

MARTHA STEWART

Living

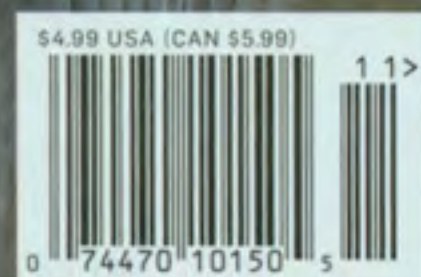


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HEAVY LIFTERS 1. *StriVectin-TL Tightening Neck Cream*, \$89, strivectin.com. 2. *RéVive Peau Magnifique Youth Recruit Neck and Décolletage Serum*, \$900, reviveskincare.com. 3. *Dr. Hauschka Regenerating Neck and Décolleté Cream*, \$58, drhauschka.com. 4. *Lancôme Rénergie Lift Volumetry Neck Cream*, \$90, lancome-usa.com. 5. *Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream*, \$25, drugstore.com.

LOTIONS & POTIONS

CLEANSE AND MOISTURIZE

Think gentle—emollient cleansers, nonirritating creams. Skin on the neck is thin, with very little connective tissue, so the signs of aging (a crepey appearance, brown spots, lines) appear much more pronounced there than on the face.

Naomi Kunizawa, a Shiseido research associate who explored neck physiology in a 2006 *International Journal of Cosmetic Science* paper, suggests a light, easy-to-spread cream “to avoid excess force” and excess stretching. The neck also contains fewer stem cells to help promote skin renewal, so those classic clock-stopping tools, such as peels or retinoic acid, aren’t the right routes to take in this instance—and can be scarring.

NECK CREAM OR NOT?

Moisturizers formulated specifically for the neck are generally smoother than typical face creams, so they create less pull on the skin. And the antiaging agents are carefully designed to deliver results without a reaction.

If you’re in your 20s—and your skin looks it—a face or body moisturizer will do fine, says Jeffrey Dover, Yale University associate clinical professor of dermatology. “You don’t

need to own six different creams.” He does, however, stress the importance of being religious about sunscreen.

It’s the 30-plus set who may want to give neck creams a go. “Look for those directed at treating fine lines and wrinkles,” says Elizabeth Callahan, a dermatologic surgeon in Sarasota, Florida. Many boast toners that offer an immediate skin-tightening tingle and brighteners to help camouflage dark spots. The addition of peptides and plant stem cells helps promote collagen regeneration, for results said to be similar to a doctor-supervised, in-office treatment. (At \$900, RéVive’s Peau Magnifique, is almost as pricey.) “Ten years ago, it was all about hydration,” says Nadine Pernodet, executive director of skin biology, research and development at Estée Lauder Companies. “Now we have new technology to address the specific functions of skin.”

DON'T FORGET THE SUNBLOCK

“The neck is one of the hardest areas to rejuvenate, so respect it,” says Callahan. “Use a sunscreen with at least SPF 30 every day.” If you’re outside, be sure to reapply. A drag, yes, but so is contemplating turtlenecks in July.

THE RIGHT MIX

Treat your face to a little TLC. This made-to-order mask, courtesy of Elena Arboleda, salon director at Mario Badescu Skin Care (one of Martha’s favorites) will help tighten a turkey wattle and lift and soften skin. Try it before a big event.

Whisk together 1 egg white with 1 teaspoon each of honey, olive oil, and lemon juice. **Smooth** on a thin layer from the hairline down to the décolletage. **Let sit** 15 minutes. **Wash** away with cool water. **Pat** dry, and apply a thin layer of moisturizer over the top.



for stressed-out necks

We crane it forward to stare at the computer and contort it to cradle the phone. Here, three healthy habits to keep your neck in line.

GOOD POSTURE

Keeping your shoulders back, try to line up your ears with them, suggests A. Lynn Millar, professor of physical therapy at Winston-Salem State University in North Carolina. If you find yourself dipping your neck to hold the phone, stop! Briefly bend your neck to the opposite side, and focus on remaining in the proper position—or invest in a headset.

ENDURANCE EXERCISES FOR NECK MUSCLES

Lie on your back with your head on a pillow. Tuck your chin to your chest, and hold that position for five seconds (longer as it becomes easier). Then press your head back. Repeat 10 times daily.

CAT-AND-COW POSE

To alleviate tension and tightness, get on your hands and knees and inhale dropping your head downward and rounding the spine like a startled cat. Next exhale, arching back, lifting your head, chest, and derriere toward the ceiling. Repeat 12 times daily, advises Loren Bassett, an instructor at Pure Yoga, in New York.