

Photo Ageing

with Kelly George



IT'S AUTUMN and as the leaves start to fall and the long summer days begin to cool, a harsh reality kicks in. While frolicking on the sand made you feel youthful, as your tan begins to fade the appearance of age spots will not! Even if you weren't lucky enough to escape to a seaside location, spending any time in our unforgiving summer sun will result in increased pigmentation, wrinkles, age spots and a reduction in collagen and elasticity. Collectively, sun-related skin damage is what we in the industry call 'photo ageing', and knowing how to treat it is the most important tool we have in our anti-ageing tool box!

Photo ageing differs from chronological ageing in that it is not an unavoidable fact of life, and can be minimised. It goes without saying therefore, that sun protection is your best friend when it comes to slowing the ageing process. However, sun lovers can take some comfort in knowing that there are ways to repair photo ageing.

The most important thing to remember is that your sun damage is the result of years of UV exposure, so it follows that there are no quick fixes. Pigment is one of the most difficult skin issues to fully resolve. Quite simply, it requires dedication! The results of any procedure performed in a cosmetic clinic can be accelerated and prolonged with an appropriate medical-grade at-home skin care regime. For example, lipid soluble topical vitamins in serum form play a crucial role in reversing sun damage. Vitamin A will keep the cell cycle turning over while Vitamin C can actually repair the accumulative effects of sun-induced ageing at the DNA level (provided of course that your products are scientifically formulated to enable penetration of the skin layers). Speak with your cosmetic practitioner about which combination treatments will best help you avoid photo ageing.

MY TIPS FOR AUTUMN SKIN CARE:

CHEMICAL PEELS: No, your face won't fall off or look like Samantha's from that episode of Sex and the City. Medical-grade peels have come a long way in the last 10 years. A good place to start is with an AHA (alpha-hydroxy acid) or glycolic peel. This will encourage cell turnover, bringing pigment to the surface and allowing combination treatments to penetrate and break up the discolouration.

GOOD FOR: ✓ Even skin tone ✓ Hydration ✓ DNA repair
✓ Cell turnover ✓ Pigment removal

FRACTIONAL LASER RESURFACING: My personal favourite. This treatment works by using energy from light and heat to create thousands of microscopic lesions in the skin. The production of collagen and elastin is stimulated as your skin repairs itself post-treatment and pigment is broken up. As an added bonus, resurfacing lasers remove the inevitable post-summer layer of dry, dull skin, revealing younger skin cells for a brighter complexion.

GOOD FOR: ✓ Pigment removal ✓ Rosacea ✓ Plumping skin
✓ Removing fine lines and wrinkles ✓ Hydration
✓ Cell turnover



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