

THE BEAUTY EXPERT

allure

DECEMBER 2012

*Totally
Gorgeous*
SKIN

Amazing Innovations for
A Brighter, Fresher Face

**Keira
Knightley**

Flings Off Her Corset

MARIO TESTINO
His Models & Muses

**9 New
Hair, Nail
& Makeup
Looks**

Runway Trends
To Try Right Now

Sparkle All Night

Sexy Party Lipstick, Festive Nails, Cool-Girl Hair



The Bright Side

See spots. See spots age. Those clusters of pigment, brought on by sun exposure, add years to your face. Fortunately, new treatments—including less-irritating alternatives to the old prescription-strength standby, hydroquinone—can even out complexions in weeks. Here's what doctors are recommending.

1 A truly gentle laser.

Dermatologists have long loved the wrinkle-fighting power of fractional lasers, but patients haven't always loved the healing time involved. The new **Clear + Brilliant** system, however, uses lower-energy wavelengths that focus on the skin's superficial layers, resulting in "more uniform tone, radiance, and improved texture with minimal redness and swelling," says Francesca Fusco, an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. "After three to five 20-minute treatments, spaced about a month apart, brown spots can dramatically improve," she says.

2 Blockbuster creams.

There are five key factors behind uneven color, according to a University of Cincinnati study: hyperpigmentation, sluggish cell turnover, stress-induced inflammation, environmental damage, and dehydration. Olay researchers developed the **Pro-X Even Skin Tone** collection to address them all. An ingredient called Sepi-white helps inhibit melanin production and fade dark spots; niacinamide boosts cell turnover, fights dullness, and works with algae extract to calm inflammation and offer antioxidant protection; and N-acetyl glucosamine increases hyaluronic acid levels to

hydrate the skin. Got all that? Then get this: A study of 272 women showed a dramatic reduction in brown spots after four to eight weeks—results comparable to a 4 percent hydroquinone cream. And another new product, **Eau Thermale Avène D-Pigment Dark Spot Lightener**, "has ten times the skin-lightening effectiveness of kojic acid [a natural bleaching agent traditionally used on sensitive skin]," says Jeannette Graf, an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City. It combines a pigment-inhibiting ingredient, Melanycide, with a gentle retinoid to stimulate cell turnover, plus vitamin E, an antioxidant.

3 A major melasma breakthrough.

The pigment-busting procedure **Illuminase** may be slightly more labor-intensive than traditional fixes, but it's yielding "very impressive" results, says Jeffrey Dover, an associate clinical professor of dermatology at Yale University School of Medicine.

Over 12 weeks, patients undergo two or three treatments involving microdermabrasion and a mild laser, explains Arielle Kauvar, director of New York Laser & Skin Care, who developed Illuminase. Patients then apply a blend of hydroquinone and Retin-A at bedtime for a month, plus a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 40 every morning—a necessary step to prolong results. In a recent study of melasma patients who tried Illuminase, 81 percent of them saw more than a 75 percent improvement in their dark patches, according to *Lasers in Surgery and Medicine*. Sun exposure, hormonal changes, or irritation can cause melasma to reappear, so an occasional touch-up treatment may be warranted, Kauvar says.



FADING FAST
From left: Olay Pro-X Even Skin Tone serum and Eau Thermale Avène D-Pigment Dark Spot Lightener in moisturizing and light formulas.



TIP

After proving to be fast, effective, and gentle in its own right, the over-the-counter skin-lightening cream **Elure** is now helping to improve the performance of in-office treatments, too. "It removes melanin from the superficial layer of the skin prior to the procedure but won't irritate skin like hydroquinone would," says Fusco, who recommends that patients start using it one month before targeting age spots with a laser or peel.