Can Estrogen Actually Reverse Skin Aging? An OB/GYN Explains Truth! Transcript

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Why Your Skin Changes During Perimenopause

Women are putting Women are putting estrogen on their faces estrogen on their faces to look to look younger, and I'm not talking younger, and I'm not talking about expensive new about expensive new serums. I serums. I literally mean literally mean their actual their actual prescription hormone drugs. Some women prescription hormone drugs. Some women even take even take estrogen gel, estrogen gel, intended for intended for hormone therapy, which should be applied, which should be applied to the hands, and smear it on the to the hands, and smear it on the face to directly face to directly improve the condition of the improve the condition of the skin with age. But skin with age. But the question arises: the question arises: can estrogen can estrogen actually actually actually reverse skin aging? Have reverse skin aging? Have n't n't n't we gone too far with this idea?

we gone too far with this idea? Let's talk Let's talk about it in this video. about it in this video. If you woke up If you woke up after 40, after 40, looked at your looked at your skin and thought, “Oh my God, what happened?” my God, what happened?” Why has Why has my skin's elasticity changed so much my skin's elasticity changed so much?

?? No matter No matter what expensive creams with what expensive creams with retinol, retinol, retinol, hyaluronic hyaluronic hyaluronic acid, or acid, or peptides you peptides you put on your face, put on your face, it seems like changes are it seems like changes are still still still happening. This is because in the first 5 years of in the first 5 years of perimenopause or perimenopause or even just after even just after age 40, your skin age 40, your skin loses up to 30% of its total collagen.

And women apply And women apply estrogen and estrogen and estradiol creams estradiol creams directly to their faces to directly to their faces to stop this stop this collagen loss and collagen loss and prevent sagging prevent sagging and deep wrinkles.

and deep wrinkles. In clinical In clinical trials, trials, trials, topical estrogen topical estrogen reduced pore size reduced pore size and wrinkle depth by and wrinkle depth by 60%. But is it safe 60%. But is it safe to apply estrogen to your to apply estrogen to your face, or are you face, or are you risking your health risking your health for the cosmetic for the cosmetic effect? As a dual-boarded OB- GYN GYN GYN, I, I will tell you the whole truth will tell you the whole truth about estrogen about estrogen creams and their safety. So, here is the main. So, here is the main reason why reason why regular cosmetics regular cosmetics stop working stop working after 40. Your after 40. Your skin is an skin is an endocrine organ.

endocrine organ. In fact, it is a In fact, it is a metabolic organ. metabolic organ. The skin on your face is The skin on your face is densely covered with densely covered with receptors, receptors, receptors, estrogen estrogen estrogen receptors, both alpha and beta. Estrogen is the master is the master switch for three switch for three vital vital vital skin functions.

First, it First, it signals dermal signals dermal fibroblasts fibroblasts fibroblasts to produce types to produce types I and III collagen I and III collagen. This is what gives your. This is what gives your skin fullness skin fullness when you start to when you start to lose volume. Secondly, Secondly, Secondly, moisture retention. You have a moisture retention. You have a natural production of natural production of hyaluronic acid hyaluronic acid in your skin deep in the in your skin deep in the extracellular extracellular extracellular matrix. And when you matrix. And when you lose estrogen, lose estrogen, you lose that you lose that ability to retain ability to retain moisture in your skin. It moisture in your skin. It becomes much becomes much drier. Thirdly, drier. Thirdly, microcirculation. It microcirculation. It supports blood flow, supports blood flow, delivering oxygen and delivering oxygen and nutrients to nutrients to the surface of the skin, the surface of the skin, giving you that giving you that same glow, right same glow, right? At 20, you have a? At 20, you have a natural blush, natural blush, but with age, your face but with age,

your face becomes more sunken and becomes more sunken and dull. So when the ovaries start ovaries start to function to function to function erratically during perimenopause, sometimes with erratically during perimenopause, sometimes with activity, sometimes without, the activity, sometimes without, the skin receptors don't skin receptors don't get what they get what they need. So, need. So, the problem is not a lack of the problem is not a lack of expensive cosmetics.

expensive cosmetics. You have an endocrine You have an endocrine deficiency in the dermis, which deficiency in the dermis, which means a hormonal means a hormonal deficiency in the skin. So, deficiency in the skin. So, if you're interested in if you're interested in using using using estrogen, let's estrogen, let's take a look at what take a look at what actually actually actually happens when you happens when you apply it to your apply it to your face and what face and what critical mistakes to critical mistakes to avoid. Okay, avoid. Okay, let's start with the let's start with the misuse of misuse of vaginal vaginal vaginal estrogen for the estrogen for the face. Many women face.

