

ELLE

BEST PARTY HAIR AND MAKEUP
GET THE LOOKS, GET THEM FAST!

FASHION!
LOOK YOUR BEST AT WORK, IN THE EVENING, AND LATER

CARRIE UNDERWOOD
IDOL'S BIGGEST STAR ON FAME, THAT VOICE, AND THAT OTHER BLOND

250+ IDEAS

THE BAGS, BOOTS, DRESSES, AND JEANS YOU'LL LOVE

GIFT GUIDE: CHEAP AND CHIC!
238 PERFECT PICKS FOR EVERYONE \$5 AND UP

AMERICAN IDOL MAKEOVER

YOU WILL NOT BELIEVE YOUR EYES! THE DAVIDS, BROOKE, SYESHA—

THEY'RE ALL HERE!

BEAUTY ADVENTURE
THE LASER THAT'S BETTER THAN A FACE-LIFT!

FRIENDS WITH MONEY
HOW TO DEAL WHEN YOU'RE THE BROKE ONE

DECEMBER 2008
USA \$3.99
ELLE.COM



GLUCOSAMINE

In their quest for the next It Ingredient, dermatologists often find inspiration in the most unexpected places—Antarctic glaciers, Japanese sake breweries, and, apparently, the orthopedics ward. Take glucosamine, a natural sugar derivative first trumpeted a decade ago for its ability to improve joint pain in arthritis patients. As an oral supplement, the compound has been shown to stimulate the key materials—including hyaluronic acid—that make up new cartilage. Typically, the does-it-all active sloughs dead cells, soothes redness, zaps brown spots, and boosts hydration—making it the skin-care equivalent of Renaissance man Justin Timberlake, except that it's saving your face instead of the entertainment industry.

"Glucosamine gently exfoliates the complexion by encouraging cell turnover," says Oakland, California-based dermatologist Katie Rodan, MD, who cofounded Rodan + Fields skin care. "It allows you to get all the benefits—without the irritation—of an AHA or BHA. As a result, skin is primed to receive active ingredients that follow." But unlike other exfoliants, which typically have a stripping effect, glucosamine strengthens cells' natural moisture barrier. According to two clinical tests conducted by Clinique (which uses the ingredient in its new Medical line), study participants who applied a glucosamine-laced skin-

care regimen for two weeks before receiving a professional IPL laser treatment or a TCA chemical peel experienced less post-treatment redness and showed significant improvement in texture and tone than a control group.

Additionally, glucosamine possesses anti-inflammatory properties that might help cells regenerate faster, increasing the rate of wound-healing. A study published last March in *The Journal of Trauma: Injury, Infection, and Critical Care* found that mice whose wounds were dressed with Poly-N-acetyl glucosamine patches for one hour experienced 90 percent closure nine days earlier than untreated mice. "It remains to be seen whether or not this is true for humans," says Manhattan dermatologist Neil Sadick, MD. "But since glucosamine strengthens cell barriers, it certainly makes sense."

Perhaps the most exciting feature in the ingredient's multitasking repertoire, however, is its potential use as a brown-spot-battling agent: In vitro research suggests that glucosamine could be a potent alternative to hydroquinone. Last year, a double-blind study funded by P&G and published in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology* reported that N-acetyl glucosamine, a more stable version of the substance, reduced the appearance of hyperpigmentation in eight weeks. "We saw a significant improvement on the side of the face



SK-II Signo Wrinkle Serum and Olay Definity Night Anti-Spot Treatment contain P&G's stabilized glucosamine; Clinique Medical Skin Conditioning Treatment preps the face for dermatological procedures.

that was exposed to N-acetyl glucosamine versus the side that received a placebo," says consulting P&G Beauty scientist and study author Donald L. Bissett, PhD. Although not quite as powerful as hydroquinone, glucosamine also inhibits tyrosinase, the key enzyme that causes melanin production. "But it's better tolerated on a variety of skin types," Bissett says.

Skeptics wonder if glucosamine, a particularly large molecule, can penetrate cells deep enough to make a difference in the complexion. "I don't think that's really an issue," Rodan counters. "Where you want it to be is on the skin's surface, because that's where it works best."—ROOPIKA MALHOTRA

All still lifes: Steven Krause

ELLE TOP 5

These smoky eye shadows earned your votes as pre-party must-haves



SKY LIGHTS
"Perfect for creating the wow factor," Chanel *Quadra Eyeshadow* in *Bleu Célestes* has bright shades "to help achieve a fun nighttime look."

CENTER OF ATTENTION
"For sparkle in all the right places," *Smashbox Wicked Lovely Eye Shadow Duo* in *Sinful/Pure* helps "eyes stand out in a crowd."

TALK THERAPY
"For first-timers," *Stila Original Smoky Eye Talking Palette* walks you through "how to get party-ready step-by-step." It's "foolproof fabulousness."

DARK MAGIC
M.A.C Eye Shadow in *Carbon* "really stays on" and the matte finish "easily blends" for the "ultimate dramatic outcome."

PROPER PICK
You love *Revlon Colorstay 12 Hour Eyeshadow* in *Berry Bloom* because it has "four vibrant colors for smoky eyes" but doesn't look "trashy."

Log on to ELLE.com/Top5 to vote for your beauty favorites and view past poll results.