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MAY 2017



ARE YOU DESTINED TO LOOK LIKE YOUR MOTHER?

Maybe you'd give anything to age as gorgeously as Mom. Maybe there's a trait (cough, varicose veins) you'd just as soon avoid. Either way, doctors say there are clues to reading your beauty future—and taking control of it.

Written by Stacey Colino

When you were a kid, looking at old prom and wedding photos of your mom was mesmerizing. You were getting not only a glimpse into her past but also a preview of how you might look when you grew up. As an adult, you still want to know: Will you age like your mother? We asked dermatologists to reveal how your features are affected by your genes—and to share

the steps you can take today to look great for years to come.

Your Eyes

THE MYTH: Smiling causes crow's-feet.

THE SCIENCE: That's not completely true; it's more about squinting, says Doris Day, MD, clinical associate professor of dermatology at New York University Medical Center and author of *Forget the*

"If you've inherited your mother's ageless looks, you've won the genetic lottery. Adhere to a similar lifestyle and you've got a good chance of aging like she did," says dermatologist Whitney Bowe, MD.

Facelift. Creases around the eyes are more prevalent in women with thin, fair skin. If your mother has crow's-feet and you share her skin tone, you could be at increased risk of developing them, too. But the real culprits are usually sun exposure and repeated squinting, notes Day.

YOUR BEST BETS: Wear sunscreen and sunglasses every day to protect your skin from UV damage. "If you find yourself squinting often while you're inside, you might need glasses, or a different prescription, to reduce the strain on the skin around your eyes," says Whitney Bowe, MD, a dermatologist in New York City. "You should also use a moisturizing eye cream that contains antioxidants to keep the area hydrated and prevent damage from free radicals triggered by the environment." A good one for day: Caudalie VineActiv Energizing and Smoothing Eye Cream (\$39; us.caudalie.com). At night, apply an eye cream with retinol or peptides, which can strengthen and repair skin. Try Roc Retinol Correxion Eye Cream (\$25; ulta.com). If you still develop these fine lines—

and they bother you—talk to your dermatologist about whether Botox or Dysport injections could soften their appearance.

Your Hair

THE MYTH: Hair loss is determined by your maternal grandfather.

THE SCIENCE: Not so, says Joshua Zeichner, MD, director of cosmetic and clinical research in dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. It has more to do with your parents. However, if your mother's hair has thinned, it's not a foregone conclusion that yours will, too. "The risk is higher if you have a mother with female-pattern hair loss," says Jeffrey Epstein, MD, director of the Foundation for Hair Restoration in Miami and New York City. But many factors can affect your chances of hair loss—including the genes inherited from Dad, hormonal abnormalities, nutritional deficiencies, stress, and underlying health conditions, such as anemia and hypothyroidism.

YOUR BEST BETS: Eat a healthy diet rich in iron, zinc, B vitamins, vitamin D, protein, and omega-3 fatty acids. It may help to take a nutritional supplement that's formulated to promote thicker,

fuller hair, says Zeichner. (We like Nutrafol for Women, \$88; nutrafol.com.) You could also try an over-the-counter topical product containing minoxidil (an FDA-approved treatment for hair loss), such as Redken Cerafill Retaliate Minoxidil Topical Solution for Women (\$30; ulta.com). But if you're noticing considerable thinning, see a dermatologist or cosmetic surgeon who specializes in hair loss and can provide a stronger treatment. One option is laser or light therapy, in which visible red light is absorbed by the hair follicle, potentially stimulating growth; another is platelet-rich plasma injections, in which your own plasma is injected into your

scalp so growth factors in the blood encourage your hair to grow.

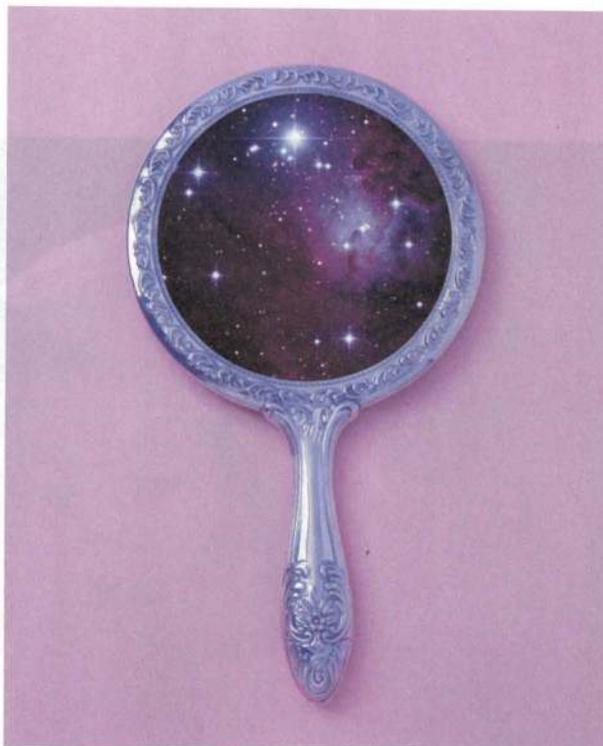
Your Pores

THE MYTH: You can permanently shrink those suckers.

