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The Best Serums To Use With LED Light Therapy

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You've probably scrolled past more than a few Instagram posts of someone using an [LED light therapy mask](#), but those futuristic devices do a whole lot more than make for some interesting social media content. According to dermatologist Ellen Marmur, who spoke to Elite Daily for this article, LED light therapy works by using different wavelengths of visible light to help improve various skin concerns. (Dr. Marmur adds that different light colors can kill acne-causing bacteria, stimulate collagen production, calm inflammation, and promote brighter skin.) To maximize those benefits, the best serums to use alongside LED light therapy will include gentle hydrating ingredients like hyaluronic acid, squalane, and glycerin. Depending on what you're using your LED device to achieve, you'll want to look for additional ingredients that target more specific skin concerns, too. To find out more, keep reading.

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The Expert

Dr. Ellen Marmur, M.D., is a board-certified dermatologist and dermatologic surgeon whose expertise includes skin cancer diagnosis and surgery, Mohs surgery, reconstructive surgery, women's health dermatology, cosmetic surgery, and aesthetic procedures. She is the founder of Marmur Medical, her New York City-based practice, as well as an at-home line of products, MMSkincare. Dr. Marmur serves as associate clinical professor in the Department of Dermatology and the Department of Genetics & Genomic Research at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

What To Look For & What To Avoid

To choose the best serum to use alongside your LED light therapy treatment, ensure that the formula contains at least one of those aforementioned hydrating ingredients and then, you can get more specific. To treat acne, Dr. Marmur recommends ingredients like willow herb, prebiotics, probiotics, and niacinamide. "These ingredients help diminish the bacteria and help to reduce the signs of inflammation that worsen blemishes," she explains. Niacinamide is also a great choice for promoting a more even skin tone and texture. And for those using LED light therapy to boost their skin’s collagen production, Dr. Marmur says it's all about the peptide ingredients — specifically, palmitoyl tripeptide-5.

As for what to avoid? "I would not recommend any ingredients that clog your pores or that are overly hydrating," Dr. Marmur suggests. When in doubt, you can always check the serum's packaging or product description online to see if it labels itself as noncomedogenic, which means that it's been formulated without any pore-clogging ingredients. "I advise patients to avoid rubbing alcohol, charcoal, and even too much retinoid," Dr. Marmur adds. "Anything that stings or dries out the skin usually backfires and leads to more redness," she explains.

One last thing worth noting is that it's important to pay attention to the directions for your LED light therapy device. Some will require you to apply a serum *before* you use your device, while others are designed to be used without any serum at all. Either way, you'll always want to start with skin that's just been cleansed (then add your serum or go on straight to your LED light therapy treatment and follow up with one of the serums from the list ahead).

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Shop The Best Serums To Use With LED Light Therapy

In a hurry? Here are the best serums to use with LED Light Therapy:

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The Doctor’s Pick: MMRepose Serum
- 2

Best Collagen-Stimulating Serum Under \$20: MIZON Collagen 100
- 3

Best Serum With Niacinamide: Paula's Choice Clinical Niacinamide 20% Treatment

4 **Best Probiotic Serum:** TULA Hello Radiance Illuminating Serum



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5 **Best Serum That Doubles As Foundation:** ILIA Super Serum Skin Tint SPF 40

1. The Doctor's Pick

MMRepose Serum


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\$85

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Full disclosure: This is Dr. Marmur’s own serum, but she developed it to be used alongside her at-home LED light device, the



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Marmur Repose Serum 2.0. The MMRepose Serum is an aloe-based formula that helps to hydrate and calm stressed-out skin as it offers up protection against future damage from exposure to environmental aggressors and oxidative stress. To boost collagen production and protect against collagen degradation, Dr. Marmur included her favorite peptide, palmitoyl tripeptide-5, and an essence of adaptogens, prebiotics, probiotics, and photodynamic actives that were chosen to respond to the skin's microbiome *and* the LED light therapy treatment for enhanced results.

Key Ingredients: Palmitoyl Tripeptide-5, Prebiotics, Probiotics, Plankton Extract, Hyaluronic Acid, Niacinamide, Green Tea Leaf Extract **Synthetic Fragrance-Free:** Yes **Cruelty-Free:** Yes **Size:** 1 oz.

