

Beauty > Skincare

13 Best Stretch Mark Creams in 2024, According to Dermatologists

Plus, how stretch marks form and how to treat them.

BY KAYLA BLANTON AND SHANON MAGLENTE UPDATED: APR 24, 2024

SAVE ARTICLE





PETER THOMAS ROTH, BURT'S BEES, BIO-OIL

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Our top picks

1



BEST VALUE STRETCH MARK CREAM

Burt's Bees Burt's Bees Mama Belly Butter

\$9 AT AMAZON

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2



BEST STRETCH MARK GEL

Differin Adapalene Gel, 0.1%

\$13 AT AMAZON

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3



BEST STRETCH MARK CREAM FOR DRY SKIN

Earth Mama Earth Mama Belly Butter

\$16 AT WALMART

[Read more](#)

4



BEST EXFOLIATING STRETCH MARK CREAM

Peter Thomas Roth PRO Strength Stretch Mark Cream

\$58 AT AMAZON

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BEST STRETCH MARK OIL

Bio-Oil Skincare Body Oil

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Stretch marks are completely normal, and anyone can develop them. According to [Connie Yang, M.D., F.A.A.D.](#), of [PFRANKMD](#), things like pregnancy, puberty, and weight fluctuation may cause the marks. Though there's no harm in them (they are naturally occurring, after all), many look for the best stretch mark creams with the hope of fading these lines.

Most contain moisturizing ingredients like [hyaluronic acid](#), vitamin E, and shea butter—all of which may help build collagen and strengthen the skin barrier through hydration to help resist stretching, says [Janelle Vega, M.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist at Mayoral Dermatology.

Meet the Experts: [Carmen Castilla, M.D.](#), a board-certified dermatologist and clinical instructor at Mount Sinai New York; [Connie Yang, M.D., F.A.A.D.](#), dermatologist at [PFRANKMD](#); [Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D.](#) dermatologist; [Aanand Geria, M.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist and owner of Geria Dermatology; [Teresa Song, M.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist at [Marmur Medical](#); [Janelle Vega, M.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist at Mayoral Dermatology.

However, don't expect a cream to magically make stretch marks disappear. "Stretch mark creams are generally great moisturizers, but are of minimal help in actually fading stretch marks," says [Carmen Castilla, M.D.](#), a board-certified

dermatologist at Mount Sinai.

That said, our experts agree that treating stretch marks early will get you the best results. Ahead, find some of the best stretch mark creams and serums available.

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1

BEST VALUE STRETCH MARK CREAM

Burt's Bees Burt's Bees Mama Belly Butter



Now 30% Off

\$9 AT AMAZON

PROS

- ⊕ **Affordable**
- ⊕ **Ultra moisturizing**
- ⊕ **Has over 30,000 ratings on Amazon**

CONS

- ⊗ **Super thick, may need more effort to spread**

Recommended by [Teresa Song, M.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist at [Marmur Medical](#), and boasting a cult following on Amazon, this Burt's Bees cream **uses rich hydrators like cocoa, shea, and jojoba butters**. It's fragrance-free, thick, and easy to apply.

We also love that its retail price runs under \$15, which is more affordable than others on this list.

What Dr. Song says: “The Mama Belly Butter is a great option as it contains hydrating ingredients like glycerin, coconut oil, and jojoba butter.”

Size: 6.5 oz | **Main ingredients:** Vitamin E, lactic acid

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2

BEST STRETCH MARK GEL

Differin Adapalene Gel, 0.1%





Now 14% Off

\$13 AT AMAZON

\$19 AT WALMART

\$18 AT ULTA BEAUTY

CREDIT: DIFFERIN

PROS

⊕ **Contains retinol**

CONS

⊗ **May cause dryness and irritation**

⊕ **Multi-use**

⊕ **Can be used to address acne**

Both Dr. Castilla and Aanand Geria, M.D., board-certified dermatologist recommend Differin gel—as long as you’re not pregnant, as it contains **retinoids**.