Estrogen for Skin: Benefits and Potential Risks

Many women take a vaginal take a vaginal estrogen cream estrogen cream or gel and apply or gel and apply it directly it directly to the wrinkles. So what does the So what does the data show? Studies data show? Studies show that topical show that topical application of application of application of estradiol to the skin estradiol to the skin improves its thickness, elasticity, and elasticity, and reduces pore size.

reduces pore size. These are the kinds of changes that These are the kinds of changes that happen as you happen as you age after 40 age after 40. There is a difference. There is a difference between the lining of your between the lining of your vagina and vagina and your skin. The your skin. The vaginal lining vaginal lining has a mucous membrane has a mucous membrane that that that absorbs substances quite quickly.

absorbs substances quite quickly. Facial skin has a Facial skin has a thick outer thick outer layer—the stratum corneum, which layer—the stratum corneum, which means that systemic means that systemic absorption when absorption when applied to the face is applied to the face is actually slightly actually slightly lower. So you should be lower. So you should be aware that this may be an aware that this may be an unequal exchange, unequal exchange, and vaginal and vaginal estrogens may not estrogens may not have the effect have the effect you expect you expect for the skin. Some for the skin. Some women find it helps, women find it helps, while some find while some find it doesn't work very it doesn't work very well. Another well. Another feature of feature of feature of vaginal vaginal vaginal estrogen is that estrogen is that it is it is estradiol. And for estradiol. And for some women, it may some women, it may be too be too intense, intense, intense, unlike estriol, unlike estriol, which acts on beta receptors in the skin. So, vaginal, vaginal estrogen is not always an estrogen is not always an ideal option ideal option for off-label for off-label use on the use on the face for some face for some women. They may women. They may prefer prefer prefer products with products with estriol or estriol or combination products. Number two, melasma.

If you've experienced If you've experienced melasma, sometimes melasma, sometimes called the "mask of called the "mask of pregnancy" because dark pigment spots appear dark pigment spots appear when your hormones are when your hormones are unbalanced, unbalanced, unbalanced, especially during especially during pregnancy or due to pregnancy or due to sun exposure, then you're sun exposure, then you're prone to these prone to these hyperpigmented spots. Therefore, you. Therefore, you need to be need to be careful with estrogen, as careful with estrogen, as it can stimulate it can stimulate melanocytes. These are melanocytes. These are cells that cells that produce pigment.

produce pigment. Therefore, applying Therefore, applying concentrated concentrated concentrated estrogen to the face estrogen to the face can cause can cause hyperpigmentation, hyperpigmentation, hyperpigmentation, especially when combined especially when combined with with with sun exposure. So it's sun exposure. So it's always a good idea to do a always a good idea to do a patch test on a patch test on a small area small area near your jawline near your jawline if you're considering if you're considering this option, but this option, but if you know if you know you're prone to you're prone to melasma, I would melasma, I would avoid using avoid using estrogen on your face altogether.

estrogen on your face altogether. Number three, Number three, estriol creams. I was talking estriol creams. I was talking about estradiol, and about estradiol, and now we're talking about now we're talking about estriol. Some women estriol. Some women find this to be a find this to be a safer option safer option for the face.

for the face. Unlike E2, or Unlike E2, or estradiol, such as in estradiol, such as in vaginal cream, vaginal cream, estriol is a weaker estriol is a weaker estrogen that estrogen that selectively selectively selectively binds to binds to estrogen estrogen estrogen receptors in the skin. And receptors in the skin. And it doesn't bind to it doesn't bind to important important important receptors, like receptors, like alpha receptors in breast or uterine tissues. So breast or uterine tissues. So low-dose low-dose low-dose combined estriol combined estriol may be an even may be an even better choice if better choice if you are only aiming for you are only aiming for facial rejuvenation.

