



Caring For Your Skin



Spring-Summer 2021

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Welcome to the latest issue of the **Caring For Your Skin** Newsletter. In this issue, I address:

- 1) *The latest on Covid-19*
- 2) *Is your sunscreen safe?*
- 3) *Is there any benefit to ingesting collagen supplements?*
- 4) *Health benefits of swimming may include a longer lifespan*

Coronavirus Update



Since my past three newsletters much has happened regarding Covid-19. Although certain parts of the world, including the US are experiencing upticks in outbreaks and new variants of the virus are developing, in the US the number of deaths have dramatically fallen from the winter months. This is attributed to the Covid-19 vaccines that offer some protection against the virus. Although some people who have been vaccinated have subsequently become infected with Covid-19, the severity of the illness and risk of death have been diminished.

Now that many older adults have been vaccinated, younger people are being vaccinated. Fortunately, children have been less likely to have serious Covid-19-related ailments.

Uncertainties persist of what the future holds. We do not yet know how long the vaccine protection lasts. Vaccine makers are preparing to have a vaccine booster available, if needed. Pharmaceutical companies are also testing pills and other non-vaccine treatments for people with Covid-19 infections.

We are uncertain whether a Covid-19 variant might arise that is resistant to the current vaccine protection. Vaccine makers are preparing to modify the vaccine, if needed, to protect against such a variant that might arise so the modified vaccine can become available quickly. We are still requiring patients to wear face masks when visiting the Rutland Skin Center.



In my previous newsletter <http://www.rutlandskin.com/Newsletter-Winter%20%202020-2021.pdf> I mentioned that several patients after receiving the Covid-19 vaccine developed mild temporary swelling in the areas where they had received hyaluronic acid fillers (e.g., Restylane and Juvederm families of fillers). Two of the patients had fillers in their cheeks within the six months prior to receiving the vaccine, while the third patient had filler injected in the lip two days after receiving the vaccine. All three reactions were transient and either resolved without or with simple treatment. Several more cases have since been reported. All were mild and resolved in a few days.

So, should a patient who has received filler treatment avoid getting the Covid-19 vaccine? Absolutely not. The risk of Covid-19 related illness far outweighs the risk of a transient and easily treatable reaction to filler. However, I do recommend avoiding getting filler treatment for a minimum of two weeks after you have received the last Covid-19 vaccination. If you think you might be having such a reaction (swelling, redness, and (or) tenderness), call the office without delay so that we can expeditiously address the problem.

Is your sunscreen safe?

As per my <http://rutlandskin.com/Newsletter-Summer%202019.pdf> newsletter, I recommend primarily zinc oxide as most of the other sunscreen chemicals have been shown to get absorbed through the skin into the blood system and we are uncertain if this is harmful. Zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are not significantly absorbed, although they are more effective when mixed with other sunscreen chemicals. Read more of the details at the above link that discusses other sun protective measures.

Since my sun protection recommendations in the Spring-Summer 2019 newsletter, I am now troubled to report that traces of the **cancer-causing agent benzene** have recently been found in some sunscreens. Benzene, has been associated with bladder cancer and leukemia and other blood cell cancers. It was found in 75 of the 196 sunscreen sprays, lotions and gels tested. The report found that fourteen sunscreen products with some of the highest contaminations belong to four popular brands (CVS Health, Fruit of the Earth, Neutrogena and Sun Bum). Not all of these brands' products were found to contain benzene. Neutrogena's Ultra Sheer Weightless Sunscreen Spray, SPF 100+ and Ultra Sheer Weightless Sunscreen Spray, SPF 70 were among 14 products with the highest levels of benzene. However, other products like Neutrogena's Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunscreen Lotion SPF 30 and Oil-free Facial Moisturizer with Sunscreen SPF 15 were benzene free.

To see if your sunscreen product was tested click on the two links below.

Link to results of sunscreen products testing **positive** for benzene (pages 12-15).

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1er68VcXHULkIDP40nDZ2BHVWBrOBYOiO/view> The majority (41 of 75) were sprays.

Link to results of sunscreen products testing **negative** for benzene.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16m7Uxx3vZdNvYhDD5skjsc2D13QBHLYj/view>

So don't give up on using sunscreens along with other sun protective measures, but select a mineral based sun block from the benzene free list such as

Neutrogena Pure & Free Baby Sunscreen Lotion, SPF 50, 21.6% Zinc Oxide

Blue Lizard Lotion Australian Sunscreen Lotion Baby, SPF 30+, Zinc Dioxide 10%, Titanium Dioxide 5%

Eltamd UV Pure Broad Spectrum Sunscreen Lotion, SPF 47 Zinc Oxide 10%, Titanium Dioxide 5.5%

For a less white look for the face, consider **Eltamd UV Clear Broad-Spectrum, Moisturizing Facial Sunscreen Lotion**, SPF 46, Zinc Oxide 9%, but be aware that it also has Octinoxate 7.5%, a chemical agent that has been shown to be absorbed through the skin.

Unfortunately, one of my favorites, **Coppertone Pure & Simple Lotion**, SPF 50 24% Zinc Oxide, was not tested for benzene.

This report will prompt manufacturers to alter their manufacturing process to eliminate benzene contamination in future batches. Some companies have recalled their contaminated batches.

Do collagen supplements improve the skin's appearance?



