

Five Common Chemicals Used in Skin Care Products

Have you notice that when you buy certain products you will encounter different terms that seem unfamiliar to you? Most of these terms are known to be chemicals. These chemicals are the ones commonly used in skin care products such as lotions or creams for your skin. Sometimes it gives us trouble deciphering the language of skin care products. But do not worry, I have here guide that will help you understand some ingredients that may give benefit to your skin.

Here are the five common chemicals used in skin care product:

First is the chemical known as Retinol. This is a derivative of vitamin A, and a lot of over the counter skin care products contain retinol. Retinol's stronger counterpart is tretinoin, which is the active ingredient in Retin-A and Renova, available by prescription only. If your skin is too sensitive to use Retin-A, retinol is an excellent alternative.

Retinol is proven to improve mottled pigmentation, fine lines and wrinkles, skin texture, skin tone and color, and retinol also helps to re-hydrate your skin. You may also hear about retinyl palmitate. This falls into the same family as retinol, but if the skin care product you choose contains retinyl palmitate, you will need to use more of this product than one that contains retinol to get the same effect.

Second is the Vitamin C which is the only antioxidant that is proven to stimulate the synthesis of collagen, which is essential since your body's natural collagen production decreases as you age. Collagen is considered a person's fountain of youth; it's responsible for warding off wrinkles and fine lines. Studies have shown that vitamin C helps to minimize fine lines, scars and wrinkles.

It is still important to be choosy when selecting a vitamin C product. Vitamin C in its most commonly found forms is highly unstable when exposed to oxygen, making it useless. Also, many topical vitamin C preparations do not penetrate the skin enough to make a difference.

Third in line is the a chemical called Alpha-hydroxy Acid or better known as AHAs. It is an Over-the-counter skin care products containing alpha-hydroxy acids (glycolic, lactic, tartaric and citric acids) have become increasingly popular over the last five years. Creams and lotions with alpha-hydroxy acids may help with fine lines, irregular pigmentation and age spots, and may reduce the size of enlarged pores. Side effects of alpha-hydroxy acids include mild irritation and sun sensitivity. For that reason, sunscreen should be used every morning. To help avoid skin irritation with alpha-hydroxy acids, it is advisable to start with a product with low concentrations of AHA. Also, give your skin a chance to get used to the product. Start out by applying AHA skin products every other day, gradually working up to a daily application.

Next is the Hydroquinone which is popularly referred to as bleaching creams or lightening agents. These skin care products are used to lighten hyper pigmentation, such as age spots and dark spots related to pregnancy or hormone therapy (melasma or chloasma). Some over-the-counter skin care products contain hydroquinone, but your doctor can also prescribe a solution with a higher concentration of hydroquinone if your skin doesn't respond to over- the-counter treatments.

Fifth and the last is known as the Kojic acid. Is a more recent remedy for the treatment of pigment problems and age spots. If you are allergic to hydroquinone, use products that have Kojic acid. Kojic acid is derived from a fungus, and studies have shown that it is effective as a lightening agent, inhibiting production of melanin.

Use this information to sort through various skin care products on the market. But for your own safety, and if you're still unsure which skin care products are right for you, ask your dermatologist.

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