2. Best Collagen-Stimulating Serum Under \$20

MIZON Collagen 100

AMAZON

\$17

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For a budget-friendly serum that helps to stimulate collagen production, [MIZON Collagen 100](#) is formulated with palmitoyl tripeptide-5, [copper tripeptide-1](#), and hexapeptide-8 to help both form collagen *and* reduce its breakdown. To immediately [plump and hydrate skin](#) without clogging pores, the K-beauty serum uses hydrolyzed collagen, hyaluronic acid, and glycerin. Plus, it contains [anti-inflammatory ingredients](#) like centella asiatica and allantoin to help calm signs of inflammation.

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Key Ingredients: Hydrolyzed Collagen, Hyaluronic Acid, Allantoin, Panthenol, Glycerin, Centella Asiatica, Chia Seed Extract, Palmitoyl Tripeptide-5, Copper Tripeptide-1, Hexapeptide-8 **Synthetic Fragrance-Free:** Yes **Cruelty-Free:** Yes **Size:** 1 oz.

3. Best Niacinamide Serum

Paula's Choice Clinical Niacinamide 20% Treatment

AMAZON

\$52

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Niacinamide is another favorite ingredient of Dr. Marmur's, particularly for those with acne-prone skin or those trying to improve an uneven tone and texture. And while some of the other serums on this list contain niacinamide in lower concentrations, the [Paula's Choice Niacinamide 20% Treatment](#) uses a potent 20% concentration of the multi-tasking ingredient to help minimize the appearance of pores, [reduce unwanted hyperpigmentation](#), and promote a smoother texture. To complement the niacinamide, the serum also includes [licorice root extract](#) and [vitamin C](#), which are both antioxidants that help stimulate collagen production, brighten skin, and further help shield your skin from sun damage (when combined with your SPF).

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Key Ingredients: Niacinamide, Glycerin, Vitamin C, Licorice Root Extract, Purslane, Camellia Japonica Flower Extract, Green Tea Leaf Extract, Allantoin, Panthenol **Synthetic Fragrance-Free:** Yes **Cruelty-Free:** Yes **Size:** 0.67 oz.

4. Best Probiotic Serum

TULA Hello Radiance Illuminating Serum

AMAZON

\$61

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Topical prebiotics and probiotics are thought to help balance the skin microbiome, which can improve skin conditions like acne and eczema in the process. TULA’s Hello Radiance Illuminating Serum was formulated with prebiotics *and* probiotics to help calm inflammation and maintain healthy, balanced skin. The serum also concentrates on promoting a brighter complexion both immediately and over time with its pearlescent finish that instantly leaves skin illuminated, while ingredients like turmeric root extract and Japanese mandarin work to fade unwanted hyperpigmentation with continued use.

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Key Ingredients: Squalane, Glycerin, Blueberry Fruit Extract, Green Tea Leaf Extract, Turmeric Root Extract, Safflower Seed Oil, Vitamin E, Probiotics, Prebiotics **Synthetic Fragrance-Free:** No **Cruelty-Free:** Yes **Size:** 1.7 oz.

5. Best Serum That Doubles As Foundation

ILIA Super Serum Skin Tint SPF 40

AMAZON

\$48

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You should be wearing sunscreen every day, of course, but Dr. Marmur notes that it's especially important when you're doing LED light therapy. You won't want to use this [ILIA Super Serum Skin Tint](#) for any LED devices that require a serum *during* treatment, but post-treatment, it gives you added sun protection and multiple skin care benefits via its light-coverage formula. The multi-tasking tint can replace your foundation during the day, but it also works to promote a smooth, even skin tone and texture thanks to squalane, hyaluronic acid, and niacinamide. This is also a solid choice for anyone with sensitive skin, as the tinted serum uses the [mineral sun-blocker zinc oxide](#) and is made without fragrance, silicones, and oils.

Available Shades: 28 **Key Ingredients:** Squalane, Niacinamide, Aloe Leaf Juice Powder, Bisabolol, Allantoin, Hyaluronic Acid
Synthetic Fragrance-Free: Yes **Cruelty-Free:** Yes **Size:** 1 oz.

Expert:

[Dr. Ellen Marmur, M.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist and founder of [MMSkincare](#).