Research shows that the application of topical retinoids, an ingredient that encourages cell turnover and collagen production, can effectively fade and address the appearance of stretch marks over time. Although this prescription-strength cream is marketed for use on acne, Dr. Castilla says it can also be applied to stubborn scars.

What Dr. Castilla says: “This can be drying at first, so start slowly and increase use as skin gets used to it.”

Size: 0.5 oz | **Main ingredients:** Adapalene (retinoid)

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3

BEST STRETCH MARK CREAM FOR DRY SKIN

Earth Mama Earth Mama Belly Butter



\$16 AT WALMART

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ Gentle⊕ Can help soothe itchy skin⊕ Hydrating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊗ Not everyone enjoys the scent

A great moisturizer for every day, Dr. Song and reviewers alike appreciate this stretch mark cream for its **gentle and soothing ingredients**. Plus, it doesn't contain any petroleum, mineral oil, artificial preservatives, or fragrance.

We also like that the cream is NSF/ANSI 305 certified. This means it passed rigorous testing in order for its labeling to say it “contains organic ingredients.”

What Dr. Song says: “This belly butter contains aloe vera and shea butter that's calming and hydrating.”

Size: 8 oz | **Main ingredients:** Aloe, fruit oil, seed oil, glycerin

4

BEST EXFOLIATING STRETCH MARK CREAM

Peter Thomas Roth PRO Strength Stretch Mark Cream



\$58 AT AMAZON

\$58 AT SEPHORA

PROS

- ⊕ **Gently exfoliates with lactic acid**
- ⊕ **Contains moisturizing shea and cocoa butters**
- ⊕ **Doesn't include any parabens**

CONS

- ⊗ **Pricey**

Dr. Geria recommends this pick from Peter Thomas Roth, saying it's a great pro-strength cream.

Using a couple of patented blends and a 5% lactic acid complex, this unique formula aims to reduce and prevent stretch marks **by gently exfoliating and firming the skin**. The cream is easy to dispense and rub in, but isn't safe for use on breasts. Its pregnancy-safe claims are unclear, so if you plan on purchasing this one and are expecting, have a chat with your doctor first.

What reviewers say: "This cream changed my life. I was put on a hormonal medication that caused rapid weight gain and as a result stretch marks. I thought I would never get rid of them. I tried everything and this is the only thing that helped fade them dramatically."

Size: 3.4 oz | **Main ingredients:** Lactic acid

5

BEST STRETCH MARK OIL

Bio-Oil Skincare Body Oil





Now 18% Off

\$11 AT AMAZON

CREDIT: BIO-OIL

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ Can be used on face and body⊕ A little goes a long way⊕ Keeps skin moisturized and glossy-looking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊗ Users are mixed about the oily texture

Loved by thousands of online reviewers and *Prevention* deputy editor, Emily Goldman, this oil is incredibly effective and affordable. While not technically a cream, it's designed to help reduce the appearance of stretch marks and uneven skin tone.

This skincare oil uses hydrating ingredients like vitamin E, chamomile, and lavender oil to **lock in moisture without clogging pores**. And according to the brand, you can even use it on your face.

What Goldman says: “It packs a punch (a little goes a long way), but doesn't feel greasy. I even gave one to my sister after she had a baby and she used up the whole bottle. We're now a Bio-Oil family.”

Size: 3.4 oz | **Main ingredients:** Lactic acid

6

BEST UNSCENTED STRETCH MARK CREAM

Mustela Maternity Stretch Marks Cream





\$22 AT AMAZON

\$23 AT WALMART

\$23 AT NORDSTROM

CREDIT: MUSTELA

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ EWG verified+ Fragrance free+ Ok for pregnancy and postpartum use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊗ May cause allergic reactions on some skin types

This Mustela stretch mark cream comes recommended by Dr. Geria. It highlights **avocado and maracuja for hydration**.

We like that this cream is EWG verified, which means it was tested by the nonprofit organization, Environmental Working Group, to ensure the product is free from toxic and dangerous chemicals.

