

A close-up photograph of a woman's face, focusing on her eyes and lips. She has light blue eyes and pink, glossy lips. The background is a soft, out-of-focus skin tone.

THE GL

Breakthrough solutions
to your biggest
skin-care questions

Your letters to us make one thing perfectly clear: Of all your beauty concerns, skin care tops the list. With the minimal-makeup season fast approaching, we've rounded up dozens of skin-care experts to tackle your most pressing questions. On these pages, you'll find the most up-to-date, accessible answers to your top eight questions—organized so you can find just the information you need.

6. CAN I MIX PRODUCT LINES?

Though most cosmetics manufacturers design their products to work together (this strategy boosts sales), most dermatologists and researchers believe what New York City dermatologist Debra Wattenberg, M.D., says: "You can mix and match all you want."

The only rule breaker: regimens that require a mix of products be used sequentially. Brand X's toner, for example, may shift the skin's condition so that Brand Y's moisturizer won't penetrate as effectively, says Gary Grove, Ph.D., skin physiologist at the Skin Study Center in Broomall, Pennsylvania. You also want to avoid mixing products that perform the same function. For instance: a honey-and-almond scrub plus an AHA cleanser plus an acne wash will equal red, raw skin—because all three are peeling agents. And beware of mixing products for different skin types. An acne wash (or astringent toner) plus a creamy moisturizer may leave you with clogged pores.

WHAT DERMATOLOGISTS USE

What do dermatologists, who have the ultimate access to prescription and over-the-counter products, use on their own skin? Three tell all:

Diana Bihova, M.D., New York City (combination skin)

Cleanser Cetaphil Gentle Skin Cleanser
Moisturizer Purpose Dual Treatment Moisturizer or Eucerin Moisturizing Creme

Other Lac-Hydrin, a prescription AHA lotion (nightly)

"I like products that hydrate but don't feel greasy."

Esta Kronberg, M.D., Houston (oily skin)

Cleanser Nondrying Cleansing Lotion
Other Cellex-C, an antiaging topical vitamin C; A-Cute Derm 15%, an AHA lotion (both morning and night); Pro-Tect SPF 15 (daily).

"I use what gives me results. These products are light and really make a difference in how my skin looks and feels." (All are available without a prescription.)

Jonith Breadon, M.D., Chicago (dry skin)

Cleanser Oil of Olay Foaming Face Wash
Moisturizer Neutrogena Moisture SPF 15

Other Retin-A, a prescription product that helps reverse photoaging (nightly)

"These products clean and moisturize without tightening."

