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Welcome to the second issue of the *Caring For Your Skin* Newsletter, a biannual publication to help keep you informed of the latest skin care advice and advances.

In this issue, I address:

- 1) The importance of vitamin D supplementation as part of your skin protection regimen
- 2) Rejuvenating the under-eye groove
- 3) Skin care product claims – how to separate hope & hype from reality
Three things you should do before buying a product.



Vitamin D for good health & as part of your skin care sun-protection regimen

Vitamins are essential nutrients for good health. Recently we have learned that the previously recommended daily dietary dose of vitamin D [400 International Units (IUs)] is often too low, particularly during the winter months. Ultraviolet B light, a portion of sunlight that causes skin cancer, also stimulates the skin to make vitamin D. When people take sun protective measures to prevent skin cancer & wrinkles, their skin gets less ultraviolet B exposure and thus makes less vitamin D.

It doesn't take much sun exposure to make adequate vitamin D levels in the summer months. However, if you are rigorously protecting your skin from the sun, or are confined indoors most of the time, or live in a cold climate where you get little sun exposure during the winter months, vitamin D supplementation is highly recommended. Supplemental vitamin D is also recommended for the elderly and African-Americans as these groups are at higher risk of vitamin D deficiency. Some scientists have recommended taking up to 1000 IUs of Vitamin D in pill form daily, especially during the winter months. The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends 2,000 IUs of vitamin D daily for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Vitamin D is added to some foods as very few foods (beside oily fish) naturally contain significant amounts of vitamin D. Taking supplemental vitamin D is an easy way to insure that you are getting enough vitamin D. Children require lower doses of vitamin D than adults. Too much vitamin D can cause toxic effects.

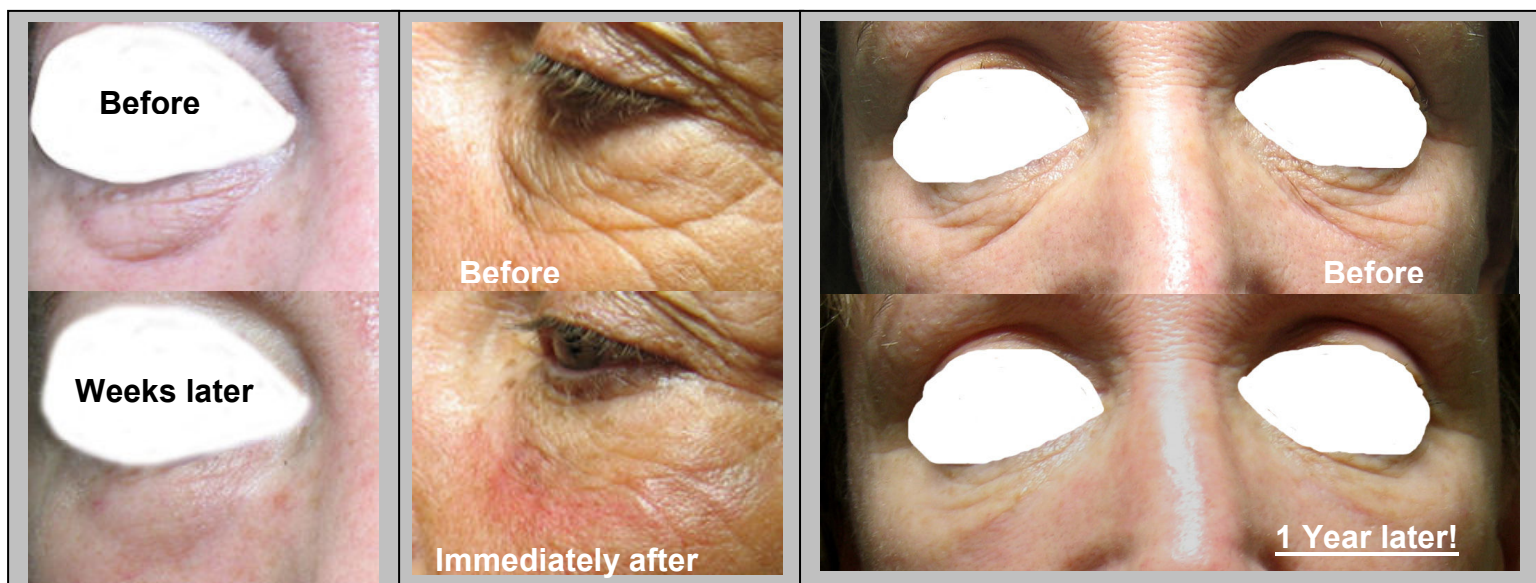
Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to weak bones and an increased susceptibility to a number of health disorders including cardiovascular disease (high blood pressure, heart disease, peripheral artery disease), cancer (colon, pancreatic, breast, ovarian and prostate), autoimmune diseases (type I diabetes & multiple sclerosis), Parkinson's disease, periodontal disease, and mental disorders (depression, schizophrenia, seasonal affective disorder). There is also indirect evidence that Vitamin D may slow cellular aging. The lesson to be learned: We should take adequate vitamin D daily for good health. (Learn more at: <http://www.skincancer.org/Sun-and-Skin-News/Make-Vitamin-D-Not-UV-a-Priority.html>)



