



You know those women – the colleagues, friends or strangers who habitually buy their bread from the local Tesco at the same time as you – who constantly catch your eye? Your attention is invariably drawn to them, not because they showcase expertly applied make-up or mermaid hair, but due to their phenomenal skin. Glowing, dewy, healthy skin. Their secret? Most dermatologists would take a punt that it's down to eschewing a wait-and-see approach – that is, pre-empting ageing concerns with investment in skincare. So says dermatologist Dr Harold Lancer (whose Beverly Hills office is frequented by Kim Kardashian, Margot Robbie and Brie Larson), who defines his twenty-to-thirty-something clients as the 'what-if' generation. They're asking questions like, 'I may not have lines on my forehead now, but what if I get them when I'm 40?' Interested in keeping your skin in the best shape possible? Read on.



COMMIT TO CELL PROTECTION

Yes, you've heard it all before. But do you *do* it? 'Sunscreen is the number one preventative cream you can use right now,' says New York dermatologist Dr Robert Anolik. According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, 90% of skin ageing comes from the sun. Oh, man. Sure, tropical holidays require more diligent protection, but Dr Anolik points out that it's actually cumulative daily bursts of UV exposure that will fast-track wrinkles, brown spots and blotchiness. And don't rely on the SPF in your moisturiser or foundation. Unless it's at least 30 – like **Kiehl's Ultra Facial Moisturizer SPF30, £26** – you're better off adding a standalone SPF product to your daily routine. We like **Murad City Skin Age Defense Broad Spectrum SPF50, £55**.



SWERVE BLUE LIGHT

HEV (the blue light emitted by your phone, laptop and tablet) can penetrate deep beneath the skin and damage elastin and collagen. Plus, blue light reduces sleep quality, lowering your skin's ability to regenerate. Your chances of a permanent digital detox are slim, so turn to anti-blue-light beauty. **BareMinerals Complexion Rescue Defence Radiant Tint Protective Moisturiser, £35**, contains antioxidant-rich cocoa extract and **SkinCeuticals Phloretin CF, £150**, is a vitamin C serum that refines skin texture; both protect against the effects of HEV. **Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Eye Concentrate Matrix, £49**, is designed to support night-time renewal.



MIND WHAT YOU EAT

'The gut and the skin are intimately connected,' says dermatologist Dr Whitney Bowe. 'Toxins from your gut are released into your bloodstream and trigger inflammation system-wide, including in the skin.' If your gut bacteria are out of whack, your complexion will appear dull – no matter how religiously you cleanse, tone, moisturise and the rest. Or, worse, you'll experience outbreaks of acne, eczema or rosacea. According to Dr Bowe, the solution is to adopt a diet rich in probiotics (yoghurt, fermented foods, tempeh), prebiotics (bananas, oats, flaxseeds) and healthy fibre (nuts, seeds and beans), which will rebalance your gut's beneficial flora. She also suggests taking a probiotic supplement containing multiple strains of 10 to 15 billion colony-forming units, working your way up to 50 billion. 'You see significant changes in your gut microbiome in as little as three days, but it can take a few weeks for those differences to translate to your face,' she says. Try **Genuine Health Advanced Gut Health Probiotic, £32.26**, or **Symprove Live And Active Water Based Bacteria, £21.95**.



RESURFACE ON THE REGULAR

Dermatologist Dr Stefanie Williams swears by retinoids. The vitamin A derivatives are backed by years of science affirming their ability to boost cell turnover, which diminishes pigmentation, ups collagen production, lessens fine lines, improves texture and reduces the appearance of pores and breakouts by increasing cell turnover. But the potential side effects – redness, irritation, dryness and flaking – mean many people stop using retinol before the skin can reap its benefits. The key is to start slowly. 'I advise using a retinoid just twice a week in the evening,' she says. And don't slather it on. 'A pea-sized amount is enough to cover the face, and a mild moisturiser can be applied on top after five minutes if you need more hydration,' she advises. 'Over time, the frequency can be increased to every other night and, if tolerated, daily.' If you don't want to use a pure retinoid, try gentler, over-the-counter vitamin A derivatives, such as retinyl-retinoate (try **Medik8 r-Retinoate Youth Activating Cream, £135**, for normal to combination skin), retinol (**SkinCeuticals Retinol 0.3, £55**, is good for combination to oily skin) and retinaldehyde (look to **Avène Physiolift Night Smoothing Regenerating Balm, £26**, for dry skin).

