

Don't Forget Your Décolletage

Many of us are now more aware of the risks of sun exposure and frequently wear sun protection to prevent Ultraviolet damage. What we may forget to do though, is apply this to our neck, chest and décolletage area.

The late Nora Ephron wrote a book in 2006 called "I feel bad about my neck", which made it to #1 on the The New York Times Non-Fiction Best Seller list. So clearly, beauty goes beyond, and below, the roll neck.

The majority of sun damage occurs in our childhood, teens and early adulthood. As the skin on the décolletage is very thin, fragile and produces less oil than on the face, this can quickly show signs of sun damage, and become visible, sometimes earlier than on our face than we can imagine.

I typically see this in my patients who enjoy the outdoors. From running, taking part in sport and the leisurely pastime of gardening, irrespective of the seasons, UVA rays penetrate through the ozone layer, clouds, conservatory, windows, our clothes and finally our skin, to cause cellular damage, textural change, pigmentation and loss of elasticity.

These are my top tips for how and why you should care for your décolletage:

- Skin benefits from hydration so increase your oral intake of water to at least 2.5 Litres a day.
- Ultraviolet rays break down collagen to form wrinkles so use a broad spectrum UVA/UVB with a minimum SPF of 30 on your neck and décolletage. Reapply every 2 hours to keep this optimised. This is also essential for preventing skin cancer. An SPF foundation is not enough.
- Use products containing the antioxidant Vitamin C (L-Ascorbic Acid). This will help to lighten, brighten and even out skin tone.
- Sleeping on your side can increase wrinkling, especially if you're blessed with a generous bosom. So learn to sleep on your back, which also does wonders for the skin on your face.
- Use your cleanser on your neck and chest also. The skin here needs cleansing and priming too so this shouldn't just stop at your face.
- The thin skin here is prone to redness and inflammation caused by sun damage, so a standard body lotion won't help. Choose a fragrance-free, antioxidant formulation that will not only hydrate, but treat the underlying oxidative stress and redness.
- A build-up of dead skin cells will make your décolletage look dry, lifeless and accentuate lines and wrinkles so integrate mild exfoliants into your home skin care.
- Step up to a medical grade facial treatment for deeper exfoliation to include your chest.

We would like to invite all Riverside Journals readers for a complimentary VISIA skin analysis and consultation until 31st October 2016.

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