

## ARMS

→ Tiny bumps on the backs of your upper arms are likely caused by keratosis pilaris, a condition in which keratin (a protein in the skin) forms hard plugs within hair follicles. Daily use of an over-the-counter glycolic or lactic acid lotion should clear it up in a few weeks; avoid scrubs, which can cause further inflammation. To eliminate discoloration on the arms, many doctors use photodynamic therapy (PDT), which treats both the aesthetic issue and the precancerous lesions that can appear in this area. The arms are painted with a photosensitising chemical that's activated with light, leaving the skin red and swollen for up to four days – after a week, it's brighter and much more even-toned. To address discoloration and crepiness, a fractionated nonablative laser is a popular choice; three to five treatments should do the trick.

## HANDS

→ Your hands age just like the rest of you; if you're not already, start slathering them with sunscreen. A topical retinoid will help fade the dark spots that often speckle this constantly sun-exposed area, and will also minimise tendons and veins, which become more prominent as skin thins with age. Injections of a hyaluronic acid filler can instantly and dramatically pump the hands for up to a year; if veins are still visible, consider sclerotherapy (which involves injections of a detergent solution – not as scary as it may sound), to help shrink them. For fast dark spot removal, doctors use the Q-switched laser: You leave the office with small scabs; about a week later, your hands look 15 years younger. Fractionated, nonablative lasers offer a one-two punch, minimising discoloration and surface crepiness.

## FEET

→ The ticket to reversing redness and scales? Repetitive, consistent moisturising. But avoid scented, silky lotions and opt for a petrolatum-based ointment or rich shea butter cream every night, before slipping on a pair of cotton socks. If your feet are cracked or flaky, alternate the thick cream with an exfoliating alpha hydroxy lotion (but skip the socks). A pumice stone or foot file (best used on damp skin) is also effective, but avoid anything that resembles a cheese grater, which can wound the skin. If dryness and cracking persist or are accompanied with itching, you may need a prescription-strength exfoliator, steroid or antifungal.

# The Magic Bullet

One product is crucial to making your skin look its best year after year: sunscreen. We know UV rays age the skin, and we've assumed that diligent sunscreen use stops, or at least slows, that process. Now there's proof: A recent study in *Annals of Internal Medicine* followed 903 adults for four and a half years, and those who applied sunscreen regularly to their face, neck, arms and hands experienced 24 percent less skin

ageing than those who didn't use it daily. Skincare products that contain antioxidants, like vitamin E or coenzyme Q10, can also help protect against UV damage: "Topical antioxidants, such as vitamin C, vitamin E, ferulic and phloretin, protect the skin against infra-red A, a newly discovered wavelength that causes accelerated skin ageing," says Maureen Allem, MD, the medical director of Skin,

Body & Health Renewal. "When you use a product containing SPF50 on its own, you're probably only about 55 percent protected," she explains. "But when you combine this with a topical antioxidant, you can expect 97 percent protection against photodamage." For more advice on holistic anti-ageing, call Skin, Body & Health Renewal on ☎ 0861 263 976 or visit [skinrenewal.co.za](http://skinrenewal.co.za) ▶