

Slow Down the Aging Process



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As people age, their faces start to show wrinkles, sunspots and deeper smile lines. All are the results of sun exposure, environmental factors and gravity. Have you ever wondered why a celebrity, or even a neighbor, doesn't usually show those signs of aging? Whether you are trying to prevent or reverse the aging process, there are many treatments available that allow you to achieve your goal.

1. **Avoid sun damage.** With all the recent advancement in product technology, you don't have to avoid the sun completely, but you have to pick your sunscreen wisely. Every morning, use a non-greasy formulated sunscreen of SPF 30 or greater that contains titanium and zinc oxides. This will protect your skin from both UVA and UVB rays. Avoid the sun between noon and 3 p.m. when possible. In addition, use sunglasses and hats made from sun-protective material and apply sunscreen liberally while outside.
2. **Moisturizers.** The use of alcohol-free moisturizers can help lubricate and soften the skin by keeping it hydrated. Choose one with antioxidants, vitamins, amino acids and essential oils. Repeated use throughout the day protects the skin against free radicals that cause premature aging.
3. **Botox.** Wrinkles between your brows, for example, are the results of repeated facial muscle use, such as frowning or concentrating. This causes a pleating of the skin. Botox treatment can temporarily reduce or eliminate these wrinkles by weakening the culprit muscles. Results are usually seen within 10 days after the treatment and can last a minimum of three to four months.
4. **Fillers.** There are many types on the market today with the most recent being Restylane, Perlane and Juvederm. Fillers are usually used in the nasolabial folds (smile lines) and other areas of the face to restore fullness and eliminate deeper wrinkles. The results can be seen immediately. Their duration can vary depending on the type used and areas injected.
5. **Fraxel skin resurfacing.** It is a new generation of noninvasive laser technology introduced in 2004 that can treat fine wrinkles, melasma (the mask of pregnancy), sun spots, acne scars and more with minimal downtime. The treatment can be tailored to each person, young and old, depending on the specific skin problem. Men and women alike are seeking treatment. Multiple sessions are usually recommended for optimal results. Fraxel can often be safely combined with other treatment modalities to enhance or restore a youthful glow.
6. **Cosmetic surgery.** Obviously some degrees of aging cannot be reversed with non-invasive procedures. Surgical options are numerous, ranging from minimally invasive to total facial rejuvenation. A discussion with a cosmetic surgeon can help you determine what surgery, if any, is right for you.



Finally, a healthy lifestyle, diet and exercise started at a very young age, can be the most effective preventive measure used to slow down the inevitable aging process. **TPW**