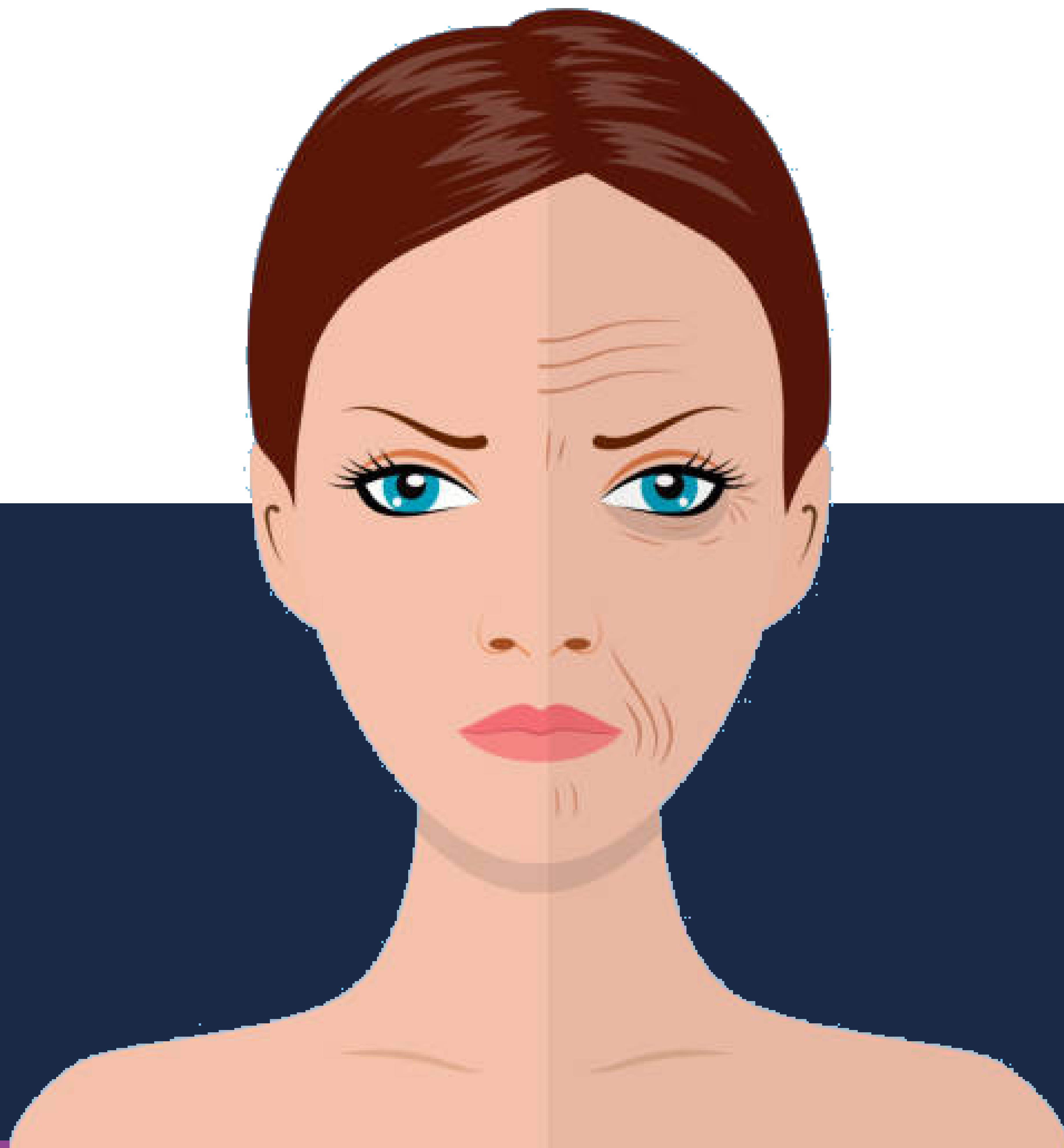


ANTI-AGING FOR MEN



Just because you are a man doesn't mean you can't look after yourself and how you look. Just like women, men want to look their best; which can be seen by the rising number of men who are placing an emphasis on their appearance. Because of this, there has been a rise in the number of men's anti-aging and skincare products and services, which is becoming an increasingly competitive market.

So what do men need to know in order to keep looking young? Here are some habits that can help you stay young looking and attractive.

