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3 Collagen-Boosting Treatments That Really Work From Top Regenerative Aesthetic MDs



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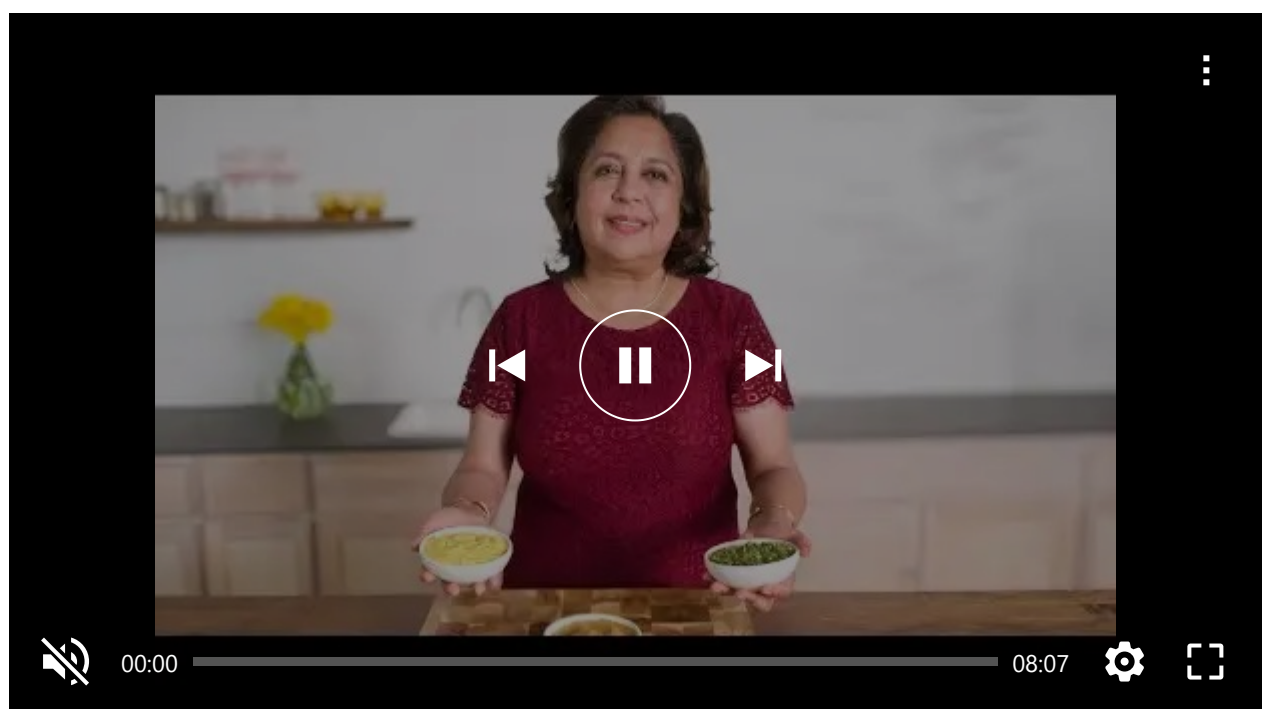
Image by **Guille Faingold**

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In the pursuit of stronger, smoother, firmer, and more lifted skin, skin care experts zero in on collagen and elastin production. For good reason: Collagen and elastin are your skin's structural proteins that make up the dermal layer and are responsible for how the skin looks and feels. In youth, the body is able to replenish collagen and elastin levels very efficiently—so the skin always has a steady, plump supply.

At some point during the mid-twenties, this changes. The body's regenerative abilities slow, and the amount of collagen and elastin that is lost outpaces the amount that is made. And thus, the aging process begins.



This is why there are so many topical products, [oral supplements](#), and tools that aim to give your body a collagen boost—because if you're able to help support your body's natural collagen and elastin synthesis, that can be a meaningful way to a prolong youthful, healthy complexion. With advancements in regenerative skin care technology, these treatments are quite effective too.

