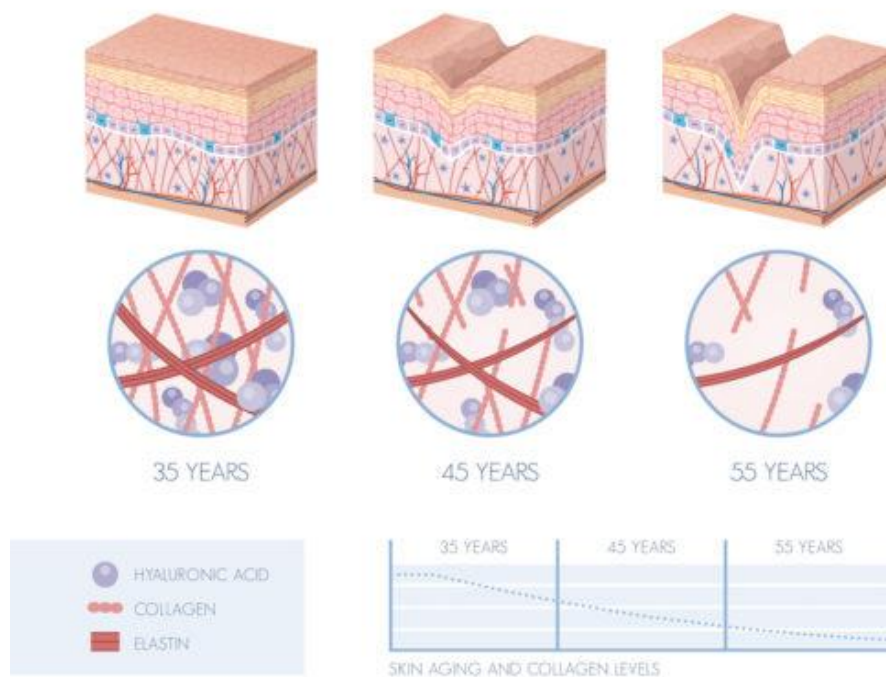


Why Hyaluronic Acid Deserves a Front Row Seat in Your Skin Care

Hyaluronic acid has become a buzz word in the skincare industry. Miracle claims of the effects of topically applied HA are everywhere, and skincare companies know that often just the mention that their product contains hyaluronic acid will trigger an impulse purchase. Some of these claims are ridiculous (especially to an esthetician) – “better than Botox” or “erases fine lines after 1 week.” There are hundreds of skincare companies out there, and they all want you to believe in their version of hope in a bottle. Doesn't it make more sense to educate yourself about what products really deliver? In the case of hyaluronic acid, the truth of what it can do lies somewhere in the middle of the hype.

What is hyaluronic acid?



Hyaluronic acid (HA) is a molecule that occurs naturally in the human body. It is a glycosaminoglycan that occurs naturally in the skin, connective tissue, eyes, and joints. It is also called hyaluronan. It helps tissues in your body and keeps hair, skin, joints, nerves, and eyes well lubricated. The highest amount of hyaluronic acid in the body is found in the skin. It's a large part of the extracellular matrix, which is the gel-like material that surrounds your skin cells.

The proteins collagen and elastin are also part of this material, as are other glycosaminoglycans (a family of polysaccharides, or carbohydrates, of which hyaluronic acid is a part).

Hyaluronic acid is vital in keeping the skin hydrated. It holds *a thousand times its weight in water* and attracts water from within the dermis and moves it along to the skin surface (epidermis). Hyaluronic acid and other glycosaminoglycans also play a role in skin elasticity and tone, cell regeneration, and healing.

As you age, hyaluronic acid levels in the skin decline (after age 40). Your skin doesn't manufacture it as effectively, which is in part why the skin becomes thinner and drier as you get older.

What does it do?

Skin care product companies often tout the benefits of hyaluronic acid as an anti-aging ingredient. This is inaccurate. Hyaluronic acid is a macromolecule, meaning it has a larger molecular size, which is too large to effectively be absorbed into the skin. Applying it topically won't increase the skin's natural inner storehouse of hyaluronic acid. But that doesn't mean it doesn't have any effect on the skin. It's major benefit is its ability to improve skin hydration levels. HA is a humectant – it binds moisture to the skin helping it hold onto precious moisture.

Using a topical hyaluronic acid product will help pull moisture from the deeper layers of the skin to infuse the top layers with moisture. If you live in a humid area, it can also help pull water from the air into your skin. This is known as TEWL. (Trans Epidermal Water Loss)

HA won't erase fine lines and wrinkles. What it will do is plump the skin with extra moisture, which can help dry looking lines look smoother.

Other Benefits

- Hyaluronic acid increases moisture levels in the skin without adding oil. It is lightweight and can be used by virtually all skin types.
- Some research shows that hyaluronic acid may have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, even when applied topically.
- Hyaluronic acid can promote regeneration of the skin and help it to heal. Moisturizers containing hyaluronic acid are often recommended after a chemical peel or laser treatment.

Injectables

Hyaluronic acid can be injected directly into the skin to help fill deep lines and wrinkles. It also is used to recontour the face, adding a youthful fullness back to the cheeks or to fill out the lips (Examples are Juvéderm and Restylane brand names). Injecting hyaluronic acid stimulates the skin to produce more collagen on its own, which means it may have lasting anti-aging benefits.

What to Look For

Hyaluronic acid is sold as a serum (try our [Euro Botanicals Hyaluronic Acid](#)) and in moisturizing creams and lotions. (Many [of our products](#) contain HA)

Look for the words "hyaluronic acid" or "sodium hyaluronate", on the ingredient label. Sodium hyaluronate is a salt that is derived from hyaluronic acid. The difference between them is primarily that sodium hyaluronate absorbs into the skin faster than hyaluronic acid. Look for a 1% or higher concentration of hyaluronic acid in your skincare product. Any less, and it's not likely to have much benefit for your skin.

If the skincare product doesn't show the percentage of hyaluronic acid, check that it is within the top 10 ingredients listed on the ingredients label. Further down the list means there isn't a significant concentration present to deliver benefits.

How to Use

You can use a hyaluronic serum morning and evening after cleansing and toning. Apply your moisturizer as the last step (SPF protection will be your last step during the day).

Most people notice a hydrating feeling right after applying HA, but realistically it takes several weeks (or at least 3 skin cycles of 21-40 days for skin cells to renew) to see a noticeable difference. Adding hyaluronic acid to your skincare is a win-win for your skin for better hydration and skin elasticity and tone.

