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SPOTLESS CLEAR MY PIGMENT



Hyperpigmentation may be harmless, but it can hinder you from realizing your brightest and healthiest skin. Here's how to get rid of hyperpigmentation.

Hyperpigmentation is among the many skin care concerns that lead us down rabbit holes of how-to-treat-it research. It's likely you've experienced some degree of hyperpigmentation in your lifetime, whether you realize it or not. Millions of people, of all skin types, have or will deal with this skincare concern.

While many people don't realize they have hyperpigmentation, even more people are wondering how to get rid of it.



SO, WHAT IS AND WHAT CAUSES HYPERPIGMENTATION?

If you haven't identified the condition you're dealing with as hyperpigmentation, you may be trying the wrong products to lighten and balance your complexion.

That's why it's important to understand the ins-and-outs of this condition to choose the most effective ingredients for treating it, but also to prevent it from developing in the first place.

If you're experiencing hyperpigmentation, do you know how you can prevent it from worsening? Do you know which type of hyperpigmentation you're dealing with? And most importantly—do you know how to get rid of hyperpigmentation?

Have no fear. We're here to provide you with the facts, the science, and the studies, so you can make educated decisions for your skin.

WHAT IS HYPERPIGMENTATION?

If we break the word “hyperpigmentation” down, we get hyper (meaning over or excessive) and pigmentation (the natural coloring of skin tissue).

By definition, hyperpigmentation is an excess of pigment in the skin.

When our skin produces more melanin than usual, it manifests as darker skin, discoloration, dark spots, or patches, which all fall under the umbrella of hyperpigmentation.



Production of melanin, or our natural skin pigments, is our skin’s defense mechanism that occurs when our skin experiences trauma.

Skin trauma can come in the form of a scratch, cut, or any sort of wound that breaks the surface of the skin.

Skin trauma also includes sun exposure, because our delicate skin is no match for the sun’s intense rays.

Once our skin incurs trauma, it reacts by stimulating melanocytes, our melanin-forming skin cells, to protect itself from further damage.

These cells rush to the surface of our skin when they’re stimulated, leading to discoloration, darker pigments, sun spots, dark spots, and patches of darkened skin—hyperpigmentation.



WHAT CAUSES HYPERPIGMENTATION?

Hyperpigmentation, as we now know, is caused by trauma to the skin. While some causes are controllable, others are genetic. Some common causes of hyperpigmentation include:

SUN EXPOSURE

ACNE

SKIN INFLAMMATION

CERTAIN MEDICATIONS

HORMONES

SKIN INJURIES

ADDISON'S DISEASE

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HYPERPIGMENTATION

Think of hyperpigmentation as an umbrella term for darkened pigment. Before we understand how to get rid of hyperpigmentation, it's important to identify which type of hyperpigmentation we're experiencing. Knowing the specific type of hyperpigmentation we're dealing with will help to determine the most effective treatment or ingredient for ridding this condition and lightening the skin.



POST-INFLAMMATORY HYPERPIGMENTATION, develops on our skin as a reaction to inflammation. Skin inflammation often emerges from pimples, blemishes, acne, and conditions like eczema. It's also how our skin heals from wounds. This type of hyperpigmentation typically affects people who are prone to acne, but men, women, and people of all skin types are susceptible to post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. These darkened spots can appear pink, red, or brown in color, and they can be found anywhere on the body, including the face.



MELASMA HYPERPIGMENTATION, is a type of hyperpigmentation that develops on our skin as a response to hormones, genetics, medications, and sun exposure. This condition is common in pregnant women and people with darker complexions who naturally have more melanocytes than people with lighter complexions. Melasma commonly develops as large patches or brown spots on the face, forearms, and neck. Many people experience melasma around their nose, cheeks, and lips.



SUN-INDUCED HYPERPIGMENTATION, often appears as age spots, liver spots, freckles, and sun spots. This type of hyperpigmentation is caused by overexposure to the sun's rays. These spots can be brown or black, and they're commonly seen on the face and hands. People who are older and people who spend considerable time in the sun without sunscreen are prone to developing sun-induced hyperpigmentation.

HOW TO GET RID OF HYPERPIGMENTATION?

Now you're well-versed in the causes of hyperpigmentation, the types of hyperpigmentation, and the science behind hyperpigmentation. So how do you get rid of hyperpigmentation? Although hyperpigmentation is harmless, it contributes to an unhealthy appearance. The healthy skin we're all seeking is evenly-colored, evenly-textured, and blemish-free. Here are the best skincare products for treating hyperpigmentation:



RETINOL, works extremely well for hyperpigmentation, because it stimulates cell turnover. This means it tells our skin cells to shed old cells that are clogging our pores and prompts them to generate new cells.