I often speak to regenerative aesthetic dermatologists to get the latest intel on skin care technology—and here, three top M.D.s share their favorite collagen-boosting treatments.

LED

With the overnight ubiquity of LED masks, it's understandable why one might be skeptical of their efficacy. Anytime I see a tool flooding the market or my Instagram feed, I tend to write it off as gimmicky too. This is especially true since the tools come in a wide spectrum of price points and quality.

But as board-certified dermatologist [Ellen Marmur, M.D.](#), founder of [Marmur Medical](#) and [MMSkincare](#) explained to me on an [episode of Clean Beauty School](#), LED lights and their therapeutic benefits are rooted in rigorous research—and have been studied for decades at this point. LED lights, she says, are the real deal.

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And, I might add, are great for [boosting collagen](#). “LED lights work by creating a photochemical reaction. They’re targeting the mitochondria, which are the

most magical things. Think of them like a battery that fuels all the energy processes happening in the cells, including making new proteins,” she says.

According to research, the [mitochondrial electron transport chain is actually photosensitive](#)^{1✓} to the wavelengths given off by LED lights. Essentially, they have receptors that can accept these wavelengths, which stimulates various chemical processes. “One of them will accept red light, one of them will accept yellow light, one of them will accept green light, and so on,” she explains.

Depending on the color or wavelength, these can “increase growth factors, increase proteins [like collagen and elastin], and turn on or off other mechanisms in the skin, which can help get rid of wrinkles, improve elasticity and firmness, and decrease things like dark spots and inflammation.”

For collagen and elastin production, current research indicates that red or near-infrared might be the best options. Learn more about [LED technology here](#), and then shop our favorite [LED masks here](#).

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP)

“PRP was historically used in athletes or people in the orthopedic community who were healing from injuries, like in their knees for example. But then it took off in dermatology,” says board-certified dermatologist [Caren Campbell, M.D.](#) in an episode of [Clean Beauty School](#).

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It’s a treatment born of regenerative medicine, and wields the body’s own healing powers. “Basically we draw your blood in a special tube, and then we spin it down so it separates out the red blood cells from the serum that contains the platelet rich plasma. And what it contains is growth factors,” she explains. “So growth factors send messages to the body that say, ‘Hey, come here and heal this, or grow this.’ Essentially, they communicate with the body to regenerate tissue.”

And one way they rejuvenate the skin is through collagen production. In fact, research shows that PRP can encourage [collagen production in the dermal](#)

layer^{2✓}.

Campbell notes that it's a treatment that can be used in a wide variety of areas *and* alongside other injectables or treatments (not just in isolation). This makes it a particularly useful tool in the regenerative toolbox. "It's just been hugely impactful," she says. "And a great option for tricky areas—like under the eyes or around the mouth—without having to use filler."

For example, it can help ease the appearance of dark undereye circles. "For folks who are predisposed to dark circles—like they've had them from even a young age—I've been doing a series of PRP injections in that area every month and it's shown dramatic improvement," she says.

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Or another tricky concern it can help treat are the fine lines around the mouth. "The lipstick lines around the mouth are just incredibly hard to treat. It's the bane of all cosmetic dermatologist existence. I started exploring PRP in the area alongside something like Clear & Brilliant or microneedling, and it's worked incredibly well," she says.

Sofwave

Sofwave is a skin treatment that uses ultrasound technology to stimulate collagen and elastin production.

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"Anything we can do to get that collagen production back up and turn that whole physiology back on, is a good thing. There are a lot of technologies that can improve collagen production in that dermal layer, but they all have downtime. With this, you can go back to life quickly after," says board-certified dermatologist [Amy Lewis, M.D.](#), Clinical Associate Professor of Dermatology at [Yale University School of Medicine](#) once told me about [Sofwave](#).

Sofwave is an ultrasound device, which has been used before in aesthetics.

