



TOP 3 ANTI-WRINKLE CREAMS OF 2009

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Worth It or Not? The New Sun Protectors

O, The Oprah Magazine | May 26, 2010

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We all know that topical sunscreen is an absolute must (you're nodding, right?). But what about other products now hitting the shelves that claim to offer extra protection from damaging UV rays? We talked to several top dermatologists to find out what's worth trying (one star = a little lackluster, five = brilliant).



Photo: Marko Metzinger/Studio D

1. UV SunSense and SunSignals UV Sensors

What they are: A wristband and stickers (for your shoulders or forearms) that turn a different color when it's time to reapply sunscreen.

How they work: The products function like transition lenses (which gradually darken when

exposed to light), recognizing UV rays and changing color accordingly.

Why you might want to try them: "They're a constant reminder that you need to use sun protection," says Jeffrey Dover, MD, president of the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery. If you're the forgetful type when it comes to sunscreen, the prompting can't hurt.

Caveat employer: The amount of UV exposure that triggers sunburn varies from person to person. Don't rely solely on these products, and reapply sunscreen every two hours when the sun is strongest (from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Worth it?: ***

2. SunPill and Life Extension Enhanced Fernblock with Sendara

What they are: Daily supplements that help protect against UV damage.

How they work: The pills contain polypodium leucotomos, an antioxidant fern extract that has been shown to inhibit UV-induced free radical molecules that can damage skin cells.

Why you might want to try them: "Oral sun protection can help prevent DNA damage in both the outer and deep layers of skin," says Ariel Ostad, MD, clinical assistant professor of dermatology at New York University Medical Center. The extra insurance is a worthwhile investment if you're heading for a beach vacation or spending a day on the water.

Caveat employer: Though one study found that polypodium leucotomos decreased sunburned skin cells by 27 percent, dermatologists recommend you use the pills in conjunction with broad-spectrum sunscreens.

Worth it?: ***

3. SunGuard

What it is: A powder you add to detergent that coats clothes (imperceptibly) with sunscreen for up to 20 washes.

How it works: SunGuard includes Tinosorb FD, a chemical sunscreen that adheres to fabric and absorbs UV rays before they can reach your skin.

Why you might want to try it: An untreated white T-shirt offers sun protection equivalent to about an SPF 5. Washing it with SunGuard gives it the equivalent of an SPF 30, says Anne Chapas, MD, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at New York University School of Medicine.

Caveat employer: Unless it's your burka you're washing with SunGuard, don't toss your regular sunscreen—continue to apply it to uncovered skin 30 minutes before going outside. (And don't forget the tops of your ears.)

Worth it?: ****

[Find out when to replace your sunscreen](#)



From the June 2010 issue of O, The Oprah Magazine

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