

“Dear Dr. McCollough”... Practical Answers for Every Body

Dr. E. Gaylon McCollough Helps Clear Up The “Hype”
On Non-Invasive Cosmetic Treatments

Dear Dr. McCollough: What causes wrinkles and how can I prevent them?

Dear Reader: Years of abuse such as unprotected sun, wind, cold, and ultraviolet light exposure cause the collagen and elastic fibers of the skin to break down, and the fluid elements between them to dry, leading to the development of wrinkles. Here are a few things I think *you* can do, to prevent wrinkles, and a couple of things you can do once they begin to appear.

1. Beware of the sun. Regardless of what you have been told, the only real “anti aging crème” is sunscreen. Exposure to the sun will cause the majority of wrinkles you will have in your lifetime. If you must be exposed to the sun, protect yourself with a good quality sunscreen that is a “broad spectrum”, which means it protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Also, sunscreens with titanium dioxide or zinc oxide are less likely to cause an allergic reaction and seem to have better staying power than others. Remember to apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes prior to every exposure to the sun. Reapply frequently and liberally, at least every two hours, as long as you stay in the sun. And don’t forget that 70-80% of the sun’s damaging rays can penetrate through cloudy haze and water, so you need to use a sunscreen under these conditions as well.

2. Don't smoke. Smokers have more wrinkles than non-smokers, it’s a fact. Smoking seems to actually speed up the aging process of the skin. Not to mention that the facial expressions one makes when smoking may contribute to wrinkles. (Around your mouth from the actual inhaling, and around your eyes from squinting to shield your eyes from the smoke) It has also recently been thought that repeated exposure to the heat from a cigarette can damage the skin.

3. Cleanse and moisturize daily. Be good to your skin. Keeping skin clean and hydrated is necessary to help prevent premature aging. I recommend that you seek the advice of a medical professional when choosing products. There are as many skin types as there are people, so having someone there to help you sift through the aisles and aisles of skin care products is helpful. You may choose a product that is wrong for your skin type, and cancel out any benefits you may have been trying to achieve.

4. Replace vitamin and mineral deficiencies. Pharmaceutical grade vitamins (Such as our *Max-A-Life* brand) provide all the nutrients skin needs to replenish itself with healthy new cells.

5. Use skin polishers. When we age, the scales of dead skin cells accumulate on the surface and the skin can develop a dull, lifeless appearance. Blood circulation immediately beneath the skin also lessens thereby impairing nutrition and the skin loses its elasticity because of the deterioration of its collagen elastin network. Retin-A and Alpha-Hydroxys when used properly—and for a long enough period of time—tend to reverse these changes. It should be clearly understood that *neither Retin-A nor Alpha Hydroxys are a substitute for cosmetic surgery*, but they are a helpful adjunct for the individual who desires additional improvement beyond what surgery can provide.

6. Have a surgical peel. Once wrinkles are present the only way to truly get rid of them is by having a surgical peel or dermabrasion. Even that only gets rid of about 80% of wrinkles. Regardless of what you are told, “newer” quick healing procedures (like the nitrogen plasma technique or *micro*-dermabrasion) do not, generally, improve acne scars and deeper wrinkles, such as those around the mouth, in the forehead, and at the corners of the eyes. In order to improve deeper wrinkles, skin blemishes, and scars, it takes a procedure that extends into the dermal layers of the skin, such as regional or full face surgical peel or surgical dermabrasion. Unless it takes 2 weeks to heal, you will not see any permanent changes in your skin.

If you would like any more information on this or other health related topics, call the McCollough Institute for Appearance and Health at 251-967-7600, email info@mccolloughinstitute.com or visit our website www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com. If you would like to ask Dr. McCollough a question, please submit the question using our online contact form at <http://www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com/contactus.html>.