever-present mobile phones. “They emit high-energy visible [HEV] light, or blue light, which is a short wavelength. It won’t give you a burn but it goes deep into the skin layers and causes inflammation,” she explains. Research shows that overexposure to blue light accelerates the oxidation process, damaging that ever-important skin barrier and worsening wrinkles, fine lines and hyperpigmentation. It’s another reason to consider not only a digital detox but also a powerful antioxidant to prevent HEV from penetrating the skin. Select a broad-spectrum SPF laced with antioxidants, or layer a mineral SPF over your antioxidant serum. “I prefer mineral sunscreens over chemical,” says Natalie Abouchar, registered nurse and founder of Sydney’s Privée Clinic. “Zinc is very healing for the skin.” Vescio also deems zinc.
“THERE’S NO SUBSTITUTE OR EQUIVALENT FOR VITAMIN A”

— SIMONE VESCO, CO-MANAGING DIRECTOR OF DERMAVIDUALS

“a supercharged antioxidant” thanks to its ability to protect from free radical damage. It aids in DNA repair and collagen production, too.

Another preventive ingredient that should be a non-negotiable each morning is an anti-inflammatory such as vitamin B3 (or its derivative niacinamide), says Dr Joseph Hkeik of Sydney’s All Saints Skin Clinic. “It plays a key role in more than 200 cellular reactions, including cellular energy production. No other ingredient we know of behaves this way, and it may explain why it has such a wide range of skin benefits,” explains Olay senior scientist David Khoo. “It boosts cell turnover and maintains the skin’s moisture barrier, reduces blotchiness, decreases fine lines and wrinkles and evens out skin tone.” Khoo recommends the brand’s Total Effects moisturiser, which blends niacinamide with vitamin E and green tea to further fight free radical damage, while Hkeik swears by the potent blend of B3, vitamin C and amino acids found in Rationale’s Immunologist Serum.

Vitamin A (and its derivatives) continues to be the gold-standard treatment at night. “There’s no substitute or equivalent for vitamin A,” says Vescio, who explains that beyond the superficial benefits (fading pigmentation and blurring fine lines), it also promotes cell turnover and may help prevent skin cancer. It can be a tricky ingredient, so ease into it by using a gentler, over-the-counter formulation just a few times a week. And for sensitive areas, like around the eyes, pick a product designed to combat ageing with extra TLC. “The Olay Eyes Pro-Retinol Eye Treatment contains retinyl propionate, a gentler member of the retinoid family of ingredients,” says Khoo.

1. Vitamin A Nanoparticles, $90, DERMAVIDUALS, dermaviduals.com.au
2. Anti-Pollution Drops, $204, DR BARBARA STURM, mecca.com.au
3. Retinol Rescue Overnight Cream, $143, CLARK’S BOTANICALS, mecca.com.au
4. Total Effects 7 In One Day Cream Normal, $33, OLAY, 1800 028 280
5. Immunologist Serum, $163, RATIONALE, rationale.com
6. Help Me Retinol Night Treatment, $65, PHILOSOPHY, 1800 812 663.7
7. Sensitive Shield SPF 30, $75, DERMALOGICA, dermalogica.com.au
8. Eyes Pro-Retinol Eye Treatment, $49, OLAY, 1800 028 280
9. Door Prestige Light-In-White Le Protec tre UV Jevinesse Et Lumières, $170, DIOR, myer.com.au
10. Resist Omega+ Complex Serum, $36, PAULA'S CHOICE, paulaschoice.com.au
11. Tinted Daywear SPF 30+ UVA – UVB, $22, INVISIBLE ZINC, 1800 630 056
12. Private Formula Advanced Night Cream, $49.95, DR LEWINN’S, drlewinns.com.au
13. IntenselyHale TruPhysical, $90, REVISION SKINCARE, envoyaskin.com.au

WHAT’S NEXT FOR SKINCARE?

EMPHASIS ON DNA REPAIR

“New scientific advances have clearly demonstrated that our body’s own DNA repair enzymes play a critical and final step in cell protection against oxidative stress,” says dermatologist Dr Katherine Armour. “Topically applied DNA repair enzymes enhance the body’s DNA repair process and prevent the accumulation of DNA lesions, which can cause cell death, cell mutation and skin cancer.” Armour worked with fellow leading dermatologist Professor Greg Goodman to develop Bespoke Skin Technology, featuring a duo of products that focuses on DNA protection and repair. “Prevention is better than cure. If we can start early with DNA repair enzymes, we can ideally prevent damage from the sun and other environmental aggressors.” The stand-out Complete Daily Armour is also packed with zinc, niacinamide and vitamin D, among other actives.

