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# Look Good for a Lifetime

**WORRIED ABOUT WRINKLES, DULLNESS, brown spots, and sagging skin? Stop—it causes lines! Instead, take action by talking to your doctor about in-office treatments that can help you face your 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s with confidence. BY ELLEN MILLER**



#### **TRY: A LIGHT CHEMICAL PEEL**

**What it is** During this 10-minute procedure (sometimes called a “lunchtime peel”), a dermatologist or trained aesthetician applies a solution containing a low concentration of alpha and beta hydroxy acids or milder fruit-based enzymes to dissolve dead cells. The treatment leaves skin softer and brighter; a series of peels fades brown spots, “shrinks” enlarged pores, and, if you’re acne-prone, keeps breakouts at bay.

**What to expect** You may experience mild stinging and redness, but any tingling or flushing should subside after a few hours. “Your skin will also be more sensitive to ultraviolet rays,” says Bank. “So be sure to avoid the sun and slather on an SPF of 30 or higher.”

**Average cost** \$100 to \$300 per treatment, but ask about package deals—a plus because monthly visits are often recommended to maintain your results.

## 20s

• For the most part, “this is an incredibly forgiving decade,” says David E. Bank, M.D., a dermatologist in Mount Kisco, NY. But in your late 20s, the skin’s natural process of exfoliation

starts to slow down. This means that as fewer new cells are produced, dead ones pile up on the surface, creating a thick layer that can make your complexion appear sallow and less radiant.



# 40s

• You've been taking extra cardio classes to blast body bulges, but by now, you may wish you had more fat from the neck up. Because you've lost some natural padding, you can look gaunt

around the eyes and cheeks. Sun damage shows up as brown spots, deeper wrinkles, broken capillaries, and sometimes sagging skin.

### TRY: RESURFACING LASERS

**What they are** Fractional non-ablative lasers (such as Fraxel re:store or Palomar StarLux) emit very fine beams of light to slightly damage your skin below the surface, triggering new cell growth and collagen production.

"They can even out tone, refine pores,

and smooth wrinkles," says Arielle Kauvar, M.D., a dermatologist in New York City. Deeper crinkles and darker spots may need to be treated with a more aggressive ablative laser such as Fraxel re:pair or Lumenis DeepFX—devices that actually blast away the surface of the skin.

**What to expect** Despite numbing cream, you'll still feel the burn. For more intense ablative treatments, your doctor will likely give you a sedative, numb the area, and send you home with painkillers. Plan to take a week off, since your skin will be very red and swollen.

**Average cost** \$500 to \$1,000 for one non-ablative treatment (three to five are usually needed); \$3,000 to \$5,000 for an ablative procedure. (Just one is usually recommended.)

### TRY: VASCULAR LASERS

**What they are** Known as pulsed-dye lasers, devices like the Vbeam zap broken capillaries and reduce all-over ruddiness.

**What to expect** The process is tolerable but not exactly pleasant—it feels like a rubber band snapping against your face repeatedly. You could experience swelling for a few days afterward and may need three or more treatments for stubborn blood vessels or red patches.

**Average cost** \$500 to \$750 per visit.

### TRY: TIGHTENING DEVICES

**What they are** Ultherapy (which relies on focused ultrasound waves), and Thermage or the newer Pelleve (both of which use radio-frequency energy) heat up tissue deep inside the skin, making it contract. Some people experience only subtle changes; for others, there's a more dramatic firming effect. "Patients who are slim throughout the face and neck do best," says Kauvar. But even if you're a good candidate, keep your expectations realistic. "If you like the way you look when you pinch your skin and pull it back, you may be happier with a face-lift," says Rapaport.

**What to expect** Doctors suggest taking a sedative to help you endure the burning sensation of Thermage and Ultherapy. You won't need pain meds for Pelleve since its specially designed hand piece makes the process more bearable. Expect results to last six months or longer.

**Average cost** \$2,000 per treatment.