

I'M SURE EVERYONE IS EAGERLY AWAITING THE SUMMER AFTER ALL THAT HOLIDAY CHEER FOLLOWED BY WHAT FEELS LIKE A VERY, VERY LONG JANUARY.

Words: Dr Nestor

## NEW YEAR, NEW HEALTHY SKIN!

While we plan our summer escape and contemplate our New Year's resolutions (if they haven't become a distant memory), I thought I'd write about skin care, from this point to be referred to as 'Cosmetceuticals' (hybrid of cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, i.e luxury feel and clinically proven). We're going to discuss why it's important, and why it's an investment in glowing this year. Before we dive straight into what we need from cosmeceuticals, let's discuss why we need them.

Ageing has been defined as the 'progressive, irreversible loss of balance of the body's systems'... including skin. There is no single cause of ageing (hence no fountain of youth - sorry). The degree of ageing is dependant on both genetic and environmental factors. There are far too many complicated causes to go into any great depth, but I'll try to summarise, and keep it interesting. I'll try.

### What are free radicals and why don't we like them?

A free radical is an atom of oxygen or molecule that is highly unstable. Think of a bull in a china shop. The result is chaos, with a lot of damage to whatever it 'runs into'. For it to settle, it needs to pair up with something, anything. It won't rest or become stable until it is 'neutralised' (you can stop thinking about the bull now). These free radicals damage structures within our cells, most notably our DNA. Enter antioxidants. They function to mop up the free radicals and restrict the damage caused.

Think of our DNA as a blueprint to, well, everything in our body. DNA is protected by caps called 'telomeres'. Think of telomeres as a forcefield around our DNA. Free radicals and toxins, built up from an unhealthy lifestyle, bombard this forcefield. Once

they break through, they go for the jugular, our DNA! In skin, DNA functions to make new skin cells over and over again. If the blueprint has taken repeated knocks by these free radicals, it's not copied correctly, and therefore vital information is lost when making new skin. This means less plumping and firming factors are produced. Even the instructions to repair itself are lost! This is what we refer to, in part, as ageing.

If we can neutralise these free radicals and mop up the toxins, we can protect our DNA and therefore, in theory, slow down the ageing process.

### Where do free radicals come from?

Mostly, from ourselves. 90% are produced from normal chemical reactions in our mitochondria (small combustion engines in our cells that power life). The body is very good at cleaning these free radicals up, but our ability to do so declines with the years. The remaining 10% can come from various sources, but importantly from external factors, such as radiation, UV light, pollution, smoking and diet.

### How can we repair the damage and maybe even de-activate these reckless free radicals?

There are a lot of skin care ranges on the market, all promising to make you look brighter, smoother, radiant, firmer... you get the picture. Sadly, most of this is clever marketing. There are, however, some ingredients that are supported by strong scientific evidence.

### What does our skin need?

Our understanding of the ageing process and how skin is damaged and repaired is far more comprehensive than ever before. Research, driven by what is now a billion pound industry, is progressing at

a great speed. Many ingredients are tried and tested daily. Below are a few I believe are worth mentioning, ones which have clinical trials to back them.

**Vitamin C** is a wonderful molecule. Its most important role is in the production of collagen. If the appropriate levels of vitamin C are applied to skin, it can contribute and aid in the repair of UV radiation-induced skin damage, prevent free radical damage and support wound healing. It also helps to regenerate Vitamin E.

**Vitamin E** is the most potent of all antioxidants in skin. It can boost the skin's natural immune cells and suppress the development of certain skin cancers. It helps to increase the production of new, healthy skin and is used extensively for fine lines, as well as controlling acne.

**Co-Enzyme Q10** helps to regenerate Vitamin C & E, and has the ability to repair our mitochondria (cells' powerhouses). Think of it as giving our mitochondria a thorough service and MOT to make it run more efficiently, and therefore help produce healthier, cleaner energy.

**Flavonoids** Yes, this is the one found in wine. It is a very potent anti-oxidant and acts to mop up free radicals and limit the damage caused. I'm not saying reach for the vino!

**Peptides** have shown anti-ageing properties, help with skin pigmentation, and reduce collagen breakdown.

**Human Derived Growth Factors** are specialised proteins that act as chemical messengers. They signal repair mechanisms in skin, to help produce and build collagen and elastin.



Images: Terry Boyd



## SCOTLAND'S FIRST MEDICAL COSMETIC AWARDS!

Cosmetic Medicine is a hybrid of medical specialties, such as plastic surgery and dermatology, and the Health and Beauty Industry. It is respected for its commitment to patient safety and dedication to understanding the ageing process, as much as treating it. Scotland boasts national and international speakers in Cosmetic Medicine, individuals striving to further develop the field, and improve standards.

On the 14th of November 2015, history was made when four individuals decided to host the first ever Scottish Medical Cosmetic Awards. Nurse Michelle McLean, Nurse Frances Turner-Trail, Lara Williamson and Dr Nestor felt that it was time to bring together the Medical Cosmetic Community in a way that had never been done before.

The evening was held at the Hilton Glasgow with no expense spared. The theme... The Great Gatsby, with entertainment from Scotland's finest, SWING!

It was a red carpet, black tie 'who's who' of Scotland's cosmetic doctors, surgeons, nurses, dentists and aestheticians. Over 250 were in attendance.

Dr Leah Totton, winner of the Apprentice, and Dr Nestor hosted the evening, with Dr Nestor opening the evening praising colleagues for their outstanding work and contribution to Scottish Cosmetic Medicine. Nurse McLean shared the stage with Dr Totton to present awards, captivating the audience.

Awards for Best in the industry were for Best Injectable, Best Company Representative, Best Medical Device, and Best Skin Care Range. These categories were judged by the practitioners themselves.

These awards were followed by Best Aesthetician, Best Cosmetic Nurse, Best Cosmetic Dentist, Best Cosmetic Surgeon, Best Cosmetic Doctor, Best Clinic and Best Non-Surgical Rejuvenation. Keeping the awards fair and coveted, these categories were all judged by experts in their fields outside of Scotland.

An honorary award was given to Brendan Semple of TLC Pharmacy for his dedication to Medical Cosmetics in Scotland, and effort to bring practitioners together professionally.

With the audience in a celebratory mood, the organisers, presenter and judges made way for the entertainers and jazz band, with DJ Collin Barr keeping the party going until the early hours of the morning.

Scotland's Medical Cosmetic Awards 2016 promises to be even bigger, better and louder this year!

**Winners: See more at: [www.pmfanews.com/reviews/news-reviews/2015/11/medical-cosmetic-awards-2015](http://www.pmfanews.com/reviews/news-reviews/2015/11/medical-cosmetic-awards-2015)**



If you would like to know more about any of these treatments, visit my page, [www.drnestor.co.uk](http://www.drnestor.co.uk), or call 0141 552 0828 to make a free, no obligation consultation with myself or email me at [contact@salonnv.co.uk](mailto:contact@salonnv.co.uk)