

Vitamin A - Treatment for Wrinkles

The Proof is in - It works

Topical Retinol improves fine wrinkles associated with natural aging

Each month when we read the headlines of our professional publications, invariably something new appears to peak our curiosity; and, for a moment, we hope that the proverbial magic in a jar has been found so that we can offer even better treatments and products to our patients and clients.

This month's headlines were no exception; however, the research does not uncover anything dramatically new. The findings have proven again the importance of Vitamin A in skin care.

We have known about Vitamin A for close to a century yet it is not well understood by clients and patients. That is our fault. We have failed to educate our clients that while Vitamin A is the most effective skin care ingredient - it takes time to work - but work it does producing long lasting, sustainable results.

A research team from The University of Michigan was the latest to once again demonstrate the importance and efficacy of Vitamin A in skin care. The headlines, not only in the United States but worldwide proclaimed in bold letters: Vitamin A (Retinol) Effaces Wrinkles in Naturally Aged Skin. **Thus, retinol has the potential to deliver retinoic acid-like effects to human skin with improved tolerability. (1)**

The May Archives of Dermatology (1) published a report of a small, double blind, vehicle controlled study of elderly patients. Studies of this type are rare in our field. After 24 weeks of treatment, proof was found that topical retinol improves fine wrinkles associated with natural aging. Continuing, the researchers believe that a stronger, healthier skin matrix that was retinol induced makes the skin more likely to withstand injury and even ulcer formation plus improved appearance. In essence, healthier and more beautiful skin can result from the use of properly formulated and packaged vitamin A.

Another study conducted by Manchester University in the UK also issues a favorable report on the effects of vitamin A on aging and photo-damaged skin. The use of Vitamin A showed an increase in the production of glycosaminoglycans and procollagen - two skin components in the treated areas exposed to retinol.

It is important that any quality skin care regime must include vitamin A in an appropriate format and strength. Many over the counter products do not contain adequate levels of vitamin A nor are they packaged to protect and maintain the efficacy of the product. A finding also demonstrates that one need not have to rely on the acid form to get and sustain results.

Look for professionally available products that contain vitamin A in one or more of the following forms in meaningful strengths: retinyl palmitate, retinyl acetate and retinol - preferably in a step up line to allow the skin to acclimate to Vitamin A and avoid retinoid reactions. A significant advantage to using the above mentioned forms of vitamin A is that they can effectively be converted to retinoic acid at the cellular level thereby providing similar results to the more irritating forms resulting in higher use compliance and better results.

Arch Dermatol.2007; 143:606-612; Vitamin A (Retinol Effaces Wrinkles...; News author; Laurie Barclay, MD; CME Author: Charles Vega. MD;