For a once-a-week treatment, opt for DNA Renewal’s DNA Restoring Mask, formulated by Dr Ronald Moy, a California-based dermatologist and cosmetic surgeon and pioneer in the study of DNA repair. This mask uses enzymes plus vitamins E and C to boost cellular renewal, maximising the correction of sun damage.

GETTING PERSONAL

Forget monogramming everything you own – a bespoke serum is the new luxury. Personalised plasma-laced creams are the main attraction at Sturm’s German office, but you don’t need a European holiday (or blood draw) to benefit from a tailored approach. Dermaviduals’ philosophy is grounded in no two complexions being the same (including your own from season to season), so it creates unique formulations blended to individualised needs. “There should never be a one-size-fits-all mentality for skincare solutions,” says Vescio. “We offer a fully customised skincare range based on the principles of corneotherapy and specifically..."
THE FUTURE IS FERMENTED

In just a few years, kombucha has gone from something your crazy aunt made in her garage to a cafe mainstay. And its addition to beauty products further reiterates the precious balance between good bacteria and happy, healthy skin. "Adding fermented ingredients boosts free radical protection," says Lev Glazman, co-founder of Fresh skincare. "As the barrier becomes stronger, the skin creates natural defences against pollution."

Probiotics are even making their way into toothpaste, working to boost the good bacteria that gets killed by fluoride.

WORKS A TREAT

Opting for minimally invasive procedures is a trend on the rise last year, a study by The American Society For Aesthetic Plastic Surgery found that non-surgical treatments were up 38 per cent in the past five years. Spending a little time in the doc’s chair to gain a lot of time each morning is a smart trade – these are our favourite new "tweatments" the healing process, jumpstarts collagen production. The Perméra handpiece also specifically tackles melanin at a superficial level, making it safe for all skin types. A few sessions will deliver a glowing, more even-toned complexion.

THE REJUVENATING LASER FOR PIGMENTATION

Even if you’ve sworn off the sun, it’s near impossible to completely dodge pesky spots of pigmentation. Dr Stephen Mulholland, a Toronto-based plastic surgeon, likens this uneven skin tone to “dandelions in a garden – if you let them take over it can look bad, but pick them along the way and a few aren’t a problem”. Hkeik employs the Clear + Brilliant Perméra non-ablative laser to tackle sun spots. The treatment creates tiny lesions in the skin, which, through

THE STARTER INJECTABLE FOR A DEWY COMPLEXION

Sure, fillers can be injected deeper down to create volume, but a new technique is boasting radiant results. The treatment sees a cannula used to fan a light layer of filler under the skin to boost hydration levels for ultra-natural lustre. "By injecting a fine blanket of filler into the dermis of the face, we can create an instant dewy glow," says Abouchar, whose clinic offers this innovative treatment known as a Skin Booster. "Hyaluronic acid fillers attract water to the..."
skin surface, increasing hydration.” There’s also the added bonus of a smoother complexion – the filler plumps tiny lines, acne scars and “orange peel” skin, and thanks to a local anaesthetic, it’s virtually pain-free with results lasting up to six months.

THE “NATURAL” SOLUTION FOR UNDER-EYE CIRCLES
A few quick facts: the skin around the eyes is up to five times thinner than the skin on the rest of your face (which means less plump collagen and elastin), and the six muscles in the area make around 100,000 tiny movements every day. Plus, the area is often quite sensitive, making it a no-go zone for particularly active products. All this adds up to overworked and undernourished skin with no poker face: it reveals everything, from a lack of sleep to fluid retention. Platelet-rich plasma injections are a safe solution for brighter, more rested eyes. "It works well at addressing periocular hollowness and uneven texture, as platelets can regenerate all connective tissue including changes associated with age-related bone and fat loss and loss of skin elasticity,” says Abouchar.

THE NEW WAY UP FOR SAGGING SKIN
The latest buzzy treatment is the thread lift, which sees dissolvable surgical strings inserted into the face to subtly pull skin upwards, tightening and smoothing lax contours. It’s popular overseas — Sturm has a waitlist at her Düsseldorf clinic, and it’s often performed at Mulhalland’s practice. Gwyneth Paltrow is a known fan of the procedure, even having a demo performed on stage during her inaugural wellness summit, In Goop Health, last year. "It’s exciting technology,” says Mulhalland, adding that past iterations gave the treatment a bad name. "It takes about half an hour and, because the threads that are now used are bio-absorbable, they go away but the effect lasts for months. "It’s popping up on clinic menus around Australia and is set to become legitimate competition for more painful radiofrequency tightening.

