The Rise of Longevity Skincare: Is ‘Skinspan’ the New Healthspan?

8 MIN READ

MAY. 28, 2025

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Inside the growing field of cosmeceuticals designed to extend your skin’s biological youth, not just smooth its surface.

For decades, anti-aging skincare has focused on smoothing wrinkles and plumping skin. But what if we’ve been aiming too shallow? A new wave of “longevity cosmeceuticals” is turning the skincare industry on its head—by targeting the biological roots of aging, not just the surface signs.

Welcome to the era of skinspan, a term that refers to how long your skin stays biologically youthful and functionally resilient. Think fewer fine lines, yes, but also better wound healing, stronger barrier function, and cells that act like they’re decades younger.

The Science of Skin Longevity

According to a 2025 review in ***Frontiers in Aging***, longevity cosmeceuticals differ from traditional anti-aging creams in one critical way: they’re designed to modulate the 12 hallmarks of skin aging broken down into three categories: primary hallmarks, antagonistic hallmarks, and integrative hallmarks. The 12 hallmarks of skin aging are genomic instability, telomere attrition, epigenetic alterations, loss of proteostasis, disabled macroautophagy, mitochondrial dysfunction, cellular senescence, deregulated nutrient sensing, chronic inflammation, altered intercellular communication, stem cell exhaustion, and dysbiosis. These are the same biological processes that drive aging throughout the body, from genomic instability to mitochondrial dysfunction and

cellular senescence.

To qualify as a longevity cosmeceutical, an ingredient or product must:

- Directly target one or more of the 12 hallmarks of aging
- Demonstrably improve skin viability, structure, or function over time
- Be validated through rigorous clinical trials using biomarker-driven endpoints—preferably with post-trial skin biopsies

Understanding these criteria is key, especially in a largely unregulated market where bold claims often outpace real science. “The cosmetic industry, including skin care products that market themselves as anti-aging, is the ‘Wild West’ of medicine,” says **Dr. Sam Fuller, MD**, a board-certified plastic surgeon and medical director of two MedSpas. “Currently, there are limited tracking, regulations, and limitations on what companies can boast as being clinically proven or recommended. Forcing products to clearly demonstrate efficacy, either by using the newer term ‘skinspan’ or by other means, would greatly allow consumers to know the products they are about to purchase are highly researched.”

Ingredients That Go Beyond Moisture

The study found that some compounds are *emerging as promising candidates* for future cosmeceutical development; especially for targeting cellular aging in the skin. More research and formulation testing is needed, but some of these ingredients are already showing up in cosmetics and most are available as supplements. These include:

- **Fisetin** – Clears senescent (zombie) cells, boosts collagen, and reduces UVB-induced damage
- **Spermidine** – Promotes autophagy and supports elasticity and collagen maintenance

- **CaAKG (Calcium alpha-ketoglutarate)** – Reduces inflammation and improves barrier function
- **NMN (Nicotinamide mononucleotide)** – Enhances keratinocyte resilience and supports NAD+ metabolism
- **Astaxanthin & Epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG)** – Antioxidants that protect from oxidative stress and maintain skin elasticity
- **Rapamycin** – Targets aging mechanisms through autophagy enhancement and metabolic regulation
- **Acarbose** – Slows glucose absorption and reducing metabolic stress
- **GlyNAC** – a combination of Glycine (Gly) and N-acetylcysteine (NAC) that enhances mitochondrial function and supports collagen synthesis and antioxidant defense

These ingredients go beyond hydration, aiming to slow or reverse key mechanisms of biological aging in the skin.

A Super Age Guide to the New Longevity Cosmeceuticals

Some of the most exciting ingredients in aging research, like fisetin, EGCG, spermidine, and NMN, are beginning to show up in skincare. But not all products deliver on their promises. In a space where marketing often outpaces evidence, we created this guide to help you separate the science-backed from the hype. Here are four ways to find the formulas that actually support skin longevity at the cellular level.

1. Look for Active Ingredients with Geroscience Backing: Seek products with well-researched compounds like fisetin, spermidine, EGCG, and astaxanthin. These ingredients have demonstrated cellular effects in lab and early clinical models.

Red flag: If a product says “contains NMN” without describing stability or delivery method, be skeptical, because topical NMN degrades quickly. “It is also important to understand what is the maximum dose that can be absorbed or needed for results, so that consumers are not purchasing and receiving higher quantities of medications that will not alter its overall impact,” says Dr. Fuller.

