

Skin and age

It is quite common to associate some medical problems with age. Our healthcare standards recommend testing colonoscopy in patients over 50, having annual or bi-annual check-up of cholesterol, and similar factors associated with possibly deteriorating health.

Skin is no different from other organs and it ages as well. It actually can age quicker due to the permanent exposure to elements and outside conditions.

With age, our skin dries very gradually and we need to help it with larger intake of water and moisturizing several times a day. Applying moisturizer in the morning and in the evening may no longer be enough. Taking care of just the face is definitely not enough. We should moisturize our entire body and especially the parts exposed to the outside conditions.

We also need to re-evaluate our love for sun. While sun is very healthy for some skin conditions like psoriasis, we should not spend time in the sun during the noon hours (11-2) and not for an extended duration. Twenty minute sunbaths in the morning or late afternoon are the most recommended.

Damaging activity of sun rays on our skin is much more visible with age. Several factors might be contributing to the currently frequently seen conditions. First, baby boomers generation (now 60+) did not know much about the sun damage. Most of seniors remember baby oil applications and hours of sun exposure in order to look 'brown'. The better tan the healthier body was the common thought. Not until many years later, it was discovered and popularized that sun actually caused skin cancer if overused in time of exposure. Not until much later, we learned to put a sunscreen on our skin and wear head cover while staying outside.

These days full of suntan are now visible on the aging skin. Conditions like actinic keratosis or basal cell carcinoma are chronic in older population and, if not treated, can cause long-term problems. Medicare part B reports that treatments of those diseases are the most frequent and repeating in seniors 65 and older. Depending on skin type (how quickly you tan and how red you become in the sun), those problems can start much earlier. Not infrequent are signs of aging skin in actinic



keratosis in patients in their 40s, especially those with a very light complexion.

Skin is our largest organ and needs medical care and check-up like any other organ, especially when we are aging. Geriatric dermatology is a particular focus of Dr. Michael Bukhalo at Arlington Dermatology (former Altman Dermatology Associates). Not only over 50% of the practice's patient are 60 years of age or older but Dr. Bukhalo can offer multiple standard and innovative methods in treating older skin and preventing medical problems associated with this process.

Dr. Bukhalo is a leader in developing more effective and less invasive methods of treatments of the signs of aging and can assess your need to receive the type of treatments with a certain frequency. Many of novel methods are available through multiple clinical trials and studies focusing on better utilization of the current medications and proposing some newer medications.

Please, ask us questions about your needs to prevent chronic skin problems. Call 847 392 5440 to find out if you may qualify for a study of some new treatment methods. Participation in the studies is free of charge and might be a good solution for many patients. If you do not qualify, we can assess your needs and present you with many options, depending on your lifestyle and general health.

Maintaining your skin healthy is our goal. Make it your own too!

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