YOU BRUSH, YOU FLOSS (AT LEAST OCCASSIONALLY)
and you do your best to avoid lollies, but that may not be enough to keep your teeth and gums in top form — an important key to the self-care puzzle. "The mouth is a gateway to good health,” says Dr Ron Ehrlich, co-founder of Sydney Holistic Dental Centre. "Your teeth are the hardest substance in the body — if they have holes in them, it is scary to think what your lifestyle choices are doing to the rest of your body,” adds his nephew and colleague, Dr Lewis Ehrlich.

Gum disease can increase your risk of a host of ailments, including diabetes, stroke and difficulties falling pregnant. And contrary to popular belief, there often isn’t any pain associated with it. What’s more, a recently published study on twins found that genetics can’t be blamed for tooth decay — you are, in fact, what you eat. So to further keep your smile, er, smiling, "make food your medicine,” advises Dr Ron.

"Focus on a nutrient-dense diet — eat a variety of colourful vegetables, good-quality and ethically sourced fats and proteins, drink lots of water and restrict your carbohydrate intake.” If you struggle to devour anything green, then a nutrient-packed supplement, such as WelleCo’s The Super Elixir mixed with water or into a smoothie, is a good place to start.

"It’s also important to take the time to de-stress and move your body regularly,” says the younger Ehrlich. "Emotional or postural stress can contribute to clenching and grinding. This can cause cracked, sensitive teeth requiring invasive dental treatment. It can also contribute to headaches, neck aches and jaw pain. Regular massage, Epsom/magnesium salt baths and exercise such as walking, strength training, yoga and Pilates can all assist in breaking this cycle.”

SHADES OF GREY ARE CHIC FOR HOME INTERIORS, BUT NOT SO MUCH YOUR TEETH.
1. INVEST IN A SONIC TOOTHBRUSH and learn how to use it properly. “It’s not a substitute for good brushing technique.”
2. WHEN SELECTING A WHITENING TOOTHPASTE, look for hydrogen peroxide or carbamide peroxide. And don’t rush a brushing session, but do manage your expectations. "Whitening toothpastes will only be present in your mouth for the duration of brushing and therefore won’t have the same effect clinical whitening can have.”
3. THINK OF GOING PRO. “The best chance of getting adequate results is to visit your dentist to see if you are a good candidate for whitening. It can then be arranged to be done in the dental office, at home or a combination of the two.”
4. CUT OUT COFFEE OR TEA, but if you just can’t bear the thought, you can try drinking them through a [stainless steel] straw.
GOT 5 MINUTES?
NuFace’s cult micro-current facial device has been reimagined for the body – just five minutes a day of massaging helps to firm and tone the skin. The brand’s testing found that after 60 days of targeting cellulite on the thighs and butt, 80 per cent of participants’ skin appeared smoother.

QUICK FIX: “Studies show it’s the contrast of eyebrows against the skin that make us appear more youthful,” says Hannah Mutze, Benefit’s national brow artist. “Unfortunately, our brows naturally fade and lose definition as we age, but we can maintain the contrast by adding colour through product application and regular brow tinting. Try a tinted brow gel like Benefit’s Gimme Brow+ for quick and easy colour, or opt for a semi-permanent dye job every two to three weeks – a customised colour will enhance, define and refresh the brows.”

FREEZE FRAME
We put pro-grade body contouring to the test

WHAT IT IS: Clatuu 360° Freeze is a non-invasive cryolipolysis treatment performed at Body Catalyst clinic (in Sydney and Melbourne) that promises to eliminate those stubborn centimetres that get harder to shift as you age, thanks to a slower metabolism, less time spent exercising and muscle loss.

BEFORE: A thorough consultation is paramount to Body Catalyst’s philosophy, so I settle in for a 45-minute chat. My technician, Amy, first quizzes me on the nitty-gritty of my exercise and diet habits. “This shouldn’t be ‘instead of’ living a healthy lifestyle, but rather ‘in addition to,’” she says, reiterating that while cryolipolysis (fat freezing) has a record of excellent results, it won’t really work to its full potential if pizza, ice-cream and a few glasses of shiraz is a regular Friday (and Tuesday) night. Expectations are another important part of the discussion – Clatuu isn’t designed to eliminate kilos of fat but rather address stubborn pockets that won’t budge with the aforementioned healthy lifestyle. My area of concern: bra bulge (aka back fat). You know, the pudgy stuff that hangs over a strap – I find it annoying as fitness bras and tops seem to cut into it just so. Yes, it’s a petty concern and not detrimental to my health, but no amount of butterfly presses targeting my traps makes a difference. Amy is confident Clatuu will smooth the area with one treatment.

