

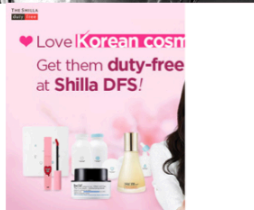
## This Is Why Keeping Your Skin Hydrated Is So Important

JOIE GOH | Published July 14, 2016

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Staying hydrated can prevent practically every type of skin woe – and no, it's not about how much you drink. We delve into the latest products that promise to keep skin quenched 24/7.



Fact: We're made up of around 70 per cent water, so our bodies function best when we're adequately hydrated. Healing and recovery are sped up; common bugs are prevented. It's no surprise then that the same logic applies to skin.

Keep it moisturised and its barrier function gets a boost, becoming less susceptible to problems like acne, pigmentation, sensitivity and premature ageing – issues many women in Singapore are familiar with, notwithstanding the humid climate. After all, the main causes of dehydrated skin here tends to be sun exposure (UV damage slows down skin's metabolism, in turn weakening its barrier function); ageing (slows down sebum production); poor diet (not enough healthy fats, too much alcohol); air conditioning (hands up if you can't live without it), and using products that strip away moisture.

"Well-hydrated skin is one of the most important criteria for healthy skin," says **Dr WS Heng**, a

"Improving hydration makes fine lines and wrinkles appear softer. The skin will generally become more radiant and plump. In some cases, skin sensitivity can also improve."

See: [12 lightweight moisturisers that are great for humid weather \(http://www.femalemag.com.sg/beauty/moisturisers-for-oily-skin/\)](http://www.femalemag.com.sg/beauty/moisturisers-for-oily-skin/)

### On a liquid diet

All this explains why brands are constantly coming up with innovative ways to supply and lock in skin's moisture. To aid this, some companies – particularly those from Japan or South Korea, where hydration is almost an obsession (blame it on the widespread desire for dewy skin, or simply the dry weather) – advocate layering an emulsion before your moisturiser. Shiseido's White Lucent brightening line and Cle de Peau Beauté's revamped basic range, for example, include a two-step moisturising routine for evenings. After cleansing and toning, apply a milky emulsion or lightweight cream, before topping that off with a richer cream like the White Lucent Multibright Night Cream or Cle de Peau's La Crème, meant to seal and lock in moisture.

The most popular ingredient used to keep skin parched, though, is hyaluronic acid – not just in injectable fillers, but also almost every hydrating serum, lotion, moisturiser, cream, mask and makeup. Unlike other acids that have an exfoliating effect, hyaluronic acid is a naturally occurring polysaccharide found in the body, and acts as a cushioning and lubrication agent for joints, nerves, hair, skin and eyes. Supposedly able to hold up to 1,000 times its weight in water when used in skincare, it's also said to stimulate and improve skin's collagen growth and water-binding abilities.



Fresh Research Lab's Rose Deep Hydration Face Serum and Cream (above, \$88 and \$70 respectively), for example, uses a combination of two hyaluronic acids that work together to limit water loss on skin's surface. They also contain what the brand calls "liquid patches" that form a protective network on skin's surface, attracting and sealing in moisture throughout the day. Intensely hydrating yet lightweight, they're reportedly able to penetrate skin to a depth of 500 micrometres (as compared to the usual 10 to 20 micrometres), resulting in epidermal hydration for 24 hours non-stop.

Meanwhile, Restylane, the pioneering creator of hyaluronic acid filler injectables, has launched a six-piece skincare line that includes cleanser, day and night creams, eye care and hand care (from \$50) boasting its patented NASHA (or non-animal stabilised hyaluronic acid) technology adapted for topical use. Since hyaluronic acid produced by the body breaks down after a few days, the company has created a pure, longer-lasting version that forms a silky, hydrating veil over skin to protect its barrier and reduce the appearance of superficial fine lines.



These Biotherm and Restylane products are the latest crop of skincare items that promise to keep skin hydrated 24/7.

Another way that brands maximise absorption of moisturising ingredients: microencapsulation, which essentially means active ingredients are enclosed in a protective coat that allows more efficient delivery to targeted areas. Take Bioderma's Hydrabio range (below) that uses an oil-in-water-in-oil microcapsule structure. The outermost oily layer fuses with the lipids on skin's surface, allowing its watery layer – made of a blend of ceramide-stimulating vitamin PP and humectant glycerine – to reinforce skin's barrier. The innermost oily core, which contains apple seed extract, is then delivered to the basal layer of the skin for even deeper hydration.



Chanel's Hydra Beauty Micro Gel Yeux (above, \$96) uses the same approach, though with microfluidic technology that enables the active ingredients – in this case, the polyphenol-rich camellia and blue ginger extracts – to be encapsulated into microdroplets. These burst when they come into contact with skin to deliver moisture sans oiliness, and supposedly plump up dehydration lines, while stimulating draining and circulation for brighter, smoother eye contours.

And if that's not souped up enough, Biotherm's upgraded Aquasource Everplump (\$55-\$69) taps on the benefits of microencapsulation and hyaluronic acid. Blue Hyaluron, the star ingredient in this luxurious moisturising gel, is encapsulated in an oily outer layer, and supposedly boosts skin's natural hyaluronic acid levels by up to 22 per cent. What this is ultimately meant to do: plump skin from within and smooth lines.

**Photography** Vee Chin **Styling** Imran Jalal **Hair & Makeup** Sha Shamsi, using Tom Ford Beauty **Model** Joo Hyun/Mannequin

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