

Your skin does most of its repair work in the dark. Choose the right night soother to heal winter dryness—and get extra anti-aging benefits.

OVERNIGHT *sensations*

By **Karyn Repinski**

*y*ou know that saying “You snooze, you lose”? Well, nothing is further from the truth when it comes to skin care. In fact, nighttime is the right time to repair aging skin and keep it ultramoisturized. “During the day, skin is in protection mode—it’s busy fending off environmental aggressors like sun, wind, and pollution,” says Jeannette Graf, MD, a dermatologist in Great Neck, NY. At night, while you rest, your skin has time to replenish. “This is when it does the bulk of its repair work,” such as creating new cells and mending or shedding old, damaged ones, says Dr. Graf.

Your skin makes the most of any creams you apply at night too: Because it gets warmer then, products penetrate more deeply, yielding faster results, explains David Bank, MD, a dermatologist in Mount Kisco, NY. This is a huge plus in the winter, when skin loses more than 25% of its ability to hold in moisture. That drop means a slowdown in skin turnover that leaves your complexion looking dull. For 40-plus women, who often already have dry skin, that can really ratchet up the problem—especially if you're also using ingredients that can irritate skin, like retinoids to control acne and aging. But don't give up on having a soft, smooth, fresh-faced glow. Our guide to choosing the right night cream goes beyond restoring lost moisture; these PM perfecters also contain potent anti-agers that rejuvenate skin. Just pinpoint your main complexion concern and preferred texture—balm, cream, lotion, gel, or serum—and prepare to get the skin of your dreams.

You Want **INTENSIVE CARE FOR DRY SKIN**

If your skin is tight, rough, and flaky, it's time to sub a mega moisturizer for your regular nighttime product. Key ingredients for dehydrated skin include fatty acids, such as linolenic or linoleic acid, and ceramides to repair skin's natural moisture barrier; hyaluronic acid and glycerin to attract water to the skin; and petrolatum, mineral oil, and dimethicone to seal it in. Stick with balms or creams; most lotions aren't hydrating enough for dry skin. And remember, regular use is a must. "Moisturizers can control dry skin, not cure it," points out Mary Lupo, MD, a dermatologist in New Orleans.

BALMS AWAY Collective Wellbeing Night Balm (\$27; *collectivewellbeing.com*) contains echinacea to stimulate production of skin-smoothing collagen, plus lavender to help lull you into dreamland. La Roche-Posay Substiane Daily Replenishing Care for Mature Skin (\$52; *laroche-posay.us*) features Pro-Xylane, a sugar molecule that firms and hydrates skin.

CREAMS OF THE CROP The rosehip oil in Skinceuticals Emollient (\$57; *skinceuticals.com*) is a gentle, natural source of anti-aging retinoic acid. Boots No7 Lifting & Firming Night Cream (\$20; Target) contains peptides to smooth skin and prevent sagging.

SUPER SERUMS Unlike heavier creams and balms, serums can be used during the day, under your SPF and foundation. For an instant surge of moisture, try Vichy Laboratoires Aqualia Thermal Serum 24Hr Hydrating Concentrate (\$29.50; *vichyusa.com*) and Philosophy When Hope Is Not Enough Replenishing Oil (\$45; *philosophy.com*).



You Want LESS SENSITIVE SKIN

If you suffer from rosacea, a condition that makes your skin prone to flushing and blushing, or your skin just normally stings and burns when you apply products, you need a night cream that cuddles your complexion. Fragrance aggravates sensitivity, so look for fragrance-free products, which means no scent has been added. Don't be surprised, however, if a fragrance-free product has an aroma—they often contain natural soothers such as lavender oil and rose oil. Also essential: ingredients proven to ease irritation. Some MVPs include coffeeberry, green tea, and vitamin C, antioxidants that help lessen lines and fade brown patches.

BALMS AWAY Ultraemollient Eau Thermale Avène Tolérance Extrême Cream (\$36; dermstore.com) has an airtight cap that eliminates the need for preservatives, another potential skin aggravator. Vichy Laboratoires Aqualia Thermal Mineral Balm (\$32; vichyusa.com) contains water rich in selenium, a mineral proven to reduce inflammation.

CREAMS OF THE CROP Aveeno Positively Ageless Night Cream with Active Naturals Natural Shiitake Complex (\$20; drugstores) features mushroom extracts that slough dead cells to enhance luminosity. Boscia Restorative Night Moisture Cream (\$48; sephora.com) is loaded with botanical extracts—willow herb, rose, and mulberry—to quell inflammation and brighten skin.

