



Low Plastic Surgery (LPS)
Dr. Lowe's Facts about Medical Skin Care

Will my skin look better?

Aging skin can be improved with variety of techniques that include: skin care, chemicals, micro-dermabrasion, surgery, or lasers. Almost all skin care lines involve often expensive products that may or may not be effective over time. Unlike other treatments for aging many skin care regimens are not supported with scientific fact but more on antidotal reports. Many skin line products are completely ineffective while others many provide only temporary improvements. Most skin care lines are successful not because of their results, but because of marketing. Nevertheless, a medically managed skin line can be effective when used properly and consistently over time. An effective skin care program requires a long term commitment to the system or regiment of care. Medically prescribed skin care can deliver real and measurable results in many cases and that makes it the most popular non-surgical ways to treat aging skin. The vast majority of medical skin care relays on medications that require a physician prescription. Skin lines can allow healthier skin to regenerate and color to decrease. It can improve skin texture and other discolorations of the skin over time. These disorders are very difficult to treat effectively in most cases, and treatment modalities such as chemical peels or lasers may be required to treat areas that do not improve with skin care.

What do you think about cosmetic facials, micro-peels, or micro-dermabrasion?

Minimally invasive procedures are associated with minimal results. These procedures are best performed at a spa and are usually quite safe when performed by a professional. Most patients report small improvements in skin quality after these treatments. It is difficult to know how many minimal treatments it would take to equal consistent medically prescribed skin, but good skin care used over several months is more effective in most cases. Laser resurfacing or intense light treatments are typically very predictable and effective ways to rejuvenate the skin in the short term. Dr. Lowe is committed to a true clinically effective treatment and leaves the feel good treatments to the medical spas and aestheticians.

How effective are medically prescribed skin care regimens?

Medically prescribed skin care regimens are an important part of skin rejuvenation. Many skin lines provide modest improvement in the skin texture or superficial scars over time. Effective skin care regimens require patients to follow a strict protocol and long-term use in order to see noticeable results over 13-18 week period. A well-balanced skin care program provides several specific phases that include: prepare, correct, stimulate, and protect. The skin program must provide medically prescribed agents at an appropriate strength to truly rejuvenate the skin. Most programs include a skin lightener (Hydroquinone) and a skin stimulator (Tretinoin or Retin-A). Almost no over-the-counter skin line can provide effective dosing without a physician prescription or supervision. Skin care is an excellent adjunct to a number of cosmetic treatments, but is ineffective in some situations or conditions. It can on occasion prepare your skin or better laser results and maintenance. Your physician or health care professional can help you develop a skin care program that is right for you.

What is the best skin care line or skin product?

There are a number of different skin care lines that are popular in the treatment of aging skin. The two most popular skin lines sold in our practice include Dermesse & Obagi. Each skin line can be used to improve skin quality or color quite effectively over time. There a number of very effective skin lines sold in medical practices throughout the country and on the internet. There are also a number of highly effective skin products sold over-the-counter that include: Cetaphil, Neutrogena, Oil of Olay, and Aveeno. Each product line provides a number of feel good options including cleaners, toners, and moisturizers. There are number of make-up lines that conceal or improve the outer appearance of the skin. Nevertheless, only medically prescribed products reliably and scientifically rejuvenate the skin. This is not about spending your money on what feels or smells good, it is about buying products that really works. A number of physician supervised skin care lines truly rejuvenate the skin. It is best for patients to choice a program that fits their lifestyle and is effective, safe, affordable, and obtainable. Most patients incorporate

a number of different products to maximize their results. Your board certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist can usually assist you in choosing the right skin care program.

Are there risks associated with skin care?

All skin care products are associated with a limited amount of risk. The risks are often associated with a patient's skin color or consistency. Darker skin types are at a higher risk for complications associated with medically prescribed Hydroquinone or Retin-A. All laser skin care must be adjusted and formulated appropriately for skin types. The risk of skin care include: poor aesthetic results, swelling, crusting, hyperpigmentation, hypopigmentation, and scarring. The more aggressive skin care programs the higher the risk minor complications. Most over-the-counter products are quite safe when used as recommended, but many of these products are not scientifically tested and can cause skin irritation or contact dermatitis. Patients who experience a significant problem with any skin care product should discontinue the product and report to their physician immediately. Some medically prescribed skin lines do not cause a problem for some time. Skin rejuvenation is always a balance between "pain & gain." The pain of skin care includes time, skin sensitivity, and cost. Your board certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist can assist you with choosing the treatment that is right for you.

Is skin care costly and time consuming?

