

SO ATTRACTIVE! beauty

Skincare

Rx

Your local drugstore or makeup counter is stocked with skincare lines. More abound at your local medical office and spa. So, what's the difference? We asked so you don't have to.

BY MAE FLENNY



Taking care of your face isn't so simple anymore, or is it? Whereas your grandmother's beauty routine probably consisted of using a hodgepodge of random products bought at the corner drugstore, the proliferation of specialty skincare lines has made it easier, and more effective, to get the targeted results you want.

Providing complementary ingredients specifically formulated to work in tandem to fight facial issues such as fine lines, age spots, poor skin tone and texture, the skincare lines available in dermatologists' offices and skincare-specific retailers provide a slew of benefits over their drugstore counterparts and offer more than pretty packaging filled with empty promises.

One of the obvious pros of buying a skincare line from a dermatologist, or skincare specialist, is ease of use. When you have an entire line's cleansers, exfoliants, toners, sunscreens and moisturizers at your fingertips, there's no need to go scrambling about town to fill the gap in your facial regimen. Additionally, the ingredients in a skincare line are formulated to work together, rather than cancel each other out—and work on a deeper level than you may be used to.

"Over-the-counter products are created to keep you from harming yourself," says Jamie Lee Metz, owner of Jamie Lee Metz Advanced Aesthetics. "They don't penetrate into the dermis, the deepest layer of the skin. Counter products usually remove dead skin and only affect the top layer of the skin. Salon products penetrate the epidermis and clinical products penetrate the dermis and require someone with professional knowledge to apply them."

Of course, knowing what's available, and where, is the first step towards selecting a skincare line that addresses your unique needs. Whether medical-grade products are for you, or a more natural, biodynamic organic line is a better fit for your skincare philosophy, here's a sampling of innovative lines to be found around town.

CLINICAL IMAGE RX

Metz's clients have a choice of spa or clinical-grade products. One of the main regimens that Metz uses on her clients is a clinical line called Image RX. Created by a plastic surgeon and his wife, the Image line affects the deepest layers of the skin. "Clinical Image RX is a very specialized treatment," she explains. "We can get very specific with

it, individualizing the treatment for a person's skin type. It requires advanced knowledge to know how to use it correctly."

According to Metz, the Image line provides the user with a more wholesome and glowing look, by creating more hydrated and healthier-looking skin. "Image RX is good for someone who desires more advanced skincare. It goes beyond pampering."

SKINCEUTICALS

SkinCeuticals is a medical-grade treatment which was created with molecules designed to hold hydration throughout the day. It focuses on prevention, protection and correction. The line is made with a Vitamin C serum that works to strengthen capillaries and help rebuild the skin.

"SkinCeuticals has several active ingredients that do what they say they will do," says Candace Cromwell, an aesthetician at Ambiance Relaxation Spa. "The line has several products for whatever skin problem you may have."

The line also includes cucumber, "a healing agent that takes the redness out," says Cromwell.

PREVAGE MD

Prevage MD was created by the makers of Botox and offers a therapy which is double the strength of regimens found over-the-counter.

The line makes the skin softer and changes the elasticity of the skin, helping with skin damage. It also claims to protect the skin from the damage of UV rays.

"Prevage MD is used in conjunction with other treatments," says Laurita Chiamese, an aesthetician with the Contours and Curves cosmetic surgery practice of Ryan Mitchell, MD. "Clinical results show a 29% reduction in lines, 26% reduction in skin roughness, 37% increase in skin hydration and a 33% improvement in the overall appearance of the skin."

There is a non-medical line of Prevage that is sold in department stores, but has less active ingredients than Prevage MD, according to Chiamese.

MURAD

Aesthetician Michelle McCracken at Applause Salon Spa touts the benefits of Murad, a skincare line created by a dermatologist, who is also a pharmacist and researcher—a background which lent a unique perspective when creating the line.

Murad products provide an anti-aging component and help with pigmentation problems, acne and skin problems that may occur due to hormonal imbalances associated with menopause. It is also heavily focused on the principle of preventing water loss.

"Murad is great for someone looking for a change and who wants to treat their skin," says McCracken. "It can be customized to your own skin. There's something for everybody."

PHYTOMER

Stephanie Hollister, an aesthetician with Liasons Salon Spa, believes Phytomer, a French skincare line, is the best thing to hit the States.

Phytomer (pronounced Fee-ta-meer) is a natural product with marine ingredients like seaweed and algae. These trace elements are similar to our skin's natural makeup. Phytomer focuses on healing and hydrating the skin, and has products available for every skin type.

"It's very healing for people who need more aggressive treatments. The products are great for clearing up and preventing future breakouts," Hollister explains. "It has higher concentrations of active ingredients than store products, which help smooth out the skin." ✨

