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Beauty and the skin

Time can wreak havoc on the face, leaving saggy skin, age spots, wrinkles and even cancer. Each year, billions of dollars are spent on creams and lotions to make the skin smooth and healthy looking. Most cosmetic companies do not fully understand the multiple pathologic mechanisms involved in skin aging. A good lifestyle is key for beautiful skin. Plenty of water, antioxidants, avoiding cigarettes, excessive alcohol and limiting sun exposure goes a long way to keep the skin healthy. Antioxidants are found in fruits and vegetables, particularly the leafy green vegetables and brilliantly colored foods like blueberries and tomatoes. A new wrinkle for the wrinkle is hormones. In addition to the female hormones which are good for the skin, there is DHEA and melatonin.

In a study published in the Journal of Surgical Research, applying DHEA to the skin protects the delicate blood vessels. In the skin, there is an amazing capillary network to nourish living cells. Additionally, DHEA regulates the skin collagen. DHEA peaks at age 21 and progressively gets lower as we age. It is barely perceptible in the body when one reaches their ultimate age and death occurs shortly thereafter. Some feel there is nothing better than DHEA as an anti-aging product. Keep the DHEA levels high and perhaps there won't be any aging. For a decade, I have been recommending DHEA orally as

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a supplement. It is extremely safe, inexpensive and very healthful. It does come orally in 25 and 50 mg sizes. The consumption of 25 to 75 mg a day is recommended for the middle-aged person. In some exceptional cases where it is used to treat diseases such as lupus erythematosus, 200 mg a day is used.

Melatonin is similar to DHEA in that it also peaks in the teen-age years and progressively decreases as we get older. However, the DHEA is elevated in the early morning hours and melatonin is released from our pituitary gland in the late evening and helps one get a good night's sleep with a proper amount of dreaming.

In a German study, it was proven that melatonin is a free radical scavenger (antioxidant) and more potent than vitamin C. If one combined the elements of what is in commercial moisturizing products along with hormones, several vitamins and an essential oil, such as chamomile, one will have a true dream cream. More about that next week.