2. Demand Real Clinical Claims Trust products backed by:

- Double-blind, placebo-controlled human trials
- Biopsy or gene expression analysis
- Measurement of markers like TEWL, collagen integrity, or cellular senescence

Red flag: Phrases like “clinically proven” without citations or measurable outcomes. “Unfortunately, ‘clinically proven’ is a very challenging term to analyze. For some products, clinically proven may simply mean a small survey was performed following use. For others, it may be ex vivo or laboratory testing that may not translate into actual human body responses. Erring on the side of caution would be my recommendation, and certainly doing your homework in terms of reading the fine print, discussing new products with your provider, and even finding information online about the product’s rigorous (or lacking) evidence is essential,” says Dr. Fuller.

3. Be Wary of Grandiose Promises No cream can “reverse aging,” but good longevity skincare can:

- Improve barrier function
- Reduce oxidative stress
- Increase collagen synthesis
- Slow degradation of skin structure

Red flag: Vague terms like “reverse your biological age” with no data.

4. Ask These Two Questions Before You Buy:

1. **Does the brand talk about skin *function*, not just appearance?** You could begin using an anti-aging product, and it could look like it's doing its job on the surface—but not on a cellular level. That means that it's targeting wrinkles or skin spots, for example, but it's not reversing aging or preventing aging from happening. Dr. Fuller suggests a stacking strategy. "In other words, as a plastic surgeon I want to combat aging both immediately and long-term. This means actively reducing wrinkles with Botox and energy devices and supplementing volume loss with filler. However, this will not slow or reverse the anti-aging issues at the cellular level. Preventative anti-aging includes wearing sunscreen and moisturizing skin," he says.
2. **Will this support long-term resilience or just give a temporary glow?** Not every skincare product has the same goal. You wouldn't expect sunscreen to get rid of wrinkles, would you? So, think about your skin goals and understand what each product can do for you. Again, it goes back to the stacking strategy where you're tackling short-term and long-term results. "Both temporary glow-up products and long-term anti-aging serums and medications have a role if supported by evidence-based research and safety guidelines," says Dr. Fuller.

Understand Skin's Role in Full-Body Longevity

Skin is your body's largest organ and a key player in immune defense, hormone regulation, and detoxification. Here are other ways to protect your skinspan:

- **Wear a mineral-based sunscreen** with at least sun protection factor (SPF) 30 each day. (**See our review of the best sunscreens that don't contain microplastics**)

- **Moisturize your body and face**, at least once and twice per day, respectively.

- **Eat a well-rounded diet** rich in fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats. **(See the best longevity-boosting foods supported by research**).

- **Drink enough water** to stay hydrated, meaning 15.5 daily cups for men and 11.5 daily cups for women. (Note that these amounts include food sources. See our **guide to hydration for details**.)

- **Get at least seven hours of sleep** each night. (And **explore why sleep timing matters**)

- **Aim for regular exercise** of 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week. (See our **ultimate guide to building muscle** for more.

Brands Leading the Longevity Skincare Space

As longevity cosmeceutical research continues to uncover the cellular mechanisms behind skin aging, we're likely to see a surge of new products formulated with bioactive compounds like NMN, fisetin, spermidine, and EGCG. These ingredients are being studied for their ability to influence aging hallmarks at the molecular level. Here are a few brands already leading the way:

- **OneSkin Peptide OS-01** has OS-01, a senescence-blocking peptide
- **True Botanicals Pure Radiance Oil** uses astaxanthin and other antioxidant botanicals with clinical testing
- **Skinvest Bomb Bum Cream** contains fisetin

- **Perricone MD High Potency Growth Factor Firming & Lifting Eye Serum** is formulated with spermidine

- **Your Best Face Rescue Face Serum** has EGCG
- **Aramore NAD+ Cell Energizing Skin Care Treatment** includes NMN
- **Ordinary Caffeine Solution 5% + EGCG** contains EGCG
- **Codeage NAD+ Face Serum** has NMN

We're still in the early stages of this science-driven skincare revolution. But as "skinspan" becomes a new frontier in longevity, the best products will work to preserve your skin's resilience, structure, and vitality for the long haul.

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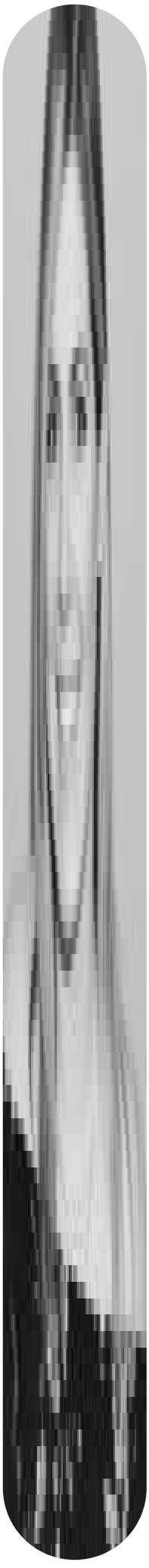

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