As for women, men will benefit from general skincare tips, such as eating a healthy, well-balanced diet and keeping active. It is recommended that men consume at least 4 -5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day in order to get important nutrients that promote collagen, elastin, and overall skin health.

Fruits and vegetables enhance skin tone and help people appear more attractive by increasing the production of red and yellow pigments in the skin (1). Fruits and vegetables also improve skin hydration, thickness, and density by increasing microcirculation (2) which delivers oxygen and nutrients to the skin. They also help to maintain skin moisture.

On the subject of moisture, water is essential for survival and for young, healthy-looking skin. The skin is the biggest organ in the body and is particularly sensitive to dehydration. The negative consequences are that it becomes dry and wrinkled (3). Optimum hydration results in skin that is younger in appearance. This is because it helps the skin retain its elasticity. Skin that is properly hydrated also works as a protective barrier.

Proper hydration also allows your kidneys and bowels to function more effectively when flushing out the toxins in your body. This is beneficial because toxins can accumulate, causing the skin to respond with acne, rashes, and even infections.

Up until the age of 50, men lose less water through their skin than women (4). However, over this age, they lose more from their face and neck, so they need to drink at least 5 pints of water a day.

Getting more sleep is one of the easiest ways to beat aging. It's called 'beauty sleep' for a reason. Lack of sleep speeds up the aging process by speeding up how fast you burn through skin cells, thus creating fine lines and wrinkles. It also causes water to be lost from the skin more quickly (5).

During sleep, your body releases hormones that regenerate the skin and boost collagen production. So it is advisable for men to get 7-8 hours' sleep every night. On top of that, sleeping on your back with your head slightly elevated on a silky pillow will reduce eye bags and wrinkles caused by sleeping on your front (6).

Every night men should wash their faces before going to bed and use an anti-aging serum.

Caffeine and alcohol have aging effects on men as well as women. Reduce or cut out caffeinated drinks like tea and coffee as caffeine reduces collagen in the skin (7).

These drinks often include milk and sugar, both of which have a negative effect on the appearance of skin. The sugars affect the collagen due to a process called advanced glycation end products. Fittingly shortened to AGEs (8).

Most men like a beer or two, but alcohol can also have a detrimental effect on skin and how old it looks. Alcohol may be liquid, but it dehydrates the skin (9). This can leave it looking tired, old and saggy. Alcohol also affects the production of collagen, which helps keep skin plump and healthy looking (10).

Like women, men also need to protect their skin from the drying effect of the sun's UV rays by using sunscreen with SPF 30 or more. Even during the winter. It has been shown that men tend to be more at risk of UV exposure due to their lifestyle (11) which, at best, can lead to more wrinkles and skin that looks old. At worst, it can lead to skin cancer.

It is often said that men age more slowly than women. In fact, certain factors do actually contribute to this. One reason for this is that a man's skin is typically oilier than a woman's skin. This is because it has more sebaceous glands that produce more sebum. This helps to keep men's skin more supple, elastic and wrinkle free (12). The downside to this is that men can be more prone to acne. So, to keep skin healthy and free of the damage that acne can do to skin, men need to make sure that they wash their faces twice daily. Always use cool or warm water rather than hot water, which dries out the skin. Use a gentle cleanser or astringent to remove all traces of dirt and oil. Finally, apply a paraben-free moisturizer.

Testosterone plays a large part in a man's skin. Men typically have faster metabolisms because of higher levels of testosterone, which means that toxins are more effectively removed from the skin (15). However, as men age and their testosterone levels drop, their skin can lose its elasticity and moisture. It also starts to thin. For this reason, testosterone cream applied to the face is beneficial for men (16). Testosterone can also be taken in pill form. However, use it with caution as it does bring with it some risks, including reduced sperm production, sleep apnoea and acne (17). Increased testosterone levels can also lead to hair loss (alopecia) (18) which makes men look older. So think carefully and speak to your GP if this is something you are considering. You need to weigh up all the pros and cons.

Men's faces tend to sag more than women's do, especially on the cheeks and eyelids (19). This is due to loss of collagen and elastin, causing the skin to lose its elasticity. This can be caused by smoking (20), exposure to the sun, and even weight loss (21). Taking a quality collagen supplement, stopping smoking and doing facial yoga can help with this.

The majority of the time, men need to follow the same advice as women, but there are a few things they need to do differently. Living a healthy lifestyle with lots of fresh water, fruit and vegetables, exercise and fresh air will give your skin the best chance of fighting off the signs of aging.

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