

NURTURING YOUR SKIN



By Dr. Jeffrey S. Yager, MD

Vital skin care tips for women of color Treating these women requires a great deal of experience and very few doctors dedicate their practices to Hispanic and African American patients. Here are some helpful tips to making sure your skin receives the best care.

The wonderful thing about the annual Miss Universe Pageant is that it is a celebration of beauty in every color. As a board-certified plastic surgeon in New York, the great majority of my patients are women of darker skin tones.

Making sure you receive the best care requires knowledge about the many types of treatments and products for women of color, as treatments and products can be very different.

These patients are more prone to dark spots (hyperpigmentation), hypertrophic and keloid scars, and can have bad reactions with treatments that produce heat or irritation. First, be sure to ask your plastic surgeon, dermatologist or spa professional if they have extensive experience in treating patients of your skin tone. You can start by observing other people in the waiting room, and with the before and after pictures they show you.

Post Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation (PIH), whereby every pimple, scratch or rash creates darkness, can also be a common problem. The best way to avoid this is by limiting irritations. For shaving, sometimes a single blade razor is best, as the multiblade models can clip the hair so short that it curls under the skin creating razor bumps. Even something as simple as using your cellphone can cause irritation. Putting the device next to your face can cause bacteria to enter your skin and create acne. A way to avoid this is to either carry wipes to clean your phone or use an earpiece.

As for the treatments I recommend at Yspa, one of the best is the Silk-Peel. This is an advancement on traditional microdermabrasion because it can also infuse medication into the deeper layers of your skin. I think of it as a wet microdermabrasion. It mechanically cleans the skin as well as brightens with prescription products. It is very safe for all skin types and a series of these peels often can tremendously improve your complexion.

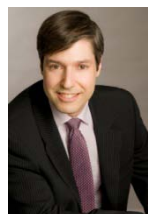
For difficult dark spots or hormonal skin changes after pregnancy, I often prescribe Obagi NuDerm®. This system of products is the most effective for evening out the skintone in women of color. It is only available with a prescription through your doctor. At Yager Esthetics|Estética™, we have been using it for almost 15 years with great success.

One thing about lasers and darker skin types - they can be dangerous if not used properly and/or if the provider is not well trained and experienced.

Lasers generate heat, which can cause darkening and burns if the energy is too high. African American and Hispanic women must use a much more gradual approach with lower settings to safely realize treatments like laser hair removal, skin resurfacing or even vein treatments. Always make sure to do a test spot a few weeks in advance to ensure no poor reactions.

In New York and many other states, these treatments are often done by estheticians and medical assistants of varying levels of training, so you must find out who is treating you and how much experience that person has.

With these tips, you can feel more secure about seeking treatments for your skin type.



Dr. Jeffrey Yager is a board certified plastic surgeon, and the founder of Yager Plastic Surgery and Yager Esthetics | Estética™ in the Washington Heights neighborhood New York City, where he has established a center of excellence in cosmetic plastic surgery of the face, breast, and body dedicated to the Hispanic community. An award-winning researcher, Dr. Yager has been recognized by the Plastic Surgery Educational Foundation (PSEF) and the Northeastern Society of Plastic Surgeons. For more information, please visit: www.dryager.com or call (212) 543-1700.