



Skincare to Fall For

Switch up your regimen for autumn with these expert-approved tips

By Tina Smithers Peckham

With fall in full swing, it's high time to switch up a few things — and this doesn't mean just the addition of some perfectly placed, pumpkin-adorned throw pillows (more on that, p69). We're speaking about skincare: It's an important aspect of our daily routine that requires some maintenance — and more than a quick swipe of a Dove bar. It is our body's largest organ, after all, and undoubtedly, no amount of makeup camouflage can compensate for a youthful, glowing, even-toned complexion. But not everyone is blessed enough to give nary a thought to their skincare routine; many suffer from adult acne, eczema, psoriasis and the countless sun-induced indicators of aging here on the First Coast.

So, what can a gal or guy do to protect this vital organ and fight environmental and lifestyle damage to this key portrayer of personal beauty? As we get older and the seasons change, certain skincare swaps are crucial if wanting continually healthy skin.

“As fall and winter arrive, it’s a good time to reassess our skincare routines, making changes to combat dryness, while promoting healthy epidermal cell turnover for well-hydrated and vibrant skin,” shares Board-certified Plastic Surgeon Dr. John B. Harris, founder of the Florida Facelift & Skin Cancer Center.

Thus, we turned to the experts to learn what a proper fall skincare routine looks like, from serums to sunscreen (yes, this *is* still important!) and beyond. We’ve also scoured the product lines of local plastic surgeons, med spas and popular retailers to share our top seasonal skincare essentials. Read on to find a few items chock full of skin-loving ingredients, ideal for reversing some of the damage done during scorching summer days at the Jacksonville Beaches.

Opt for a richer moisturizer

Drier air means drier skin — which can result in uncomfortable conditions no one wants such as eczema and itchy, irritated skin. Avoid these dermal disasters by switching out lightweight summer staples for their richer counterparts. (Kinda like how so many of us swap our favorite cold brew for a creamy pumpkin spice latte after Labor Day.)

“There is less humidity during the winter months in Jacksonville, which for some dry and sensitive skin types may warrant the use of a heavier, direct-contact moisturizing cream,” Dr. Harris says. “Or better yet, an anti-aging moisturizer program, which actively promotes healthy skin cell turnover and maintains smoothness by acting on multiple layers of the skin.”

Heftier hydrators should be a priority this time of year; seek out those made with ceramides, which help to moisturize and strengthen the epidermis. Master Aesthetician & Laser Specialist with The AMARA Med Spa, Katarina Forster, emphasizes the importance of restoring the skin’s protective barrier, especially after the moisture in the air subsides.

“When humidity levels lower, this can compromise our skin’s barrier function, causing more water to be lost from the surface, making it rough and dry,” she shares. “You want to change your skincare routine seasonally because our skin is always changing, growing and evolving. You want to keep it guessing to trigger more cell renewal. This is the key to a glowing complexion.”



ZO Skin Health Hydrating Creme

Few products truly compare to medical-grade skincare (a.k.a. the brands you can typically purchase at a med spa or dermatologist’s office). This superior moisturizer restores some of that much-needed hydration and soothes the appearance of visible redness.

\$110 at The AMARA Med Spa, Florida Facelift & Skin Cancer Center, and Natural Look Medical Spa

SkinCeuticals Phyto Corrective Essence Mist

New to the SkinCeuticals line, this soothing botanical mist is designed to deliver an instant spritz of hydration while strengthening the skin’s barrier and correcting redness, rough texture and dullness.

\$67 at skinceuticals.com

If still feeling a hint of dryness, add a hydrating serum to your evening regimen or apply the occasional moisturizing sheet mask. Bonus: Seek out the added ingredient of hyaluronic acid, which can also help hydrate and plump the skin — in turn, reducing signs of aging and minimizing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

Speaking of moisturizer, be sure to implement a rich body lotion, hand cream and foot balm to further combat dryness from head to toe. Oh, and don’t forget to smooth on a quality eye cream nightly before bed, as the undereye area often gets lost in the skincare shuffle!



Reverse summer sun damage

With fewer days spent by the pool, now is prime time to assess any potential skincare issues and work on repairing the havoc wreaked by harmful UV rays — hyperpigmentation, decreased elasticity and rough, uneven texture. Because, let’s be real — we likely haven’t been perfect about reapplying sunscreen every two hours, every single day. (But if you have... bravo!)

“We feel it’s important to meet with our patients in September and October to review how their skin has fared from sun damage over the summer,” Dr. Harris says. “We take advantage of this time with less direct sun exposure to initiate our topical programs for actinic keratosis (rough, scaly patches developed from years in the sun) or to simply ramp up anti-aging and anti-pigmentation skincare programs with retinols and hydroquinone.”

If wanting to combat dark patches and hyperpigmentation at home, a serum rich in vitamin C can help correct uneven skin tone, resulting in a brighter complexion. It can also aide in treating those pesky fine lines and wrinkles! Speaking of, enter the holy grail of anti-aging products: retinol.