Rejuvenation of the under-eye area

As we age we lose fullness in our high cheek area and a groove forms under our eyes giving us dark circles and a tired look. In the past this area was treated with surgery to remove fat under the lower eyelid. With the newer filling agents we now have an easier way to restore this area. A little filler product often has a dramatic effect on the under-eye appearance as shown below in several before and after photos of my patients. I typically use less than 1 cc of Restylane in this area. The effects last well over a year, and I have seen patients that are still looking good over two years after treatment!

The following patients had their under-eye grooves treated with Restylane. The effects are immediate, and unless bruising occurs, there is essentially no recovery time. Cover-up makeup can conceal transient redness. The chance of bruising can be lessened by avoiding aspirin and aspirin-like medications for at least 10 days before the treatment. Tylenol (acetaminophen) is OK to take, but fish oil, vitamin E capsules and alcohol should be voided, as they too make bruising more likely. Learn more about fillers at www.rutlandskin.com.



Another recent development is the use of Radiesse or Perlane over the cheekbone area, to restore volume that is lost as we age. These fillers, in combination with Restylane for the under-eye circles, provide additional benefit in improving this area of the face. Fillers do not always entirely eliminate the fine lines we develop just under the eye. Daily moisturizers and tretinoin (Retin A, Renova) can improve these lines somewhat. For a more dramatic improvement of these lines and to tighten the skin in this area, resurfacing techniques can be performed. These do require significant recovery periods, but the results last for years. The newer fractional laser resurfacing techniques require less down time compared to older laser technologies. I plan to review **fractional laser resurfacing** in a future newsletter.

Many of my patients inquire about products they see that are promoted to remove dark circles and eliminate wrinkles under the eyes. Do any of these products work? There are no miracle creams although most moisturizers can help improve the appearance of fine lines. In the next section of this newsletter I will show you how to decide if a product is worth buying.



A Skin Care Product Claim - Is it Real or is it Bogus? Buyer Beware!

Patients often ask me to recommend skin care products that might restore or help maintain healthy appearing skin. With so many different skin care products available, it is difficult to know which ones to use. Many products make “anti-wrinkle” and other claims with little, if any, scientific evidence to support these claims. Expensive products often contain the same ingredients as inexpensive products, but are priced higher in part because of packaging and advertising costs to promote the product, but mostly to make large profits. How to separate the facts from the fiction can be very difficult. It is unfortunate that selling false promises is often rewarded with large profits, without fear of punishment, as our federal government does not regulate cosmetic claims.

I could literally put the equivalent of Crisco cooking grease in a fancy jar and claim that it improves the appearance of wrinkles. I would probably add several botanical ingredients to add to the mystique of the product. I could call it “RejuvaLux Crème”, and wrap the box with a pink ribbon. I would charge a high price to convince prospective customers that the product must be of great value. I could have someone write some “customer testimonials” claiming how wonderful the product is. I could legally advertise this product as a wrinkle reducer on the internet, newspapers and magazines, make millions of dollars in profit.....and get away with it! **So Buyer Beware!** There are many unscrupulous business people out there, including a few physicians, who are running this type of scheme and making millions of dollars with their products that are mostly over-priced moisturizing creams.

You would be better off using an inexpensive moisturizer and sunscreen daily. Products that contain antioxidants, such as vitamin A (retinol), certain forms of C, and E, might have some added benefit. Tretinoin (Renova & Retin A) and glycolic acids have scientifically proven benefits. Consuming antioxidants in your daily diet by eating lots of fruits and vegetables is good for your overall health. Taking a daily multiple vitamin and supplemental fish oil may provide additional benefits. Other measures to improve your skin’s health are to quit smoking, if you are a smoker, and to avoid excessive sun exposure and tanning beds. Daily exercise is also important to your overall health.



For more information on measures to restore and maintain healthy looking facial skin see the patient handout at www.rutlandskin.com. To help you separate fact from fiction on skin care product claims, log onto:
www.smartskincare.com,
www.cosmeticscop.com, or
www.realself.com.

