

THE CUT

SKIN DEEP

Everything You Need to Know About Moisturizing Your Neck

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Despite all of [Nora Ephron's warnings](#), we appear to have forgotten about our necks. Trust Wendy Williams to remind us. After she told the Cut that she [moisturizes from head to toe](#), including the neck, we realized that most of us ... don't do that, and the neck can get ashy too.

It's not entirely our fault that we've been skeptical about neck moisture and the existence of what the beauty industry calls, "neck creams." There are currently 523 facial moisturizers and 223 body moisturizers on sale at Sephora. With the abundance of ways to moisturize your body and face region, neck cream sounds like a scam, designed to incite beauty-related panic over a niche body part. What's next, elbow moisturizer? Ear cream? Behind-the-knee lotion?

But according to dermatologists, Williams and Ephron were onto something. While your neck may not need a [Korean skin-care routine](#), it would benefit from some moisturizer love. Here's why.

Your neck has thin skin.

And it's not just because it's sensitive. Your neck skin has a different cell composition than the other parts of your body — just think about how rare neck pimples are. “Neck skin is different. The dermis is thinner and more prone to wrinkling,” says dermatologist [Dr. Dendy Engelman](#). “When you don't have a thick dermis, there isn't as much [collagen](#) in the skin, and all the support to keep it from wrinkling.” Engelman says your neck skin is about as delicate as the skin on your eyelids.

Your neck is naturally oil-free.

Your neck is missing what Dr. Engelman calls “nature's moisturizer”: Oil. The same substance you frantically try to blot away from your T-Zone is also what gives your skin moisture and youthfulness. Dermatologist Dr. Dan Belkin explains, “The neck has fewer sebaceous glands, which secrete oil. People with more sebaceous glands have better wound healing and fewer signs of aging.” Simply put, moisturized or oiled-up skin looks better than [dry skin](#).

You stick your neck out.

A sheet of muscle called the platysma runs in bands from the jawline to the clavicle. Have you ever strained your neck at the gym by lifting a heavy weight? I mean, me neither, but watch any Instagram video of [the Rock pounding plates at the gym](#) and you'll see the platysma when his neck bulges. The platysma is also exerted when you stick out your chin or make an “Eek” noise. Over time, Dr. Engelman explains that those movements can stretch out the lines of the neck. Bottom line, she says, “Anatomically, we have a lot more going on to accelerate the aging appearance of the neck.”

What do I do?

Luckily, it's pretty simple to perform some acts of prevention. Don't forget to [apply SPF](#) to your neck, first of all. “People usually apply sunscreen to their face and body, but often neglect to apply it to their neck,” says [Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank, Madonna's dermatologist \(really.\)](#) He cites the neck as a primary aging concern for many of his patients in their mid-40s and 50s.

Also, splash some lotion below your chin. “If there's rough, dull texture to the skin, bring moisture in so that the cells in this layer can lay more uniform and flat, and have a more luminous texture,” explains Dr. Belkin. Dr. Engelman suggests applying both sunscreen and moisturizer from mid-chest to your hairline.

Most dermatologists agree that any kind of moisturizer will suffice. Since the neck area lacks sebaceous glands, even the rich body moisturizers work fine and won't break out your neck. That said, neck-specific creams or face creams that will stimulate elastin and collagen are “better,” says Dr. Engelman. Here are several ones recommended by dermatologists and online reviewers that won't make you feel like you're wearing a turtleneck of lotion.