DURING: Clatuu works by freezing fat cells to death. The machine uses powerful suction to grab the area of concern and cool it to -9°C. This is the magic temperature, as fat cells die but other cells are totally unaffected. The body then gradually eliminates the dead cells (around 25 per cent of fat cells in the treated area) through the liver. Amy prepares me for the worst: the first 15 minutes might be a little unpleasant. It’ll get cold, potentially tingly to the point of discomfort before going numb as the area freezes for the duration of the hour-long treatment. Honestly, the worst part of the experience is the initial step: application of cold protective silicone gel sheets, which send goosebumps down my arms. The rest of the time? Completely comfortable – I actually almost fall asleep. Once the suction is released and the handpiece removed, Amy gives the area a massage to further break down the fat cells. As circulation returns, it can cause tingling after-pain and nausea, which passes in about 10 minutes. Luckily, I fare without either. The treatment does lower the body temperature, so my fingers are cold for about 30 minutes post-treatment and I have slight bruising for a few days after, but you can definitely return to normal activity asap.

AFTER: In a word (or two): it works. After just a few weeks, the area is smoother and there’s less pudge to squeeze. Does anyone notice the results? Probably not. But I certainly do, and that extra bit of confidence is worth the investment.

Clatuu 360° Freeze treatment, $595 for one area with a variety of pricing packages available,
BODY CATALYST, bodycatalyst.com.au

QUICK FIX:

Gimme Brow+, $40, BENEFIT, benefitcosmetics.com/au

Clatuu 360° Freeze treatment, $595 for one area with a variety of pricing packages available,
BODY CATALYST, bodycatalyst.com.au

PREPARE FOR THE WORST: Expectations are another important part of the discussion – Clatuu isn’t designed to eliminate kilos of fat but rather address stubborn pockets that won’t budge with the aforementioned healthy lifestyle. My area of concern: bra bulge (aka back fat). You know, the pudgy stuff that hangs over a strap – I find it annoying as fitness bras and tops seem to cut into it just so. Yes, it’s a petty concern and not detrimental to my health, but no amount of butterfly presses targeting my traps makes a difference. Amy is confident Clatuu will smooth the area with one treatment.

DURING: Clatuu works by freezing fat cells to death. The machine uses powerful suction to grab the area of concern and cool it to -9°C. This is the magic temperature, as fat cells die but other cells are totally unaffected. The body then gradually eliminates the dead cells (around 25 per cent of fat cells in the treated area) through the liver. Amy prepares me for the worst: the first 15 minutes might be a little unpleasant. It’ll get cold, potentially tingly to the point of discomfort before going numb as the area freezes for the duration of the hour-long treatment. Honestly, the worst part of the experience is the initial step: application of cold protective silicone gel sheets, which send goosebumps down my arms. The rest of the time? Completely comfortable – I actually almost fall asleep. Once the suction is released and the handpiece removed, Amy gives the area a massage to further break down the fat cells. As circulation returns, it can cause tingling after-pain and nausea, which passes in about 10 minutes. Luckily, I fare without either. The treatment does lower the body temperature, so my fingers are cold for about 30 minutes post-treatment and I have slight bruising for a few days after, but you can definitely return to normal activity asap.

AFTER: In a word (or two): it works. After just a few weeks, the area is smoother and there’s less pudge to squeeze. Does anyone notice the results? Probably not. But I certainly do, and that extra bit of confidence is worth the investment.

Clatuu 360° Freeze treatment, $595 for one area with a variety of pricing packages available,
BODY CATALYST, bodycatalyst.com.au

QUICK FIX: “Studies show it’s the contrast of eyebrows against the skin that make us appear more youthful,” says Hannah Mutze, Benefit’s national brow artist. “Unfortunately, our brows naturally fade and lose definition as we age, but we can maintain the contrast by adding colour through product application and regular brow tinting. Try a tinted brow gel like Benefit’s Gimme Brow+ for quick and easy colour, or opt for a semi-permanent dye job every two to three weeks – a customised colour will enhance, define and refresh the brows.”

Gimme Brow+, $40, BENEFIT, benefitcosmetics.com/au

Clatuu 360° Freeze treatment, $595 for one area with a variety of pricing packages available,
BODY CATALYST, bodycatalyst.com.au