

# HOLD MY HAND, I'M AGING

*No longer can it be said that you can tell a woman's age by her hands...*

**N**o longer can it be said that you can tell a woman's age by her hands; medical science has provided the answers to combat the worst foe to our skin... the sun. We all forget to take care of our hands; exposing them to excessive washing with detergents; toiling away in the garden and in the full sun. How many of us protect and tend to our hands the way we do our face? During the aging process there are many reasons that our hands (and faces) give away our age. As most people know, sun exposure is most likely one of the most poisonous forms of light we can expose our skin to. There are 3 main UV (ultraviolet) rays: UV A, B and C. The differentiation of these rays, is by their wave length and hence the penetration of depth into the skin layers. UVA (wavelength 320-400nm); penetrates deepest into the skin and causes damage at the dermal layer. Dermal, meaning deeper skin layer. UVA, is linked to skin aging, wrinkling, and initiation and exacerbation of skin cancer. UVA can penetrate glass and clouds and hence puts our skin at risk, even when we are indoors or driving. 95% of UV radiation is generated from UVA rays. Anecdotal, I've noticed that if a woman suffers from pigmentation on her cheeks, due to hormones or other factors; the cheek pigmentation is often darker on the side of the car that she sits on. Sun exposure through windows of the car causes or exacerbates pigmentary changes.

UVB is a shorter wavelength (280-320 nanometres), does not penetrate glass and clouds; but is still a potent ray which is also linked to malignant and benign skin tumors such as malignant melanoma. It causes damage to the more superficial layers of the skin, the epidermis, and superficial layers of the dermis.

UVC is the shortest high energy light wave generated by the sun. It is filtered by the ozone layer and usually does not reach the earth's surface. This is obviously where the ozone layer is still intact.

To observe photo damage (damage due to sun rays;) we can simply compare the areas of our skin exposed to the sun (the face, hands, forearms and décolleté-neck and upper chest); as opposed to non-sun exposed areas which undergo the normal physiological aging process. Photo-damaged skin is leathery in texture, more wrinkled and has a lower recoil capacity (elasticity). It is also more fragile, blisters eas-

ily and shows impaired wound healing. These signs are due to changes in the deeper skin layers (dermis). Superficial changes are manifested by increased skin pigmentation (darker areas) and lentigines (also known as "sun spots" or "liver spots").

Younger skin has lots of protein, forming scaffolding under the skin surface. The scaffolding is made of collagen (large proteins); elastin (smaller elastic proteins) and hyaluronic acid (a gelatinous substance holding these proteins together). Hyaluronic acid is what is used in skin fillers, replacing your body's own natural skin thickness and "bounce".

So this all sounds very depressing, "irreversible" and up until recently, pretty much was the case. However, medical science has graciously provided us with ways of reversing and rejuvenating the skin giving us back a youthful skin.

► **Skin fillers** replace the skin thickness and elasticity. This is a simple procedure involving injecting small amounts of filler into the hands. About three injection sites, with local anaesthetic, making the procedure close to painless. Dry ice can then be used to rid the skin of sun spots, at a different sitting. – Dr. Michelle Emmet



► **Chemical peels**, stimulate the skin to produce its own stronger, healthy refreshed cells; to give a smoother texture, less blotchy pigment and reduction of skin wrinkles.... Chemical peels have recently taken the Skincare market by storm and have proven to be a very safe effective way of rejuvenating the skin and decreasing small wrinkles and pigmentation.

► **Laser and Light Treatments** Hand Photo-rejuvenation can be treated with laser and Light procedures, (IPL) or Fractionated Laser. Abnormal cells are destroyed, leaving only healthy tissue. IPL also promotes the growth of collagen, fills in scars and gives skin a youthful



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glow, targeting sunspots, and textural problems.

► **Needling of the Skin** causing minor "trauma" to the skin: stimulates your own cells to naturally produce nutrients, collagen and elastin so your body can repair itself. Treatments like Dermalrolling, Dermapen (the new innovation to skin needling) and Carboxytherapy can improve overall skin rejuvenation, with minimal pain, and no downtime.

*"In my experience hand rejuvenation is best addressed when multiple treatment modalities come together. I recommend peels and IPL to reduce pigmentation. To improve loss of volume I find fillers very effective and for loss of firmness and collagen I highly recommend using Skin needling procedures."* – Lindi Prinsloo

The only way however, to **PREVENT** damage to our skins, is to **STAY OUT OF THE SUN** and wear sunblock which is reapplied repeatedly during the day. And remember to protect your skin even when driving or sitting near a window.

Do you avoid the sun and face the risks of osteoporosis and joint pain? Or do you face the sun and risk skin cancer and early aging?

**Ovelle D3** increases the skins resistance to the effects of harmful ultraviolet radiation by over 80% with added Vit. D, if you are a sun avoider.



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