

OUR SIXTH ANNUAL NEW GUARD LIST!

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**KERRY'S  
NEXT ACT**  
LIFE AFTER  
SCANDAL

**TRAVEL IN  
STYLE**  
WHAT TO WEAR  
ON PLANES,  
TRAINS &  
AUTOMOBILES

**THE  
POWER**

**ISSUE** MEET 50 WOMEN WHO GET  
EVERYTHING THEY WANT



SKINCARE NEWS

# THE DOCTOR WILL SEE YOU

THE MAKEUP AISLE MAY BE MORE WELCOMING THAN EVER BEFORE, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE DERMATOLOGIST'S OFFICE? BAZE MPINJA REPORTS ON NEW TREATMENTS THAT (FINALLY) OFFER MORE OPTIONS TO WOMEN OF COLOR

While the debate about whether or not social media is ruining society rages on, I'd argue that there's at least one way that it's helped cement a long-overdue but necessary cultural shift: inclusivity in the cosmetics world. We now have more foundation shades (MAC Cosmetics' Studio Fix is currently the winner, with 60) and beauty ads featuring people who defy traditional notions of what a spokesmodel should be, in terms of age (Maye Musk), body type (Ashley Graham), and gender (Patrick Starr). This excites me on many levels—as a black woman, as a beauty-industry veteran, and as a consumer.

But now that I'm sitting pretty on a mountain of dark-brown foundations, I hope the momentum spreads to the dermatologist's office. Like foundation, noninvasive skincare procedures have been around for decades, but

many of the most popular ones—such as treatments using lasers to brighten, resurface, and remove hair—haven't been an option for women of color because they target pigment or emit pulses of energy or heat that can cause hyperpigmentation and scarring in medium and dark skin tones. "Historically, most of these devices have only been studied on lighter-skinned patient populations before entering the market," says dermatologist Andrew Alexis, the director of the Skin of Color Center in New York City.

Sure, there are other antiaging treatments suitable for all skin tones, like chemical peels, neurotoxins, and fillers, but when it comes to lasers, it's as if brown-skinned women like me don't exist. That's especially confusing considering that these devices are often used to treat sun

damage, spots, and skin-darkening conditions like melasma—issues that often trouble Asian, Latina, and black women as they get older. The question is, why? "Science doesn't remain stagnant, but, unfortunately, myopic mentalities do," says Mona Gohara, an associate clinical professor at Yale Dermatology. Alexis adds that during his early years of practice, "the industry seemed reluctant to allocate resources to more diverse testing of laser treatments."

In order for things to move forward more quickly, the medical-device and pharmaceutical industries have to start viewing skin of color as worth the investment. And there are signs that may finally be happening. "I have seen progress," says Gohara. "Lately, whenever a new laser comes out, one of the biggest appeals is that it can be used on multiple skin tones."

The Acrolase, for example, can minimize the appearance of scars and redness, it zaps unwanted hair, and it's safe for dark complexions because it reduces the laser's contact time with the skin from milliseconds to microseconds, significantly lowering the chance of hyperpigmentation. For treating spots, "lower-energy, low-heat lasers, like the Clear + Brilliant, can reduce hyperpigmentation in skin of color because they only do a gentle resurfacing," says New York City dermatologist Rosemarie Ingleton. And the Halo laser, another resurfer that can be used on a variety of skin types, is a hybrid of two wavelengths—gentle and strong. There are also new nonlaser treatments that offer some antiaging benefits. For example, radio-frequency devices, such as the Alma Vshape, can tighten and smooth any shade of skin without damage. (One important note: The experts I spoke with stressed that regardless of the device used, what matters most is that it's in the right hands. If you're a prospective patient, make sure you see a physician who has experience doing these treatments on your particular skin type.)

But even as more inclusive treatments become available, there may still be barriers to entry for women of color. "Many dermatologists are scared to treat darker-skinned patients because the risk of doing harm is higher," says Ingleton, who notes that more education for doctors will help. Better research and development will too. "In the past five years, there's been more recognition of the size of the cosmetic market among patients of color," says Alexis.

In addition to these top-down changes, it will be interesting to see if a grassroots movement develops as women of color head into the dermatologist's office in greater numbers and help push the industry to develop technologies for all skin tones. When that happens, it will be a big relief for doctors who, for years, have had to turn people with dark skin away. Same goes for the patients who just want to be seen. **mc**



With the latest under-eye treatments, you won't have to hide behind shades.

SKINCARE NEWS

## PUFF PIECE

WHEN YOU GET A SOLID EIGHT HOURS OF SLEEP AND YOUR UNDER-EYE AREAS ARE STILL PUFFY, IT MIGHT BE TIME TO SEEK OUT A PROFESSIONAL. COURTNEY DUNLOP UNCOVERS SURPRISING REASONS FOR EYE BAGS—AND NEW TREATMENTS THAT CAN HELP

If eyes are the windows to the soul, then our souls must really need a nap, because dermatologists and plastic surgeons say one of the most common complaints they hear from patients is that their eyes look tired. Typically, this prompts a discussion about under-eye circles, caused by discoloration on the surface or blood vessels visible through thinning skin, but there's another issue that may be the true problem: saggy or puffy eye bags.

"The skin under the eyes is the thinnest on the body," explains Beverly Hills facial plastic surgeon Sarmela Sunder. "You're fighting the downward pull of gravity, and the thinner skin loses the battle faster than an area such as the cheek." It's also susceptible to everyday agers like sun damage, which can, over time, cause the skin to droop or protrude, creating a semicircular line of demarcation between the cheek and the under-eye. "At one point in everyone's life, it becomes an issue," continues Sunder. "For some, it shows up as early as their 20s," usually because of a genetic predisposition. The thing is, not all eye bags are created equally, so they often require different plans of action, depending on their cause. Read on to find yours and send those bags packing for good.

### CAUSE: Fluid Buildup

All over your body, beneath the skin, there's a layer of tissue with fluid-filled compartments called the interstitium. As New York City dermatologist Ellen Marmur explains, the fluid levels are constantly in flux, based on what's going on in the rest of your body. When your gut is out of whack, either because you ate something you're sensitive to (gluten and dairy are common foes), went to town on extra-salty foods like sushi drenched in soy sauce, or drank alcohol, it throws off the interstitium-fluid balance and spillover liquid collects elsewhere. A favorite parking spot: under your eyes. If you're wondering why you could chug crappy vodka all night in college and still look bright-eyed the next day but now you can barely open your swollen eyes the morning after a margarita, Marmur has an explanation for that too: "As you get older, your body becomes more sensitive to things that aren't easy for you to metabolize."

### REMEDY: Exercise (or Abstinence)

Eliminating food and drink triggers is the simplest solution, but what is life without Friday happy hour? The fix: When you wake up with puffy eyes, exercise to move that extra fluid along and drink caffeine, a diuretic, to expel it. "I usually do 30 jumping jacks, 10 burpees, and some sit-ups," says Marmur. "Or do the elliptical machine or bike for 30 minutes. It accelerates your bodily processes to move that excess water. Then have a nice big cup of iced coffee and pee it all out."

### CAUSE: Bulging Fat Pads

Beneath your eyes, there's a pad of cushiony fat held in place by a muscle that acts like Spanx to secure it. "The muscle weakens with age, and you may see that fat start to bubble under the eye because the 'Spanx' is no longer strong enough to keep the fat inside," Sunder says. Some women are predisposed to this type of eye bag and there's not much they can do to prevent it from happening. Luckily, there are some solutions.