However, this tool is different in that it uses seven parallel beams that bypass the epidermis (the surface of the skin) and enter the mid-dermal layer. This is important as this is where collagen and elastin are made, so it more effectively stimulates their production.

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Lewis notes, "with the way that the energy enters into the skin, it's more effective than ultrasound therapies of the past. It's a fixed depth, so it's only targeting the dermal layer where the collagen and elastin is being produced."

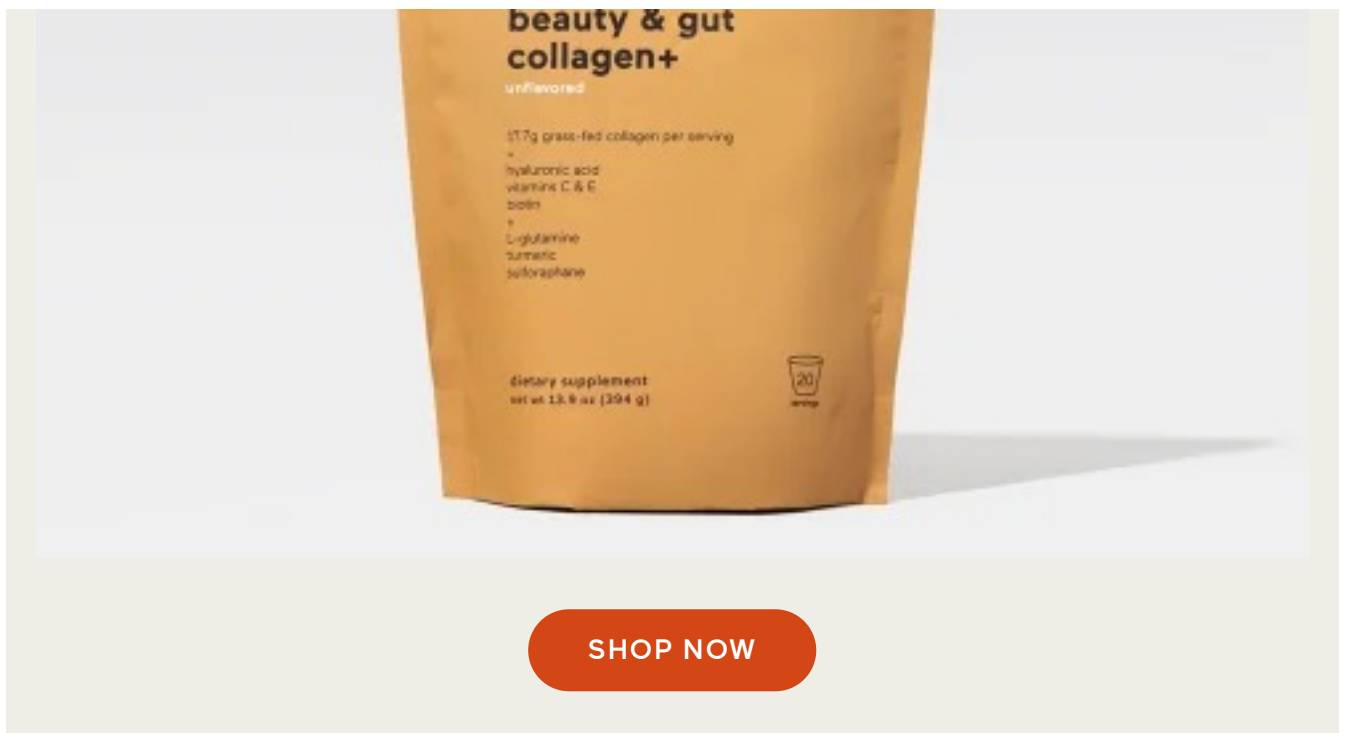
The takeaway

Amping up collagen is one of the most effective ways to improve skin longevity as a whole. With these innovative regenerative treatments, you can help your body act and look younger using its own biological and chemical pathways.

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