



EXPLORE

REAL SIMPLE

The 6 Best Anti-Aging Ingredients, According to Plastic Surgeons

There are many different voices to turn to when seeking advice regarding anti-aging skincare, but some are undeniably more qualified than others. While we do love a good Reddit thread or Twitter chain for discovering new recommendations, they don't carry quite the same weight as a medical professional's informed input.

To help sort through the clutter, we reached out to two plastic surgeons working closely with anti-aging for their top tips on which home products help most. [Dr. Melissa Doft, M.D.](#) and [Konstantin Vasyukevich, M.D.](#) shared their picks for which ingredients—and which products containing them—are most effective, even outside of the clinic.

1

Retinol: SkinCeuticals Retinol 0.3

“As an expert in facial rejuvenation, Retinol would definitely be at the top of my list,” says Dr. Vasyukevich, known to his patients as Dr. K. “It is one of the most effective ingredients for a sustainable skin rejuvenating effect. The only caveat being that it has to be applied on a regular basis for an extended period of time, otherwise it becomes ineffective.”

He recommends SkinCeuticals Retinol 0.3 (seen above) for nighttime use, and [MZ Skin's Hydrate & Nourish Age Defence Retinol Day Moisturizer SPF30](#) (\$149; [net-a-porter.com](#)) for use during the day.

To buy: \$67; [dermstore.com](#).

2

Vitamin C: Timeless Skin Care 20% Vitamin C Serum + Vitamin E + Ferulic Acid

Dr. Doft agrees that retinol is a critical ingredient in home care, but also recommends another popular antioxidant. “For anti-aging my two top ingredients are retinol and vitamin C. Both will thicken the skin by increasing collagen production.”

We like [this particular vitamin C serum](#) for its stable formula, which includes ferulic acid and vitamin E, in addition to its widely accessible price point.

To buy: \$17 (was \$25); [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

3

Hydroquinone: SkinMedica Lytera 2.0 Pigment Correcting Serum

Sometimes [seen as a controversial ingredient](#) in skincare for its “skin bleaching” abilities, Dr. K sees hydroquinone as a valuable resource in anti-aging. “Hydroquinone will help to get rid of the dark pigmentation that the skin might develop over the summer months making the skin look lighter and fresher.”

He recommends this (currently on-sale) serum by SkinMedica, which contains hydroquinone, plus a ton of other brightening, complexion-enhancing ingredients all in one.

To buy: \$131 (was \$154); [dermstore.com](https://www.dermstore.com).

4

Antioxidants: Revaleskin Intense Recovery Treatment

In addition to vitamin C, plastic surgeons recommend using other antioxidants in your skincare routine. According to Dr. K, “Antioxidants help to prevent skin cell damage from free radicals and prevent collagen breakdown.”

To buy: \$143; [dermstore.com](https://www.dermstore.com).

5

Caffeine: The Ordinary Caffeine Solution 5% + EGCG

If you're looking for an ingredient that specifically targets the eye area, caffeine is one of the few that actually works. “Around the eyes I love using caffeine products which cause vasoconstriction to reduce puffiness and dark circles,” says Dr. Doft. “Look for products with pure caffeine or green tea.”

To buy: \$7; [sephora.com](https://www.sephora.com).

6

Hyaluronic Acid: Oxygenetix Oxygenating Moisturizer

Keeping skin moist and hydrated is key to preventing aging. “I also love products with humectants,” says Dr. Doft. “Materials that increase the water absorption of your skin make the skin look fresher and reduce thin lines like hyaluronic acid and glycerin.”

“Hyaluronic acid is in my opinion one of the best and most effective skin moisturizers,” says Dr. K. “Opt for a serum or moisturizer with Hyaluronic.” He specifically recommends Oxygenetix Oxygenating Moisturizer (seen above) as an HA-containing moisturizer, and Dr. Barbara Sturm's Hyaluronic Serum (\$300; [nordstrom.com](https://www.nordstrom.com)) for HA in serum form.

To buy: \$119; [dermstore.com](https://www.dermstore.com).