



**What's aging her:** Pigmentation changes. "In dark skin, melanin is great because it functions as a natural sunscreen. Black skin can provide an SPF of 13, which decreases skin-cancer risk. But melanocytes—the cells that produce the pigment in our skin—are very sensitive. Any trauma to the skin (like acne or tweezing) can result in too much or not enough pigment being produced. So I end up with areas that are too dark or too light. Plus, I have rosacea, which makes my skin sensitive."

**Must-have products:**  
 > **Redness soothers:** Prescription Metrogel and Aveeno Ultra-Calming Daily Moisturizer SPF 15 (1), \$17, at drugstores. "I use Metrogel on my cheeks to minimize rosacea flare-ups. The Aveeno moisturizer contains feverfew to decrease redness and soothe irritated or sensitive skin, plus SPF to protect skin from the sun, which can cause rosacea flare-ups."  
 > **Brightening serum:** Obagi Professional-C Serum 20% (2), \$103, obagi.com for info. "I apply three or four drops to my entire face. The Obagi serum brightens skin to even out the overall tone."  
 > **Exfoliating hand moisturizer:** Glytone Retexturize Body

Lotion SPF 15 (3), \$49, dermstore.com. "Our hands get just as much sun exposure as our face and neck do. As a result, hands often look more wrinkled, dehydrated, and discolored. This contains glycolic acid to gently exfoliate, and it protects against future spots with SPF."

**In-office treatments she swears by:**  
 > **Microdermabrasion:** "I get this every other month, as long as my rosacea is under control—if not, it's too irritating. The exfoliation is superficial, so it removes excess pigment from the top layer of the skin." Cost: \$150  
 > **Electrodesiccation:** "People of color often get hereditary benign 'moles' called dermatosis papulosa nigra on our faces and necks as we get older. This treatment uses an electrical current to burn the moles, which then gradually fall off in a week." Cost: \$200

**Can't wait for...**  
**New over-the-counter treatments for hyperpigmentation:** "Researchers have tested a product that's a combination of ellagic acid, which lightens skin, and salicylic acid, which softens the skin. It should even out skin tone and fade dark spots."



**Jessica Wu, M.D., 45**  
 The author of *Feed Your Face*, Wu is an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the University of Southern California.

**What's aging her:** Dark spots. "A few years ago I started to notice brown spots on my cheeks. I grew up near the beach in Southern California and I never wore sunscreen as a teen, so I'm sure that's where the spots came from. We know the sun's UV rays stimulate skin to make more pigment. Plus, research has shown that Asian women typically develop brown spots and melasma before we get wrinkles. Heredity and hormones can also contribute, which is why women tend to have more discoloration than men do."

**Must-have products:**  
 > **Lightening serum:** La Roche-Posay Mela-D Pigment Control (1), \$53, laroche-posay.us. "I apply a drop or two on my cheeks only, since that's where my sunspots are. It contains kojic acid to reduce excess pigment production, and lipohydroxy acid to exfoliate and slough off any darkness close to the skin's surface."  
 > **Rx-strength fading cream (2):** "Three nights a week, I apply a thin layer of prescription-strength hydroquinone and tretinoin cream to my cheeks. It helps fade any discoloration and dark spots, but can be irritating, so I don't use it every day."

**In-office treatments she swears by:**  
 > **TCA chemical peel:** "It's very popular for treating melasma and sun damage, especially for my patients with darker skin tones. Trichloroacetic acid works by



**Valerie Callender, M.D., 52**  
 Callender practices dermatology in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area and is an associate professor of dermatology at Howard University.

