

FACE MAGIC

Does This Vitamin Really Banish Your Pimples?

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You might have heard that retinoids are good for your skin and that they'll magically get rid of all your pimples, but you might not know exactly *how*. They're that mysterious skin-care ingredient that's now in practically everything. As New York dermatologist [Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank](#) puts it, they're “the most useful anti-aging ingredient around.” [Dr. Anne Chapas](#) considers them to be “a first-line agent for acne.”

But how effective are they? In order to whack through the weeds of skin-care folklore, the Cut called dermatologists to find out exactly how retinoids work and how to tell if you need them.

They help get rid of skin blotches, too. Retinoids indirectly assist with hyperpigmentation — darkened spots on the skin caused by acne or general aging. The skin-peeling effect of vitamin A can diminish the appearance of those spots over time. Just don't expect results immediately. “It's like taking an Advil and expecting it to work in a minute,” Dr. Frank says. Try [RoC's Retinol Correxion Max Wrinkle Resurfacing System](#), which in addition to reducing fine lines, also brightens skin.