Question four: does Question four: does systemic HRT replace systemic HRT replace face creams? face creams? If you are already taking If you are already taking systemic HRT, you systemic HRT, you have probably noticed that your have probably noticed that your skin condition skin condition has generally improved, because has generally improved, because positive changes positive changes are occurring everywhere. And are occurring everywhere. And if you use an if you use an estradiol estradiol estradiol patch or gel— it's a systemic it's a systemic estrogen— estrogen— it nourishes the skin it nourishes the skin from the inside because it from the inside because it works on the entire body.

However, many women However, many women still feel the still feel the need for topical need for topical facial products facial products due to the profound loss of due to the profound loss of collagen and collagen and dullness of the skin that dullness of the skin that occurs occurs occurs due to declining due to declining estrogen levels. Therefore, systemic options for, systemic options for estradiol, such as a estradiol, such as a patch or gel, patch or gel, may be may be insufficient without insufficient without additional additional additional topical topical topical application. Now, if you want to, if you want to get the get the skin-plumping effects of skin-plumping effects of estrogen estrogen estrogen without the use of without the use of prescription hormonal prescription hormonal drugs, here are drugs, here are the best the best the best non-hormonal non-hormonal non-hormonal alternatives and alternatives and clinical protocols clinical protocols that I use for that I use for my patients.

my patients. The first is MEEP, The first is MEEP, methylestradiol methylestradiol methylestradiol propionate, a propionate, a specialized specialized specialized estrogen receptor ligand designed to designed to bind locally to bind locally to skin receptors skin receptors that rapidly that rapidly breaks down, breaks down, preventing preventing preventing systemic absorption. Phytoestrogens are. Phytoestrogens are plant- plant- plant- derived compounds from soy and derived compounds from soy and legumes that legumes that bind to bind to estrogen estrogen estrogen receptors in the skin, receptors in the skin, supporting supporting supporting collagen production collagen production and providing and providing antioxidant antioxidant antioxidant protection. This is generally protection. This is generally beneficial for the entire beneficial for the entire body.

body. body. Phytoestrogens are great for middle-aged women. So, let's talk, let's talk about my three-step perimenopausal skincare protocol perimenopausal skincare protocol.

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Non-Hormonal Alternatives & the 3-Step Skincare Protocol

First, what you eat First, what you eat is just as important is just as important as what you as what you put on your skin. put on your skin. The priority is protein and The priority is protein and fiber. You won't fiber. You won't be able to build be able to build collagen without collagen without amino acids like amino acids like glycine and proline. So it's glycine and proline. So it's important to make sure you're getting you're getting enough protein, enough protein, quality fiber, quality fiber, vitamin D, and vitamin D, and eating an overall eating an overall healthy diet. I usually. I usually recommend an recommend an recommend an anti-inflammatory diet.

anti-inflammatory diet. Second, don't Second, don't forget about forget about daily SPF. daily SPF. Photoaging is the main accelerator of main accelerator of collagen destruction.

collagen destruction. Estrogen protects Estrogen protects your skin, but your skin, but ultraviolet ultraviolet ultraviolet radiation radiation radiation constantly constantly constantly damages and destroys it.

damages and destroys it. Even if it seems Even if it seems cloudy outside, cloudy outside, you still need you still need protection from UV rays every day. Third, Third, Third, apply the products correctly in apply the products correctly in layers. Apply layers. Apply topical estriol or phytoestrogen cream to phytoestrogen cream to clean, dry skin.

clean, dry skin. After you After you wash your face, apply these wash your face, apply these products and wait 3 products and wait 3 minutes for them to minutes for them to absorb before absorb before applying heavy applying heavy moisturizers moisturizers moisturizers or sunscreen. It is or sunscreen. It is important for us that the remedy is important for us that the remedy is first fully first fully absorbed. Sudden absorbed. Sudden changes in your skin condition changes in your skin condition after 40 are not after 40 are not your personal your personal failure. It is actually a failure. It is actually a biological response biological response to changes in to changes in hormone hormone hormone receptors. Don't receptors. Don't forget to download forget to download my ultimate my ultimate guide to guide to skin care for women skin care for women over 40. Link over 40. Link below. Subscribe below. Subscribe to precision to precision health strategies for health strategies for middle age.

middle age. Write your Write your questions about questions about skin care in skin care in the comments. I would the comments. I would love to make more love to make more videos about videos about skincare, but I skincare, but I need to know what exactly need to know what exactly