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Does What You Use Between Neurotoxin Appointments Matter?

Tatiana Bido | September 14, 2022



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If you're a wrinkle-relaxer devotee, you may be used to going into your expert injector's office every 3-5 months for a touch up. If you're a novice, you may not be sure how often you should be going back and what to do in the interim to ensure that results last. However often you're going in for line-smoothing injections, experts say that what you use on your skin does matter and incorporating certain ingredients into your regimen is a must.

How Important Is Choosing the Right Skin Care?

"It's as important as the Botox itself," explains New York dermatologist Dennis Gross, MD. "My motto is, you see the dermatologist once in a while, you use your skin care every day. Injections are really fixing a problem, but they're not making it look better. What you do between injectable treatments can fix those problems while also making your skin look better."

The Trifecta

According to the pros, you can't go wrong with incorporating the following three products into your routine and sticking with them. "In general, the most rigorous scientific data supports the use of sunscreen, retinoids, and antioxidants such as vitamin C, although there are many others of interest and growing research," explains Campbell, CA dermatologist Amelia K. Hausauer, MD. "Additionally, evidence looking at peptides, growth factors and other signaling molecules has advanced in recent years."

“My trifecta is a hyaluronic acid–based product along with chemical-free sunscreen and a product to increase skin cell renewal like a topical vitamin C,” explains Beverly Hills, CA facial plastic surgeon **Kimberly J. Lee, MD**. Also included on the menu is a retinol at night says Saint Petersburg, FL oculofacial plastic surgeon Jasmine Mohadjer, MD: “It improves skin tone, fine lines and facial clarity and radiance.”

Here, the exact products our experts recommend to help boost wrinkle relaxing results and protect your investment.

1 / 7

“I recommend the Skinbetter Science InterFuse Intensive Treatment (\$130)—it contains Hyaluronic Acid to help fill in lines. It’s like Botox in a bottle,” says New York facial plastic surgeon Dilip D. Madhani, MD. “I advise adding a retinoid at night to continue skin cell turnover. I also advise you to always use SPF to protect your skin, especially treated areas.”



2 / 7

“Hyaluronic acid not only retains skin moisture and reduces fine lines and wrinkles, it also reduces skin inflammation which allows the neurotoxin to last longer because it decreases protein breakdown in your skin,” says Dr. Lee. “My favorite topical supplement is vitamin C which encourages collagen and elastin production to keep skin supple and firm. Mineral based sunscreens, like my Dr. Kimberly J. Lee Reflect (\$60) formula protects skin from sun damage, skin cancers, and premature wrinkle formation and age spots.”



3 / 7

“Jan Marini Skin Research Regeneration Booster (\$220) is a high-quality product that works with all skin types,” notes New York facial plastic surgeon Lee Ann M. Klausner, MD. “It’s full of peptides and antioxidants which help improve the appearance of wrinkles, texture, pore size, elasticity, skin clarity, hydration and overall satisfaction. It brightens skin and reduces the appearance of under eye circles, crepey skin and fine lines and wrinkles.”



4 / 7

The overall effect of neurotoxin injections won’t be optimal if the skin itself isn’t in good condition say Palo Alto, CA facial plastic surgeons David Lieberman, MD and Sachin S. Parikh, MD. “In between injections, we recommend everyone uses a retinol to increase cellular turnover and a SPF to protect from UV damage,” they add. “We also recommend antioxidants which prevent collagen degradation from free radicals in the environment, and a growth factor serum like SkinMedica TNS Advanced+ Serum (\$295) to stimulate the skin’s healthy functioning and repair,” says Dr. Parikh.



5 / 7

Dr. Gross recommends his new Dr. Dennis Gross Vitamin C Lactic 15% Vitamin C Firm & Bright Serum (\$85), which is designed to fortify skin. “If you look at where the skin makes collagen, those cells are distributed through the full thickness of the dermis. In the case of delivering a product that increases collagen, you’ve got to use every one of those cells that are available to help the cause,” he explains. “The lactic acid improves delivery and also



promotes moisture barrier repair. This allows people to really see more density to their skin.”

6 / 7

For medical aesthetician Amy Peterson, the NOTOX technology (short for “non-toxin-based wrinkle reducing serum”) in Dr. Paul Sharad’s elixirs work great to keep lines and wrinkles at bay. “Fundamentally, it is an ‘inside out’ approach that comes out of Dr. Sharad’s philosophy that, ‘one cannot have bad health and good skin,’” explains Peterson. “The Neck + Face (\$85) and Eye (\$65) Smoothing elixirs are fast-acting, non-toxin-based and have been medically tested in clinical trials on real people with real results. Use them to reduce the look of crow’s feet, forehead line and lines around the mouth.”



7 / 7

“When I build a skin-care plan for patients, I take into account what has been shown to cause beneficial effects in the medical literature and what will best fit into their lifestyle and skin needs,” says Dr. Hausauer. “I always recommend a sunscreen, but short of that, either SkinBetter Science AlphaRet Cream (\$130) or prescription tretinoin, as they have the most data for collagen production.”



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