To help answer this question I read a recent review of 19 studies on the effects of oral collagen supplements on skin. In the 19 studies there were a total of 1,125 participants between 20 and 70 years of age and 95% were women. The analysis showed beneficial results of hydrolyzed collagen supplementation compared with placebo control in terms of skin hydration, elasticity, and wrinkles. Hydrolyzed collagen is collagen that has been treated to break it down to improve absorption of its component amino acids. Based on results, ingestion of hydrolyzed collagen for 90 days was effective in reducing skin aging, as it reduces wrinkles and improves skin elasticity and hydration. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ijd.15518>

A similar review on collagen supplementation found that doses ranging from 2.5 to 10 grams per day did increase skin elasticity and hydration. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30681787/> Still, there is much more to be learned and there are safety concerns.

Are Collagen Supplements Safe?

Collagen supplements are typically derived from skin, hide, tendons, bones, cartilage, or other tissues of cows, pigs, chicken, or fish. Vegan collagen is made from genetically modified yeast and bacteria, but it is uncertain if it has the same potential benefits as animal-derived collagen. One concern with collagen derived from bones is that heavy metals and other toxins, that can be harmful to one's health, get concentrated in bones. In fact a recent analysis of 28 collagen supplements purchased at Amazon.com by the Clean Label Project found detectable levels of arsenic in 64%, lead in 37%, mercury in 34% and cadmium in 17%. Small amounts of lead and cadmium have also been found in bone broths. Toxic heavy metals accumulate in our bodies over time, which is why the less we ingest the better.

<https://www.consumerreports.org/supplements/the-real-deal-on-collagen/>

“Meanwhile, dermatologists and consumer groups have also expressed concerns that those ground-up hooves, hides, bones, and nerve tissues -- particularly if they come from cows -- could carry diseases like [bovine spongiform encephalopathy](#) (BSE), or mad cow disease.”

<https://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/news/20191212/collagen-supplements-what-the-research-shows>

The following link covers more on collagen supplements.

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/13719157-best-collagen-supplements/>

It is important to realize that the Food and Drug Administration doesn't verify the safety, purity or effectiveness of dietary supplements like collagen. What's on the label doesn't necessarily match what's in the bottle and the FDA is not policing dietary supplements. “To aid consumers, NSF and USP, among other groups, will verify the quality of dietary supplements by auditing a company's manufacturing facility to make sure it complies with industry standards and by testing the supplements to ensure that what's on the labels is in the bottles. Certified products carry the verifying organization's mark, [in this case “NSF”](#) or [“USP Verified.”](#)”

Seeing the USP Verified Mark on a dietary supplement label indicates that the product:

- **Contains the ingredients listed on the label, in the declared potency and amounts.** Tests have shown that contents of some supplements don't match the label and some contain significantly less or more than the claimed amount of key ingredients. USP Dietary Supplement Verification helps assure customers that they are getting the value they expect from a product they are purchasing.

- **Does not contain harmful levels of specified contaminants.** Some supplements have been shown to contain harmful levels of certain heavy metals (e.g., lead and mercury), microbes, pesticides, or other contaminants. At specific levels these contaminants can pose serious risks to one's health.
- **Will break down and release into the body within a specified amount of time.** If a supplement does not break down properly to allow its ingredients to be available for absorption in the body, the consumer will not get the full benefit of its contents. USP Dietary Supplement Verification tests products against performance standards.
- **Has been made according to FDA current Good Manufacturing Practices using sanitary and well-controlled procedures.** Assurance of safe, sanitary, well-controlled, and well-documented manufacturing and monitoring processes indicates that a supplement manufacturer is quality-conscious, and that the supplement will be manufactured with consistent quality from batch to batch.

“The programs are voluntary, and only a fraction of all supplements are vetted. Even without certification, manufacturers and distributors of dietary supplements are prohibited from marketing products that are adulterated or misbranded. But it happens.”

“There are around 1,000 entries in the FDA’s database of **tainted** products marketed as dietary supplements, but the agency warns that the list includes only [a fraction of the potentially hazardous supplements sold](#) online and in stores. And for consumers looking to boost their fitness or health, that might be a bitter pill to swallow.” From:

https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-fine-print-of-dietary-supplements-11624613402?mod=hp_featst_pos5

Health Benefits of Swimming may include a longer lifespan



It is summertime and people are headed to the pools, ponds, lakes and oceans for a swim so this is a good time to discuss the health benefits of swimming.

Swimming is an excellent form of exercise that can strengthen more muscle groups than some exercises like walking and running. It is also well suited for people with arthritis or injuries that prevent them from weight-bearing exercises. Swimming is an excellent way to strengthen your heart and lungs, as well as an efficient way to burn calories for those wishing to lose weight.

Another possible benefit includes a longer lifespan. Research showed that swimmers live longer than walkers and runners. The investigators followed over 40,000 men between the ages of 20 to 90 over the course of 32 years and found that during the 32 year period swimmers were half as likely to die compared to the walkers and runners. Another study of 80,000 people found that swimmers had a 28% lower risk of early death and a 41% lower risk of death from heart disease and stroke. (See reference link below).

So what are you waiting for! Take the plunge for better health!

For more information on the health benefits of swimming, and how to get started, even if you are not currently a swimmer, see the following link. <https://www.axahealth.co.uk/personal/health-information/articles/wellbeing/exercise-and-fitness/health-benefits-of-swimming2/>

*In closing, I hope you found items of interest in 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*



Enjoy your summer.
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