THE SCIENCE: Unfortunately, once pores have expanded (usually from persistent clogging and sun exposure), there's no way to make them disappear, says Day. (You can create some optical illusions, though.) "Pore size is determined by genetics. The more active the sebaceous glands, the larger your pores may appear," says Zeichner. Pores can become even bigger if you have acne, which may also run in the family, or don't take good care of your skin.

YOUR BEST BETS: Clear pores look smaller than clogged ones, so use products that contain salicylic acid or retinol to exfoliate the dead skin cells that line the pores.

Try Proactiv Skin Clearing Water Gel (\$36; amazon.com), which has 2 percent salicylic acid, plus hyaluronic acid to prevent dryness. And wear sunscreen religiously. When the sun damages the collagen in your skin, your pore walls lose elasticity and sag, making pores appear larger. If you have oily skin, act fast when it comes to treating blemishes: The longer oil sits and clogs pores, the more they grow. Use blotting papers to remove oil throughout the day, says Zeichner, such as Too Cool for School Dinoplax Blotting Paper (\$8 for 50 sheets; sephora.com). Also, don't squeeze pores. Doing so leads to inflammation, which makes them bigger. If your pores are extremely noticeable and really annoy you,



consider investing in microneedling. This treatment uses tiny needles to create microscopic wounds in the skin that trigger your body to build new collagen and elastin as part of the natural healing process. "This makes the walls of your pores firmer and appear smaller," says Bowe. "It also helps topical treatments work better."

Your Skin

THE MYTH: Removing a skin tag—a small flap attached to the body by a narrow stalk—will cause more to grow.

THE SCIENCE: That's false, says Day. The one you removed may grow back, though. And if you are prone to skin tags, you will likely develop more, whether you remove one or not. Skin tags tend to run in families. They're incredibly common, says

Bowe: "Almost everyone will develop a few throughout her life." Generally, they occur where skin rubs against itself or against clothing, which is why they often appear around the breasts, neck, and underarm area. If you have more than 30 skin tags, you're at an increased risk of developing diabetes, according to a study published in *Danish Medical Journal* this year.

YOUR BEST BET: See your dermatologist. Some people confuse skin tags with other growths, such as warts, which feel firmer than skin tags. If a skin tag isn't bothering you, there's no need to remove it. But if you want it removed, your doctor can snip it off, says Day. "Don't treat

these yourself!" she urges. "The area can bleed a lot and get infected."

Your Undereyes

THE MYTH: A lack of sleep causes dark circles.

THE SCIENCE: Day says insufficient sleep doesn't actually cause permanent undereye circles, but it does cause temporary changes that make the skin look darker. Natural shadows from deep-set eye sockets, blue veins that show beneath the skin, and darker pigmentation are all things you can inherit from either parent. But your habits matter, too: Sun damage, sleep deprivation, and aggressive eye rubbing can exacerbate undereye circles, says Zeichner.

YOUR BEST BETS: Wear sunscreen daily and protect the area with sunglasses whenever you go outside. Eye creams with

peptides or hyaluronic acid, like Olay Eyes Illuminating Eye Cream (\$27; at drugstores), can prevent or minimize undereye circles. And creams with retinol, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K, niacinamide, or growth factors can help strengthen and thicken the skin, making blood vessels less visible, says Day. Try Dr. Dennis Gross C + Collagen Brighten & Firm Eye Cream (\$65; sephora.com). If you're prone to bluish discoloration, a product that has caffeine, such as 100% Pure Coffee Bean Caffeine Eye Cream (\$25; 100percentpure.com), can constrict the blood vessels beneath the eyes, says Zeichner. A new vitamin K cream from Isdin, called Isdinceutics K-Ox Eyes (\$85; isdin.com), has a similar effect, reducing reddish discoloration and puffiness. Have allergies? Take an antihistamine to reduce symptoms, and avoid rubbing your eyes. Be sure to remove eye makeup gently with a fragrance-free product, like Almay Oil-Free Eye Makeup Remover Liquid (\$6; ulta.com). If all else fails, invest in a good concealer that's the right hue for you. We love Lancôme Teint Idole Ultra Wear Camouflage Concealer (\$31; lancome-usa.com), available in 16 shades.

Your Legs

THE MYTH: You get varicose veins or spider veins by crossing your legs too much.

THE SCIENCE: Doing so won't cause either problem, says Paul Jarrod Frank, MD, a cosmetic dermatologist in New York City. "Bulging blue varicose veins have an enormous genetic component," he says. "They have to do with an inherited weakness in the valves of the blood vessels." The smaller, squiggly purple spider veins are less attributable to genetics; sun damage to fair skin is a bigger factor, says Zeichner.

YOUR BEST BETS: If your mom has bulging veins, you can lessen your risk of having as many by keeping your weight in a healthy range, staying physically active, and never smoking. Avoid sitting or standing for long periods; this causes blood pooling and increased pressure on the veins. "Elevate your legs when you can, and flex and point your feet when you're sitting at your desk to stimulate circulation," says Day. To prevent spider veins, slather legs with a broad-spectrum sunscreen, like Coola Body SPF 30 Body Unscented Moisturizer (\$32; coola-suncare.com), every day they're exposed. If you're unhappy with spider veins or varicose veins, talk to a dermatologist or cosmetic surgeon about injections to minimize their appearance.



MOM KNOWS BEST

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