Three steps to take before you buy a product:

- 1) Wait for a product to be on the market for at least 10 to 12 months before buying it, as it takes time for the first group of purchasers to report their experiences and for independent researchers to comment on the claims.
- 2) Go to a reputable website like the three I mentioned above, to learn more.
- 3) Do an internet search on the product, along with the term "false advertising", "rip off", "fraud", or "scam".

If you don't find any worrisome information, then consider a purchase. However if there are reasons for concern, don't buy it!

Go ahead and do a trial run. Go to google.com and type in "Strivectin and false advertising" in the search window. Look what you found!!!! Isn't it outrageous that this product is still being falsely advertised and the owners of this company continue to make large profits by ripping off the unknowing public. Remember the FDA does not regulate cosmetic claims, so companies falsely and deceptively advertise to make large profits.

Also be aware that there are a lot of salespeople selling there products on the internet. You will find sites that supposedly have reviewed 50, 100, 200 or more wrinkle treatments and have picked the five or ten best ones.....but guess what?.....they sucked you into their web site and will now try to sell you one or more of those very products that were supposedly judged as the best. Many of these sites get commissions on the products they sell, so it should be no surprise that their advice has strings attached. Their advice is to help themselves sell products and make profit, not to help you find a product that actually does what it claims to do. Also be aware that some of these same salespeople pose as customers on various websites and make glowing comments on how wonderful the product works, in order to convince readers of these sites to buy it.

In general, you should be skeptical on any information coming from a source that is trying to sell you something.

I even have some reservations about physicians' offices selling products as I feel there is a conflict of interest. Would I, as a physician, be selling you the best product or one that will make me the highest profit margin? I frequently get invitations from cosmetic companies to sell their products in my office. Many of these companies tell me how much profit I can make by selling their products. I realize that lower cost products often work as well as "Prestigious" and expensive brands. I get upset that some of my patients spend significant amounts of money on a product when a lower cost product would work as well, or sometimes even better than an expensive one.

You will note that one of the sources I mentioned above, where you could find info on products, also sells products (www.cosmeticscop.com). This site did not always sell products. Despite the apparent conflict of interest between giving advice and selling products, I do feel that this site currently offers good advice and reasonably priced products, without false claims.

And finally, to show you how easy it is to find data on a product after it has been on the market for a while, I looked for information on the heavily advertised and very expensive **StriVectin-SD**, and **Dermitage**, a product that I saw repeatedly advertised on the internet. Here are a few examples of what I easily found on these products:



**Klein-Becker Presents:
StriVectin
Better Than Botox!**

Who Would Have Thought A Stretch Mark Reducer Would Turn Out To Be The Wrinkle-Reducing Breakthrough Of The Decade?!

From: http://www.cosmeticscop.com/brand_review.aspx?tid=198&brand=Bremenn+Research+Labs

Ⓢ **StriVectin-SD** (\$135.00/6 ounces) So is StriVectin better than Botox? The short answer is no—and that means no way, and no how. It isn't even better than the daily use of an effective sunscreen! StriVectin is merely a moisturizer with some good emollients and antioxidants, though the addition of peppermint oil is extremely suspect—the tingle is probably meant to lead women to believe that the product is doing something to their skin. It is doing something: causing irritation without a benefit. Botox prevents the use of facial muscles, and that instantaneously smoothes out the skin. **StriVectin-SD won't alter the wrinkling on any part of your face, not in the long term, and not in the short term. A recent study supports this conclusion.** Researchers recruited 77 women who were divided into five groups. One group received Botox injections, one used a placebo product, and the other groups applied either **StriVectin-SD**, Hydroderm, or DDF Wrinkle Relax. Only the group that received Botox injections reported satisfaction with the results; wrinkle depth measurement parameters established for this study proved Botox produced the best results. And **StriVectin-SD**? It was deemed NOT better than Botox. Actually, three test subjects using **StriVectin-SD** had to drop out due to "adverse reactions," likely from the peppermint oil in the product (Source: Dermatologic Surgery, February 2006, pages 184–197).

Consumer Alert from:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/07/16/eveningnews/consumer/main630327.shtml>

Wrinkle Fighter Brings Frowns - Critics Challenge StriVectin's Claim That It's Better Than Botox

A hot-selling wrinkle cream called StriVectin SD promises users it's more effective at battling wrinkles than botox shots. But Mallika Marshall reports it may not work any better than a moisturizer.

(CBS) At 35, Michele Griffin is looking for something to keep wrinkles at bay. She had high hopes for a popular new wrinkle cream that suggests it could be "better than Botox."

"I said, 'You know, that is something I definitely want to try,'" says Griffin.

As **CBS News Correspondent Dr. Mallika Marshall** reports, it's called StriVectin SD. First marketed as a treatment for stretch marks, its real success came when its makers added a promise to fight wrinkles.