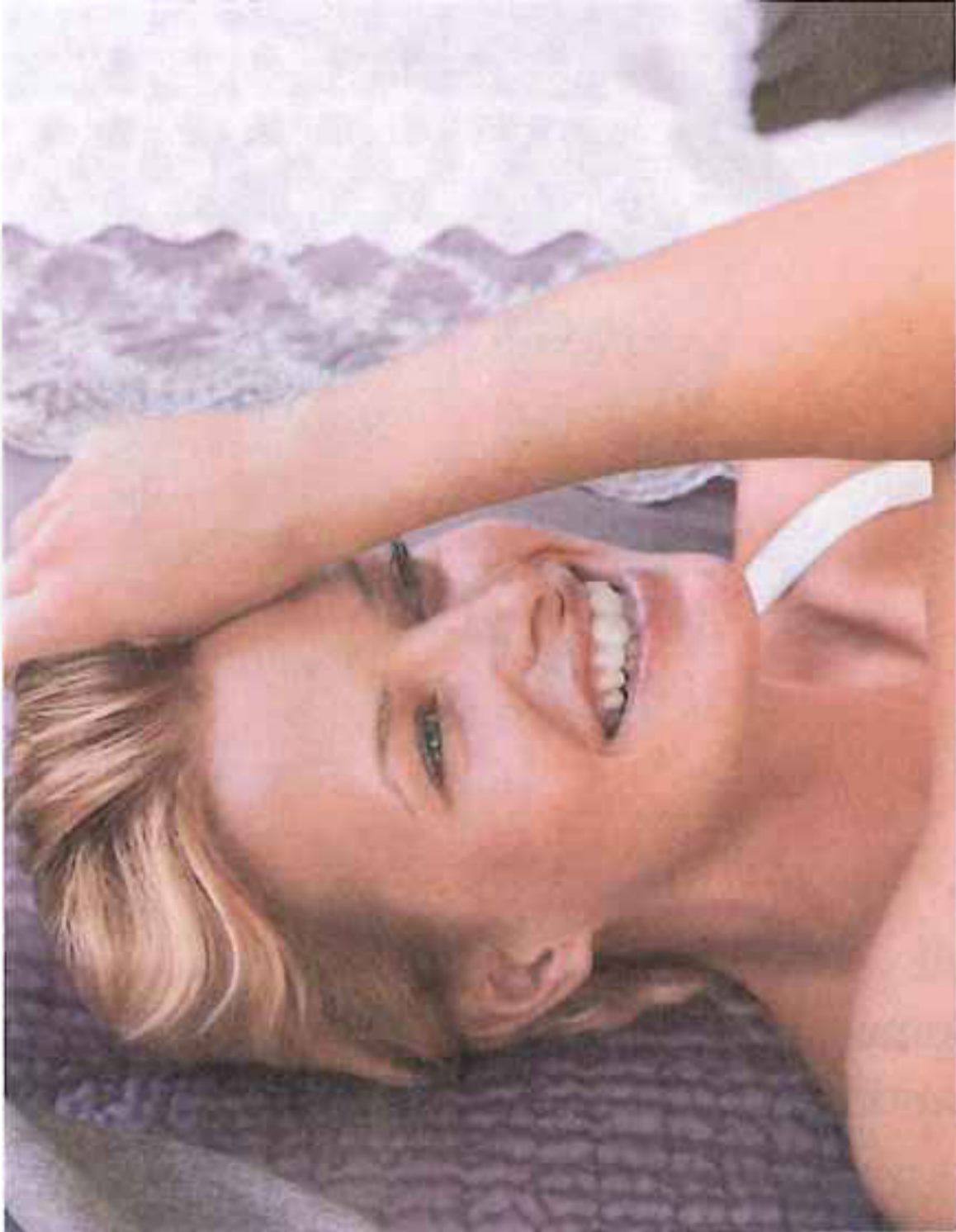
LOTIONS YOU'LL LOVE CeraVe Facial Moisturizing Lotion PM (\$14; drugstores) is packed with niacinamide, a B vitamin that reduces redness and minimizes dark spots. Dr. Lupo also recommends using coffeeberry, found in Priori CoffeeBerry Night Complex (\$84; prioriskincare.com for buying info), during the day under SPF to squelch UV-induced free radicals.

SUPER SERUMS Those with vitamin C—like Murad Sensitive Skin Soothing Serum (\$49.50; murad.com) and Paula's Choice Resist Super Antioxidant Concentrate Serum (\$25; paulaschoice.com)—ramp up collagen production and tone down discoloration.



Wake up Looking Younger!

Studies show that sleeping on a pillow in the same position night after night creates wrinkles that can take hours to go away—or even become permanent. To the rescue: the **Mumbani Fresh Face** (\$20; mumbani.com), a cushioned pillow you wear like a sleep mask to minimize pressure on your face. Our tester woke up with fewer crinkles and claims to have slept better too. Independent research confirms her experience—75% of users saw smoother skin, and more than half reported sounder slumber.