What reviewers say: “First of all the ingredients are very clean which I love. I

used this every morning throughout my twin pregnancy and the oil at night. No stretch marks after carrying my twins for nine months. This product really works.”

Size: 5.07 oz | **Main ingredients:** Avocado peptides, maracuja oil

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7

BEST STRETCH MARK LOTION

Medix 5.5 Retinol Body Lotion





\$19 AT AMAZON

\$19 AT WALMART

CREDIT: MEDIX

PROS

- ⊕ **Contains the most fluid ounces on this list**
- ⊕ **Cult-following**
- ⊕ **Non-greasy**

CONS

- ⊗ **Contains retinol; not safe for pregnant women**

More of a lotion than a cream, this pick **contains firming ingredients that help reduce crepey skin**, like ferulic acid, shea butter, vitamin E, and green tea. Aloe

vera also helps defend the skin against visible redness.

The lotion also contains retinol, an anti-aging ingredient. Remember, if you're pregnant, our experts say to avoid any products with retinol as it's deemed unsafe for pregnancy.

What Dr. Song says: "While not marketed for stretch marks, this lotion contains antioxidants and collagen stimulating retinols to help improve the texture of skin."

Size: 15 oz | **Main ingredients:** Retinol, ferulic acid, vitamin E, shea butter, green tea extract, chamomile, aloe vera

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8

BEST HERBAL STRETCH MARK CREAM

Mederma Stretch Marks Therapy



PACKAGING GRAPHIC FOR DISPLAY PURPOSE ONLY

Now 45% Off

\$17 AT AMAZON

\$49 AT WALMART

CREDIT: MEDERMA

PROS

- ⊕ **Pregnancy-safe**
- ⊕ **Ultra-hydrating**
- ⊕ **Reasonably priced**

CONS

- ⊗ **Some users dislike the scent**

Dr. Castilla points out that hyaluronic acid—a topical humectant that hydrates the skin, stimulates collagen production, and therefore, may improve elasticity—is one of the few ingredients proven to be effective in preventing and managing stretch marks.

Limited research backs this up, and adds that centella asiatica, a medicinal Asian herb, has also been found effective in doing the same. **This best-selling cream contains both ingredients**, and, when used the recommended twice per day, keeps skin moisturized and soft.

What reviewers say: “It’s been the best cream for stretch marks, and completely made my stretch marks fade around my breasts after pregnancy. Granted, I had minimal stretch marks.”

Size: 5.29 Oz | **Main ingredients:** Centella asiatica, hyaluronic acid

9

BEST MULTI-USE STRETCH MARK CREAM

Paula's Choice Retinol Skin-Smoothing Body Treatment



\$29 AT AMAZON

\$29 AT PAULASCHOICE.COM

\$29 AT DERMSTORE

CREDIT: PAULA'S CHOICE

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ Addresses stretch marks, texture, and tone⊕ Sleek packaging⊕ Anti-aging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊗ Not pregnancy-safe

Packed with shea butter, vitamins C and E, retinol, and a blend of oils, **this luxurious body lotion covers all the bases**—meaning it will not only address stretch marks, but can also work on unwanted texture (think: keratosis pilaris, a.k.a. chicken skin) and uneven skintone from head to toe. And, given that it contains a lower-strength retinoid than Differin, it's much less likely to cause irritation.

What reviewers say: “My stretch marks have lightened and the aren't as deep anymore. Some even look like they are gone now.”

Size: 4 oz | **Main ingredients:** Retinol, vitamin C, shea butter

10

BEST SPLURGE-WORTHY STRETCH MARK CREAM

Alastin TransFORM Body Treatment





\$220 AT AMAZON

\$160 AT WALMART

\$216 AT ALASTIN.COM

CREDIT: ALASTIN

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ Dermatologist-recommended⊕ Hydrates skin from inside out⊕ Unscented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊗ Pricey

Also recommended by Dr. Geria, this stretch mark cream uses TriHex technology, the brand's **special blend to help build healthy elastin and collagen**. It's also packed with lipodrone and dill extract to help improve skin texture and give the appearance of firmer skin.