"StriVectin is the Number One skin care product on the market," says Timra Carlson, who tracks retail sales in the beauty industry.

"What I think is absolutely clever of the company was the ad campaign," says Carlson, president of NPD Beauty. "'Better than Botox' was brilliant."

At \$135 a tube, department stores alone have rung up more than \$43 million in sales. It's an unprecedented success in the beauty industry.

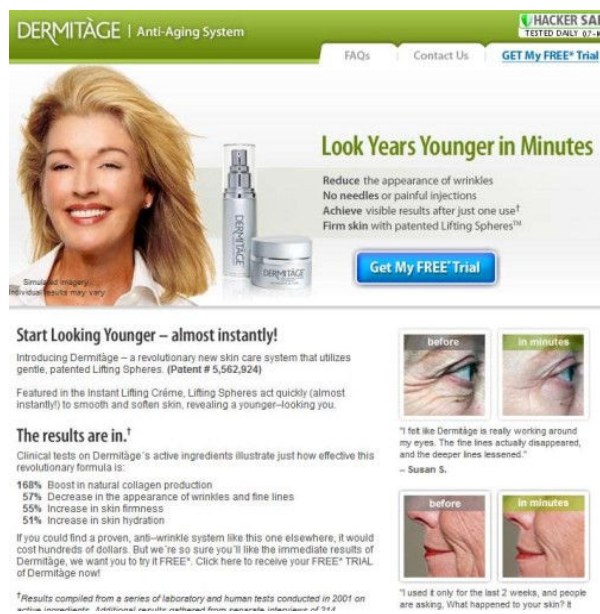
But is it really better than Botox?

"Botox is a drug that actually stops lines of negative facial expression, frown lines," says Dr. Jeffrey Dover, a dermatologic surgeon. Dover says that not only is the comparison to Botox ridiculous, but women who want a cream to erase wrinkles should go with a sure thing: an FDA approved, vitamin A-based product like Retin-A. "Retin-A has been shown beyond a shadow of a doubt, to improve fine lines and wrinkles," says Dover.

Dover says patients ask him about StriVectin on a daily basis, but **there is no independent scientific data showing that it works better than any other moisturizer.** "The truth is, any cream that you use that moisturizes as well, will temporarily make your skin look better," says Dover. The company that makes StriVectin is hanging its claim on the question mark in its slogan. "We really don't compare ourselves to Botox," says Louis Renaldi of Klein-Becker. "We raise the question for the consumer." After using the cream for six months, Griffin thinks StriVectin has helped her dry skin. But did it do what it promised? "The small ones I have here. I haven't noticed ... a big difference, no," says Griffin. The lasting success of StriVectin will depend on the repeat customer. If Griffin is any indication, many may already be searching for the next, best thing.

Dermitage Scam - deceptive advertising fleecing females, but great marketing.

Saturday, March 8th, 2008 From: <http://www.bannerblindness.com/tag/dermitage-facial-cream/>



"I recently came across this Dermitage facial rejuvenation and wrinkle reduction product. Ever since I was a young boy I have seen products being advertised that claim to reduce wrinkles. I can also recall my Grandmother applying these products, her wrinkles were never reduced, but she did smell like an old woman with wrinkle cream (I love you Grandmother!). (To the left is) a screen shot of the banner and website I came across. We can learn a great deal, from a marketing perspective, from the two pieces above. Firstly, the banner is a great marketing piece because it is shocking, interactive, and has a strong call to action. Secondly, the website is easy to navigate, has testimonials (it should have video testimonials) and immediately places a call to action on the top getting users to fill out their information. I assume that Dermitage is not advertising this product on a CPM basis, rather; a performance basis and giving the network a \$20 - \$40 CPA for every product sold.

Many health related products (weight loss, skin, hair, etc...) operate on a very shady model. They allow you to purchase an initial supply of the product for shipping and handling. After, typically 2 weeks, you get charged the full purchase price (which is rarely disclosed) and you have to contact the company to stop them from billing your credit card. Contacting the company is often difficult as they make you call numerous numbers and force you into a vicious circle with no way to get out.

What I want my patients to learn from this topic: 1) Buyer beware!
 2) Buyer be skeptical! 3) Buyer do your homework before buying these type products!
 (Remember the 3 things to do before buying any of these products.)

In closing, I hope you enjoyed this issue of the *Caring For Your Skin* Newsletter. If you are not on the e-mailing list and would like to receive future newsletters via e-mail, or would like to have a particular topic covered in a future newsletter, e-mail your request to C4YSkin@gmail.com.
 Hope you have a very nice Christmas/Holiday Season and have good health in the upcoming year. DPM