“Retinols gently remove old skin cells and increase cell turnover. A misconception about retinols is that they are too abrasive, but with proper use for your specific skin type, they can increase the production of collagen and create healthier, more resilient skin,” notes Nurse Aesthetician Teresa Davis-Mills, founder of Natural Look Medical Spa. “We recommend avoiding over-the-counter brands and working with a medical professional to choose the appropriate exfoliant and retinol for your skin type and lifestyle.”

When using a retinoid, Board-certified Plastic Surgeon Dr. Christopher Bates of Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery suggests starting slowly to give your skin a chance to acclimate — we’re talking twice a week at first, and gradually building up to every other day, and then daily. He adds that fall and winter can be a good time to start.

“Retinol is always great to use [in the cooler months] because you aren’t in the sun as often, and your skin won’t be as sensitive as it is in summer,” Dr. Bates says.



SkinMedica Lytera 2.0 Pigment Correcting Serum

Combat even the most stubborn skin discoloration! This serum corrects and prevents the appearance of hyperpigmentation, with improvements seen in as little as two weeks.

\$154 at Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery



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\$96 at Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery

Sunday Riley C.E.O. 15% Vitamin C Brightening Serum

Your future (skin) looks bright! Target the look of dullness, dark spots and discoloration at the source, while diminishing the signs of premature aging with this hydrating antioxidant formula.
\$122 at sundayriley.com



Exfoliate (but just don't overdo it)

Including an exfoliant in your regimen truly can be a game changer when it comes to achieving the smooth, glowing skin we all crave. But as tempting as it may be to work overtime sloughing off the sweat and oil that plagued our complexions during summer, don't exfoliate *too* much.

Though beneficial, ingredients like alpha hydroxy acid (AHA) and beta hydroxy acid (BHA) often found in exfoliants can actually increase skin sensitivity if overused, potentially creating tiny cracks in the skin, leading to irritation and loss of (gasp!) all that hydration we've worked so hard to replenish. For that reason, gentle exfoliating twice a week or so should suffice.

"Exfoliants are great to help retinoids and serums penetrate the skin, just a basic exfoliation every couple of days after you wash," Dr. Bates says.

Peter Thomas Roth Pumpkin Enzyme Mask

Look beyond the latte — in terms of beauty, pumpkin certainly has its benefits! This powerful exfoliating treatment addresses a dull, aging and congested complexion with smoothing pumpkin enzyme and anti-aging alpha hydroxy acid.
\$60 at peterthomasroth.com



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Continue to protect your skin

Whatever you do, definitely don't skimp on the sunscreen — keep applying a formula SPF 30 or higher on a daily basis, even if the beach is merely a distant memory for the time being. *Trust us.*

"Just because it's the fall, you still need sunscreen protection every day," notes Dr. Bates.

Davis-Mills echoes the sunscreen sentiment, stressing that we have more than just the sun's UV rays to fret over. Believe it or not, research proves that high energy visible (HEV) light, known as "blue light" from our electronic devices like laptops and smartphones, can also be destructive to our skin. Who knew all that social media scrolling could be causing more harm beyond a few bouts of FOMO?

"We enjoy an outdoor lifestyle throughout all seasons in Florida, but sunscreen is often overlooked during the fall and winter months," she says. "It's important to protect your skin year-round from UVA/UVB, IR-A rays, and HEV light."

Not only will applying (and reapplying!) sunscreen make your face look better — more youthful and even-toned — the risk of skin cancer will be significantly reduced.

Sunscreen aside, there are also other ways to protect against environmental stressors — think radiation, air pollution and additional external factors that can lead to premature signs of aging. A quality antioxidant serum is a must for supporting continuously healthy skin — and when paired with a sunscreen you love, it makes for a major skin win-win.



ZO Skin Health Illuminating AOX Serum

Get a more radiant complexion with this concentrated antioxidant serum that performs double-duty: It reduces the premature signs of aging while blurring imperfections for a luminous, smooth finish. \$165 at The AMARA Med Spa, Florida Facelift & Skin Cancer Center, and Natural Look Medical Spa



SkinCeuticals Daily Brightening UV Defense Sunscreen SPF 30

Yes, you still need to apply sunscreen daily! This lightweight daily formula combines broad spectrum UV protection with hydrating, brightening ingredients. \$56 at skinceuticals.com

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Think beyond the beauty counter

In addition to shaking up your cool-weather skincare regimen, it may be worth adding a few other items to the mix. For instance, placing a humidifier in your bedroom during the fall and winter months can work wonders for boosting hydration. In fact, get it out of storage the second you crank up the thermostat because some central heating systems can actually dry out skin. The more moisture that is circulating in the air (cue that summer humidity), the more hydrated you'll be!

Also, consider swapping out the traditional cotton pillowcase for a more luxurious one in silk or satin. Forster says this switch can be a true beauty "game changer."

"Cotton absorbs moisture, which means that when you sleep, moisture in your skin is being reduced," she says. "A silk or satin pillowcase will help you maintain hydration overnight."

And, at the end of the day, what we put *inside* our bodies can be just as necessary as what we put on the outside. In addition to eating a balanced diet (sporadic pumpkin doughnuts, optional), keep up the water intake — carry around a big insulated cup so you don't forget! — and consistently hydrate to keep skin looking and feeling fresh. ☾



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