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Welcome to the premier issue of the *Caring For Your Skin*, a biannual newsletter to keep you informed of skin care products and procedures, to help you better care for your skin and keep it looking healthy. With each issue, I plan to address two or more skin care related topics. In this issue I address:

- 1) New labeling for sun screen products
- 2) Updates on cosmetic skin filler products
- 3) Ways to minimize scar formation after surgery or skin injury

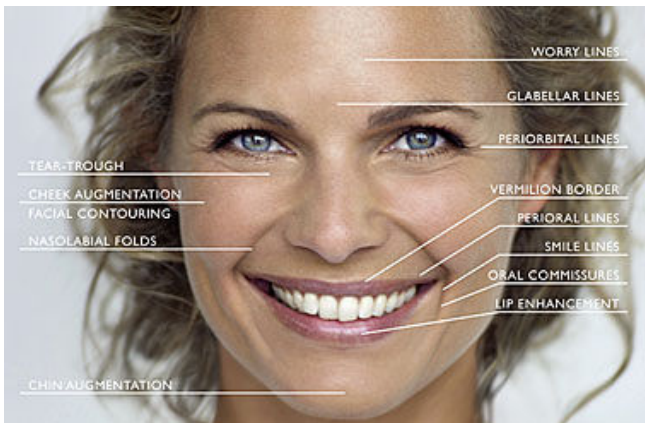


## **New four-star rating for sunscreens**

Current sunscreen product labels have an SPF number such as 15, 30 or 45. **SPF** means **sun protective factor** and roughly translates into how much longer you can spend in the sun before burning. If it normally takes you 15 minutes to get a sunburn without a sunscreen, with a SPF #15 sunscreen applied, it would take you almost 4 hours to get one. The problem with this rating is that it only addresses protection against ultraviolet B (UVB) sunlight, but not ultraviolet A (UVA) sunlight. Both UVB and UVA sunlight damage the skin and over time can cause skin cancers, including deadly melanoma. To help consumers more wisely choose sunscreens that block both types of damaging sunlight, the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) will require sunscreen manufactures to include a four star rating system to better inform users of a product's UVA protection. So soon you will notice a change in how these products are labeled as depicted in this 3 star (UVA), SPF 45 (UVB) rated Brand X sunscreen.



(<http://www.fda.gov/consumer/updates/sunscreen082307.html>). The best UVA blockers will have a four star rating, while weakest UVA blockers will have a one star or no star rating. For more information on sun protective measures, including other factors to look for in selecting a sunscreen, please read my patient handout on sun protection at: [www.rutlandskin.com](http://www.rutlandskin.com)



## ***Fill-er-Up-date***

How we treat facial creases and wrinkles has changed significantly over the past few years. For years the only commercially available filler we had was collagen. Now we have several additional products and even more are in the pipeline. For a quick overview of what is now available and to see before and after photos of treated patients, see [www.rutlandskin.com](http://www.rutlandskin.com).

I hardly ever use collagen anymore, mostly due to the short duration of its effects. ***Evolence***, a new type of longer lasting collagen derived from pigs is currently being reviewed by the FDA.

The most popular fillers now are the hyaluronic acid fillers (**HAFs**) (***Restylane, Perlane, and Juvederm***). Hyaluronic acid is a substance that is normally made in our skin. HAFs plump up the skin by binding water and have also been shown to stimulate new collagen formation. HAF treatments last from four months to over a year, depending on what area is treated. ***Elevesse*** (Anika Therapeutics) and ***Prevelle Silk*** (Mentor Corp) have recently been approved by the FDA, and will be the first HAFs in the US to include an anesthetic that will help minimize discomfort during the treatment. These two new products should soon be available. I plan on offering these products if they work as well or better than the other HAFs. I am still waiting for results that will determine how long each of the HAFs lasts, compared to one another. That data is still lacking.

A newer product called ***Radiesse*** has recently been approved for cosmetic use. It is made of a material similar to that made in our bones. It stimulates new collagen formation and the effects can last a year or more. Although it may last longer than the HAFs, it may be a bit more likely to cause temporary swelling. Radiesse is not a good product to use in lips, but is well suited for filling in the smile lines, hollows under the corners of the mouth (marionette lines). It is also used to plump up the cheek bone areas. I have been using this product since last year, and so far the results have been good. If the effects last over one year, as claimed, this product may prove less expensive than the HAFs.

***Sculptra*** has been approved for use in filling in hollows in the skin. It has been approved for filling up the gaunt cheeks in AIDS (HIV) patients and should soon be approved for general cosmetic use. It requires 2 or more injections and works by stimulating collagen formation in the skin. The results can last approximately two years.

***Artefill*** was recently approved as a permanent filler product. It is composed of bovine collagen and plastic beads. The collagen gives a temporary result and as it breaks down, the plastic beads stimulate the skin to lay down new collagen. It requires a skin test to identify patients who might have an allergic reaction to the bovine collagen. There are some concerns of unwanted bump (nodule) formation and it is too early to judge the long-term safety of this product.



## **Scar treatment**

Patients frequently ask me what can be done to improve the appearance of scars, or what treatment to use to minimize scar formation at sites of recently injured skin. There are no miracle cures for scars, but there are some basic approaches that may help. Keep recent wounds cleaned and covered with a healing ointment and band aid until healed, to help avoid infection and minimize scar formation. Skin infection can increase the likelihood of scarring. Don't let a wound dry out and avoid pulling off any scabs. For more information on wound care, see the patient handout on wound care at: [www.rutlandskin.com](http://www.rutlandskin.com).

**Beware of the Mederma® Rip-Off** - Don't waste your money on the *Mederma* brand product that is nothing more than an over-hyped product. You will be better off using a less expensive healing ointment. Scientific studies have shown no significant advantages with *Mederma* use [(Dermatol Surg. 2006 Feb;32(2):193-7.), (Plast Reconstr Surg. 2002 Jul;110(1):177-83; discussion 184-6.)]. *Mederma's* manufacturer heavily advertises so that it can convince buyers to pay more than the product is worth. **At Walgreens, a 1.7 oz. tube of *Mederma* costs ~\$30. This is almost 10 times more than Walgreens' *Advanced Healing Ointment*, that should work just as well.**

Additional treatments that may be beneficial for scars include intense pulsed or laser light treatment that can curtail active scar growth and decrease redness. For people prone to form thick scars, covering the area continuously with a silicone dressing may be beneficial. The area should be covered 24 hours a day for several weeks or more, for greatest effect. For scars that rise up, medication can be injected to flatten the scar.



I hope you enjoyed the premier issue of the *Caring For Your Skin* newsletter, and learned something that will help you better care for your skin and keep it looking healthy. I welcome your feedback on this premier issue. If you have topics that you would like to be addressed in upcoming issues, please let me know. If you are not already receiving this newsletter by e-mail, but would like to do so, please send your e-mail address / request to [C4YSkin@gmail.com](mailto:C4YSkin@gmail.com).

**DPM**