

# The TRUTH about miracle creams

In her new anti-ageing book, Harley Street skin expert **Lesley Reynolds Khan** cuts through the beauty myths to give you her insider advice on what really works to keep you looking younger for longer..



**Buying a face cream can be baffling. Hundreds of products line the shelves, all promising to make us look years younger and that are "clinically proven" to do this and 'scientifically proven' to do that.**

The days when you'd pop to your local chemist for a pot of cold cream are well and truly gone.

But as much as I'd love to tell you there are 'miracle creams' that will have a dramatic impact on wrinkles and sagging skin, there's no such thing.

No cream on this earth will give you a facelift or be able to remove eye bags that have taken decades to form.

If it's an instant fix you're looking for, the only way you'll achieve it is with treatments such as fillers and muscle-relaxing injections.

The good news is, creams can do a lot to improve the condition of your skin.

They can plump up the surface layer to smooth fine lines, boost radiance and make it feel nice.

But you have to be realistic.

You're not going to go to bed and wake up the next morning

looking 10 years younger. Despite what the packaging may claim, there is no such thing as a 'face-lift in a jar'!

And you have to persevere. You need to use a cream religiously twice a day for at least a month before you'll see results. (See 7 Ingredients That Really Work, below, to find out what to look for in anti-ageing creams).

## Miracle creams de-jargoned

It's easy to be lured into buying a product by an advert on the telly in which a naturally gorgeous (and usually very young) supermodel recommends it, or because of its posh packaging and impressive-sounding 'scientific' claims.

So what do you do? My tip is to visit a skin clinic or beauty salon at least once and talk to a therapist with proper knowledge of skin and can give you independent advice.

In the long run, it'll save you money because you won't be splashing out on products in the hope you'll stumble across one that works for you.

In the meantime, here's my guide to what you can and can't expect from those 'miracle' anti-agers.

## EYE CREAMS

Tired, puffy eyes, crow's feet and dark circles – there's nothing like that little lot to add 10 years to your face! Eye creams won't get rid of suitcases under your eyes or banish big black circles, but they can smooth fine lines, boost hydration and tighten skin.

**MY VERDICT:** Choose a super-light formula or a gel as thick creams can make your eyes even puffier and, when applying, tap a small bit round the orbital bone (don't take it right up under your bottom lashes).

### MY BEST BUYS:

● **HIGH STREET:** Nivea Visage Anti-Wrinkle Q10 Plus Eye Cream

This includes one of my favourite ingredients, co-enzyme Q10, to help skin cells regenerate – great value, too. £10.65. [www.nivea.co.uk](http://www.nivea.co.uk)

● **MID PRICE:** Avon Anew Rejuvenate 24 Hour Eye Moisturiser

This is a real find as most eye creams don't include a sunscreen. This one has broad spectrum UVA/UVB SPF25. £15. [www.avonshop.co.uk](http://www.avonshop.co.uk)

● **HIGH END:** Clinique Repairwear Intensive Eye Cream Complex

Retinol boosts skin turnover and peptides to help plump out wrinkles. £25. [www.clinique.co.uk](http://www.clinique.co.uk) or call 0870 034 2566.

★ TIP ★  
Collagen can't be absorbed through the skin as the molecule is too large. So don't buy collagen creams claiming to work miracles on wrinkles – they won't!



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## DAY CREAMS

Daytime is the most dangerous time for your skin, as it's constantly under attack from ageing UV rays from the sun – whether it's the hottest day of the year or the rainiest. So with this in mind, the most important cream you can put on your face has to be a day cream with an SPF of at least 15. It should also include antioxidant vitamins C and E for extra protection.

**MY VERDICT:** Always choose a light formula that's easily absorbed, as this will help your make-up stay put. I've tried creams that literally peel off like dead skin if you run your finger along the jawline. Yuck! And remember, if it doesn't have sunscreen, it's pointless. An SPF is the most important anti-ageing ingredient of all.

### MY BEST BUYS:

● **HIGH STREET:** Olay Total Effects

As well as being a moisturiser it has a touch of sunless tanner, a gentle exfoliator, a brightening ingredient and SPF15. It can be a little heavy but it does everything in one go. £18.99 for 50ml. [www.olay.co.uk](http://www.olay.co.uk)

● **MID PRICE:** Harley Street Skin Moisture 24/7

I developed this because I could never find a moisturiser to keep my dry cheeks hydrated all day. It has peptides in it, AHAs, vitamin E, hyaluronic acid and, sunscreen. £29. [www.harleystreetskincare.co.uk](http://www.harleystreetskincare.co.uk)

● **MID PRICE:** NeoStrata Daytime Smoothing Cream with SPF15

This lovely anti-ageing moisturiser includes glycolic acid and broad-spectrum UVA/UVB sun protection. I love it! £27.50. Call 0207 491 0150.



## NIGHT CREAMS

While we sleep our bodies are repairing some of the damage that's been done during the day. A good night cream should have vitamin C, which stimulates collagen. Other ingredients commonly used in night creams are CoQ10 to aid cell repair, peptides to reduce wrinkles and boost firmness, and AHAs.

**MY VERDICT:** Find a night cream that's light so it's absorbed into your skin – you want it on your face not on the pillow! If you have oily or combination skin, just apply it to areas where you need it, such as your cheeks and neck, otherwise greasy T-zones can get greasier and pores can get blocked.

### MY BEST BUYS:

● **MID PRICE:** RoC Retin-Ox Wrinkle

**Correction Regenerating Night**  
Nourishing night cream with retinol to help reduce lines and boost radiance. £18. Call 0845 600 4477

● **MID PRICE:** Avon Hydrofirming Night Cream

A fab cream with hyaluronic acid, that's good for dry skin with a lack of firmness. Avon has good anti-ageing products at great prices. £18. [www.avonshop.co.uk](http://www.avonshop.co.uk)

● **HIGH END:** Jan Marini Transformation Cream

This contains transforming growth factors to repair damaged skin cells as well as vitamin C, hyaluronic acid and retinol. The only trouble with this high-end cream is that if you buy it once, you may get hooked. £62. Call 0208 868 4411. [www.janmarini.co.uk](http://www.janmarini.co.uk)



## 7 ingredients that really work...

I don't believe you have to spend a lot of money on an anti-ageing cream. It's the ingredients that make a product worth buying. In my view there are only seven key ingredients you need to worry about when choosing anti-ageing products. They may not work miracles, but they do work.

(1) **Coenzyme Q10** – this powerful antioxidant, also known as CoQ10, speeds up cell repair and aids healing. It's particularly beneficial for menopausal skin. It's worth taking a supplement of CoQ10, too.

(2) **Hyaluronic acid** – this sounds scary because of the word 'acid', but it's found naturally in the deeper layers of the skin and keeps it smooth and plump due to its ability to hold up to 1,000 times its weight in water. Great for mature and dehydrated skin.

(3) **Retinol** – I love this ingredient. It's derived from antioxidant vitamin A and rejuvenates the skin by boosting cell and collagen production.