What reviewers say: "I originally got this from my dermatologist and it really helps my skin. You do have to use it twice a day to have it work, but it doesn't take that much. I do recommend it. It is expensive, but worth it."

Size: 6 oz | **Main ingredients:** TriHex technology

11

BEST STRETCH MARK LOTION FOR GLOWING SKIN

Unilever Radiant X Even Tone Body Lotion





\$13 AT AMAZON

\$14 AT WALMART

CREDIT: VASELINE

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ Non-greasy⊕ Can be used on multiple areas⊕ Absorbs quickly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊗ Not directly marketed for stretch marks

When it comes to stretch marks and addressing discoloration or hyperpigmentation, Dr. Vega recommends the Vaseline Radiant X Even Tone Nourishing Body Lotion. She likes that it includes ultra-hydrating lipids in a non-greasy formula, making it ideal for areas prone to stretch marks like the stomach, arms, legs, and chest.

What Dr. Vega says: “Its formula includes active ingredients like 1% niacinamide that’s clinically proven to visibly reduce dark spots and even skin tone in just two weeks.”

Size: 11 oz | **Main ingredients:** Niacinamide, coconut oil, vitamin C, peptides

12

BEST STRETCH MARK BODY BUTTER

Mama Mio Tummy Rub Butter





\$34 AT AMAZON

\$34 AT WALMART

\$31 AT JCPENNEY

CREDIT: MAMA MIO

PROS

- ⊕ **Pregnancy-safe**
- ⊕ **Amazing scent**
- ⊕ **Contains moisturizing ingredient vitamin E**

CONS

- ⊗ **Slightly oily**

Coconut oil, sweet almond oil, and shea butter make up this rich body butter made specifically for use during pregnancy. The **antioxidant-packed formula of nourishers keeps skin moisturized and boosts elasticity** to protect against stretch marks, and a natural blend of bergamot, citrus, and vanilla essential oils

gives it the dreamiest scent.

What reviewers say: “This is my second pregnancy using this cream and I didn’t get a single stretch mark on the areas applied. Love this product and couldn’t recommend it enough.”

Size: 4.1 oz | **Main ingredients:** Coconut oil, almond oil, vitamin E

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13

BEST STRETCH MARK CREAM FOR ITCHY SKIN

Evereden Nourishing Stretch Mark Cream



\$49 AT AMAZON

CREDIT: EVEREDEN

PROS

- ⊕ **Unscented (contains natural fragrance)**
- ⊕ **Convenient pump packaging**
- ⊕ **Plant-based**

CONS

- ⊗ **Takes a bit to absorb**

Plant-based, unscented, and rich with natural butters and oils, we're not sure a

formula could get more moisturizing and pregnancy-safe. This cream is all about stretch mark prevention, as well as **soothing discomfort and itch during pregnancy**. And reviewers love it.

What reviewers say: “This moisturizer is perfect. I’ve been using it since my first trimester and I’m 35 weeks pregnant with no stretch marks. It feels great on the skin and is not at all oily.”

Size: 4 oz | **Main ingredients:** Centella asiatica, aloe vera, shea butter, natural oils

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How to choose the right stretch mark cream for you

✔ **Consider your skin type.** For the best results, Dr. Geria says to factor in your skin type, potential allergens, and adverse reactions.

✔ **Look for hydrating ingredients.** According to Dr. Song, these include hyaluronic acids, vitamin E, shea butter, and retinoids. “Such ingredients will work together to improve the hydration and elasticity of the skin, which can mildly improve the appearance of stretch marks,” she says.

✔ **Choose creams over oils.** Cream formulations are preferred over oils and gels due to better moisturizing properties and increased delivery of active ingredients, Dr. Song explains.

✔ **Pay attention to “pregnancy-safe”:** As mentioned above, not all stretch mark creams are safe for use during pregnancy, particularly those formulated with retinoids and/or exfoliants. Always check the manufacturer’s site for disclaimer information, and run your choice by your doctor if you’re pregnant or breastfeeding.