Skin care programs can cost range from \$25 to \$600 per month. The cost of any skin care program primarily depends on a patient's budget, needs, and expectations. Just because a product line is more expensive does not mean it is more effective. Dr. Lowe believes that patients need to develop a skin care regimen that they can predictably follow and afford. It needs to be a program that is followed night after night, week after week, and year after year. Patients may want to invest in more effective cosmetic procedures such as Botox, Laser resurfacing, soft tissue fillers, or surgery. No matter what a cosmetic procedure a patient chooses it will almost always be enhanced by a good physician supervised skin care program.

How much improvement can I expect with skin care over time?

Skin care usually provides a good balance between cost and results when used consistently. It is popular for those who properly use it because it can be worked into a person's busy schedule. It is a treatment that will usually go unnoticed by friends and co-workers. People may know that your skin is improving but the full results require a 13-18 week cycle. Even with this time commitment most patients only experience a 5-10 percent improvement skin texture and quality. Skin care is probable more about maintenance and prevention than about substantial skin rejuvenation for the first year. Skin care will in no way provide patients with an instant result no matter what anyone may claim or advertise. Nevertheless, it will in most cases make yours skin look younger and healthier over time. Review Dr. Lowe's "Healthy Skin Guide" or the manufactures materials for further details involving skin rejuvenation.

When do you offer laser stretch mark or scar treatments?

All patients considering laser treatment are required to see Dr. Lowe in consultation prior to the laser treatment. Some patient may not schedule a laser treatment for several months after consultation depending on their schedule or time of year. Our practice provides laser procedures at set time points throughout the calendar month. We usually perform laser treatments on Wednesday mornings every 2-3 weeks depending on demand. We will often open extra laser treatment days as demand increases. Patients may check with our office for the laser dates that are currently available.

Can skin care be combined with other nonsurgical procedures?

Skin care is routinely utilized prior and after other cosmetic treatments. Additional cosmetic treatments such as Intense Pulse Light (IPL) used for age spots can be given if the products are discontinued within 5-7 days of treatment without much trouble. Most lasers such can often be used while on skin care products without additional risk. Patients who undergo BOTOX application do not need to modify their skin care regiment unless required by your physician. Cosmetic procedures such as injectable fillers (i.e. Juvederm) can be performed without modification of skin care program. Patients who are concerned about cosmetic treatments and skin care programs are encouraged to check with our office in advance.

Is there any downtime related to a medically prescribed skin care program?

In our practice, most of our patients who undergo cosmetic consultation are briefly counseled on the benefits of medically prescribed skin care. Most female patients are already actively engaged in some form of skin care management. Dr. Lowe is committed to providing patients with an effective and safe skin care recommendations. There is virtually no downtime associated with a standard skin care regimen. It should be slow and steady not short and harsh. A limited number of patients experience redness or skin irritation of the course of treatment, but the regimen should be adjusted when the effects become too noticeable. Patients are encouraged to discontinue certain parts of the program during periods of increased activity or sun exposure. Every patient has different skin and different expectations or definitions about down-time. Patients should adjust their skin care program during different times of the year or when travelling. A patient may elect to have a more or less aggressive the skin program based on their clinical or social situation. Dr. Lowe and our staff can provide you with further information about treatment downtime during your cosmetic consultation.

Is a medically prescribed skin care program right for me?

In most cases, skin care program is not something that a patient needs; it is something a patient wants. There is a financial and personal cost for patients who desire noticeable skin improvement. There are a variety of options to rejuvenate skin. These include skin care, surgery, resurfacing, Botox, soft tissue fillers, and laser procedures to name just a few. Skin care will provide modest results at a limited cost. The treatment regimen is not associated with undue risk in most cases. Most patients utilize skin care products throughout their lifetime. No cosmetic product is without risk or cost, but skin care is popular because it seems to provide an excellent balance between risk and benefits. Patients should carefully weigh the pros and cons of skin care before purchasing products. Each patient is unique, a consultation with a Board Certified Plastic Surgeon or Dermatologist can help you determine what options best suite your situation and pocket book. Skin care is often the right thing for the right person. For further information check out our website or other helpful links at www.drjlowe.com

What are Dr. Lowe's take home points?

1. Skin care should be individualized based on patient's features, concerns, and expectations.
2. Understand limited risks (poor results, crusting, swelling, and scaring).
3. Skin care is only effective when used routinely over a long period of time.
4. Skin care can be adjusted to increase or decrease results.
5. It is best to keep the skin care regimen simple but structured.
6. Medically prescribed medications produce scientifically proven results.
7. Most patients are unable to consistently follow skin care regimens.
8. Other procedures or lasers can be performed to enhance skin rejuvenation results.
9. Choice a skin care program that meets your lifestyle and pocket book. Have a skin care budget.
10. Discontinue skin care products one week prior to cosmetic procedures such as laser resurfacing.