You Want A MOISTURIZER THAT DOESN'T MAKE YOU BREAK OUT

It's easy to think you don't need a rich night cream when you're battling blemishes. But after age 40, everyone needs extra hydration in the winter—especially if you're also using drying acne treatments. Your mission: Choose a product that quenches skin without causing pimples. It's not enough to opt for noncomedogenic products, which means they won't block pores, says Dr. Bank. "Scan the ingredients carefully for oil in any form—even some natural oils like safflower oil can trigger breakouts." Hydrators

to look for include hyaluronic acid, glycerin, and dimethicone; even alpha hydroxy acids such as lactic and glycolic acids, which exfoliate dead cells to clear pores, are mildly moisturizing. Skip heavy balms, which usually contain oil. A new category of moisturizer is ideal if you're blemish-prone: hydrogels, which have a lightweight gel base.

CREAMS OF THE CROP Kate Somerville Oil Free Moisturizer (\$65; katesomerville.com) contains an algae extract that firms skin while you sleep. Pür Minerals Moisture Infusion (\$34; drugstore.com) minimizes the inflammation of *P. acnes* bacteria with green tea.

LOTIONS YOU'LL LOVE Dr. Brandt Blemishes No More Oil-Free Hydrator (\$35; sephora.com) contains peptides to firm, hydroxycinnamic acid to even tone, and salicylic acid to clear pores and make you look glowy. If you're acne-prone and sensitive, DDF Ultra Lite Oil Free Moisturizing Dew (\$38; sephora.com) provides relief with calming ingredients like aloe and allantoin.

SWELL GELS To minimize pores, Avon Anew Rejuvenate Night Sapphire Emulsion (\$30; avon.com) taps the power of peptides and salicylic acid. The vitamin E in Garnier Nutritioniste Moisture Rescue Refreshing Gel-Cream (\$8; drugstores) soothes and protects against free radicals.

SUPER SERUMS When skin is parched from acne meds, Epicuren Moisture Surge Hyaluronic Acid Gel (\$28; epicuren.com for stores) and Peter Thomas Roth VIZ-1000 (\$65; sephora.com) flood it with hyaluronic acid—which acts like a magnet to bind water to skin.



You Want AN ANTI-AGING BOOST

If your night cream is marvelous at moisturizing but isn't up to the job of fading brown splotches and reducing lines and wrinkles, you don't need to switch creams. Instead, pat on an anti-aging serum prior to moisturizing. "Topping a serum with a cream or lotion actually seals in its active ingredients—and reduces the chance they'll rub off on your pillow," says Ranella Hirsch, MD, a dermatologist in Cambridge, MA. Keep in mind that winter isn't the season to start using a retinoid, which can be an especially drying anti-ager. Better ingredients to look for: peptides, which boost collagen production to plump skin; lactic acid and glycolic acid to speed cell renewal and rev radiance; and brighteners like licorice and vitamin C to fade brown spots.

SUPER SERUMS MD Formulations Continuous Renewal Serum (\$53; bareessentials.com) gently polishes skin with glycolic acid. Got sensitive skin? Olay Regenerist Fragrance-Free Regenerating Serum (\$20; drugstores), with niacinamide and peptides, is ideal. To stop early signs of aging, Clinique Repairwear Laser Focus Wrinkle & UV Damage Corrector (\$44.50; clinique.com) calls on peptides, antioxidants, and repair enzymes. ■



Weather Winter Beautifully

The right night cream goes a long way to combat dryness. But to keep seasonal ravages at bay, incorporate these easy pro tips into your routine as well.

USE A HUMIDIFIER in your bedroom at night. "You'll hydrate your skin continuously while you sleep," says Ranella Hirsch, MD.

WASH YOUR FACE only at night using a nonfoaming cleanser. In the morning, splash your skin with tepid water or apply your moisturizer first and then rinse it off, suggests Dr. Lupo.

EXFOLIATE EXTRA GENTLY. "Removing flaky, dead cells helps moisturizers penetrate better," says Mary

Lupo, MD. Daily exfoliation is ideal. Try **Philosophy Microdelivery Exfoliating Wash** (\$25; sephora.com), which is mild enough for even the most sensitive skin.

MOISTURIZE IMMEDIATELY after cleansing, while skin is still damp, to help trap water in the surface cells.

EAT MORE SALMON. "The omega-3 fatty acids in fish are skin's natural emollient," says Dr. Hirsch. Other good sources of omega-3s: walnuts, canola oil, and ground flaxseed.