What are stretch marks?

According to Dr. Vega, stretch marks, medically known as striae, are a type of scarring on the skin that often appear as lines or streaks when the growth of an area is faster than the elasticity of the skin can accommodate.

“Stretch marks form due to abrupt stretching or shrinking on the dermis, which breaks down collagen and elastin fibers,” Dr. Geria adds.

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What causes stretch marks?

Stretch marks are caused by damage to the connective tissue underneath the top layer of the skin, according to Dr. Yang. Here are a few common causes for stretch marks, according to our experts:

- **Pregnancy:** “Stretch marks are extremely common in women on the abdomen and hips during this time of rapid expansion and growth,” says Dr. Vega.
- **Puberty:** As teens grow rapidly and their bodies start changing, boys will often see stretch marks on their backs, while girls will often see them on breasts, thighs, and hips, Dr. Vega explains.
- **Rapid weight or muscle gain:** Stretch marks can show anywhere on the body, even on the arms.

Dr. Vega reminds us that not everyone develops stretch marks with these changes, and much of the tendency is due to genetics, hormonal changes, and weight fluctuation.

Do stretch mark creams work?

To an extent; however, it's important to remember that stretch mark creams aren't magic erasers for skin. "Stretch mark creams generally cannot offer significant benefits to improve the appearance of stretch marks once they have already formed," explains Dr. Song. She explains that while they may help improve the skin's texture when used on a long-term basis, stretch marks are generally deeper in the skin, similar to scarring, and are less likely to respond to topical therapy.

Dr. Yang agrees. She says that once stretch marks develop, they're very difficult to get rid of, even with in-office procedures. "While some creams can help stimulate collagen, to completely correct that degree of damage requires more invasive treatments," she asserts. "Tretinoin is one of the most commonly used topicals for stretch marks, but the data supporting its effectiveness is mixed."

Can you prevent stretch marks with stretch mark cream?

Not entirely. All of our experts agree that there is little scientific evidence to support the claim that stretch mark creams can prevent the formation of stretch marks.

“Although stretch mark creams can aid in reducing the appearance of stretch marks by moisturizing the skin and stimulating collagen production, they may not be able to entirely prevent their formation,” says Dr. Geria.

This is because stretch marks occur due to genetic, hormonal, and physical factors, where the skin is being stretched beyond its normal limits, explains Dr. Song, which are unlikely to be affected by topical medications.

How do I permanently get rid of stretch marks?

“In-office treatment by a board-certified dermatologist with a laser will work best,” says Dr. Castilla. “Lasers have the most impact when stretch marks are still red/purple, however using a resurfacing laser once they have faded to skin color is still possible.”

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, chemical peels, microdermabrasion, and radiofrequency are among the other in-office treatments used to treat stretch marks.

How we chose the best stretch mark creams

We consulted dermatologists for their recommendations and thoughts on stretch mark creams. These experts included Carmen Castilla, M.D., a board-certified dermatologist and clinical instructor at Mount Sinai New York; Connie Yang, M.D., F.A.A.D., of PFRANKMD; Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D., dermatologist; Aanand Geria, M.D., board-certified dermatologist and owner of Geria Dermatology; Teresa Song, M.D., board-certified dermatologist at Marmur Medical; and Janelle Vega, M.D., board-certified dermatologist at Mayoral Dermatology.

We also conducted our own research and cross-referenced product descriptions and reviews with our expert insights.

KAYLA BLANTON

Kayla Blanton is a freelance writer-editor who covers health, nutrition, and lifestyle topics for various publications including *Prevention*, *Everyday Health*, *SELF*, *People*, and more. She's always open to conversations about fueling up with flavorful dishes, busting beauty standards, and finding new, gentle ways to care for our bodies. She earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from Ohio University with specializations in women, gender, and sexuality studies and public health, and is a born-and-raised midwesterner living in Cincinnati, Ohio with her husband and two spoiled kitties.

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