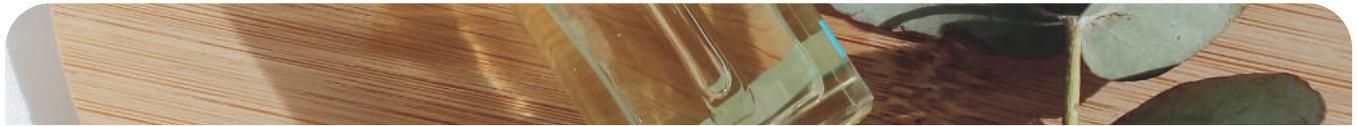
Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation caused by acne and clogged pores is one of the most common types of hyperpigmentation, so clearing the pores and stimulating cell regeneration is a major key to lightening and evening the skin tone.

Retinol serums work to inhibit tyrosinase—the enzyme responsible for melanin production. As retinol inhibits tyrosinase, it works on a cellular level to lighten the skin, treat hyperpigmentation, and prevent the skin from generating discolored dark patches.



VITAMIN C, if your skin is hyperpigmented, Vitamin C should be one of the first ingredients you integrate into your skincare routine. Similar to retinol, Vitamin C treats hyperpigmentation by inhibiting tyrosinase and, therefore, inhibiting melanin that causes discoloration, dark patches, and dark spots.

Countless dermatologists will recommend vitamin C for its brightening, lightening, and free-radical-neutralizing benefits. Free radicals lead to undesirable skin conditions like hyperpigmentation, and sun damage is one of the main culprits for the formation of these damaging free radicals. Vitamin C is an antioxidant that fights these free radicals by neutralizing them and reversing the damage they cause to our skin. Integrating a vitamin C booster into your skincare routine can even your skin tone, reduce and prevent hyperpigmentation, and counteract the effects of stress and aging at the same time.



GLYCOLIC ACID, a substance derived from sugar cane, is an ingredient found in many popular skincare products for its ability to rid dead skin cells and provide an anti-aging effect. It's highly effective for reducing hyperpigmentation. Because discoloration is often the result of old, dead skin cells that haven't quite turned over to generate new cells yet, glycolic acid works to stimulate cell regeneration and purge the cells causing discoloration. It cleanses our pores and reduces excess pigment stuck to our underlying, healthy skin cells.



KOJIC ACID, joins the tyrosinase-inhibiting group, alongside retinol and vitamin C. This substance effectively treats hyperpigmentation by suppressing melanin production in the skin. Known to lighten the skin, even skin tone, and treat acne, kojic acid is a favorite skincare product found in many soaps, creams, and lotions. Studies have proven kojic acid to be an effective depigmenting agent with antioxidant activity that stimulates cell regeneration to rid old, excessively-pigmented cells.



ALOE, is an excellent safe and natural treatment for hyperpigmentation. This ingredient contains aloin, a chemical compound that combats melanin and prevents the development of pigmentation.

Through inhibition of tyrosinase, aloin inhibits melanin production, reducing brown spots and dark patches, and treating the effects of sun damage on the skin.

In a study conducted by the Journal of Cutaneous and Aesthetic Surgery, "aloin induced powerful, dose-dependent, physiologically significant melanin aggregating effects leading to skin lightening."

Aloe extract is safe to apply topically on the skin, and it hasn't been known to produce any considerable side effects. This ingredient can be taken straight from the aloe vera plant by scraping the naturally-occurring gel from the inside of the aloe plant leaves.

HOW TO GET RID OF ACNE AND HYPERPIGMENTATION?

While acne hyperpigmentation still falls under the hyperpigmentation umbrella, the source of acne-specific hyperpigmentation can be targeted with different types of skincare products. Our skin often develops acne hyperpigmentation after a blemish disappears. This discoloration may occur because we picked at our blemishes which is a really bad idea. Or maybe we used a harsh chemical that we definitely weren't supposed to use on our face, but we grabbed the nearest, most potent product out of desperation. To prevent post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation from occurring in the first place, we have to treat the source: acne-causing bacteria.



TEA TREE OIL FACE SERUM, highly effective for treating the source of acne-induced hyperpigmentation. Tea tree oil is notorious for killing off acne bacteria, preventing it from growing and to reduce acne lesions. It also prevents future breakouts from recurring. Because acne and blemishes are the most common cause of hyperpigmentation, it's important to cleanse impurities from your skin every night. An anti-pollution cleansing cream is key to purging daily scum and grime from your face to prevent hyperpigmentation before it develops.



WEAR SUNSCREEN, we can't stress this enough. Sun exposure is not only a major cause of unhealthy hyperpigmentation, but also a major cause of rapid aging. "An estimated 90 percent of skin aging is caused by the sun." Use SPF 30, anti-aging sunscreen every day to protect your skin from sun damage.



TRY MICRODERMABRASION TREATMENTS, a deep exfoliating treatment that rids dead skin cells and particles from the pores. These treatments lighten and brighten the skin, while reducing excessive pigmentation and evening the skin tone. Be gentle with your skin and pay close attention to the way it reacts to certain ingredients or treatments. If you want to get rid of hyperpigmentation and avoid further development of skin discoloration, start with the causes of hyperpigmentation. What can you do to prevent dark spots and patches from developing or worsening?