

acne lesions, including hyperpigmentation and scarring. Tretinoin, the generic name for synthetic retinoic acid, is a prescription drug that is available in different strengths and is investigated more than any other retinoid in the treatment of photoaging. This wonder drug is shown to improve conditions of mottled hyperpigmentation, skin texture, sallowness, and laxity.

**Cons:** Tretinoin can cause retinoid reaction, which includes erythema, scaling, transepidermal water loss, photosensitivity, and irritation. If the client does experience a reaction, it can be addressed by consulting with their physician to discuss the various strengths available, frequency of use, or by switching to a less active retinoid.

Retinoids are extremely popular for good reason. They are effective in treating skin concerns, including wrinkles, hyperpigmentation, laxity, and acne. Retinol is excellent for those who want to use an over-the-counter ingredient that is milder than retinaldehyde and retinoic acid but takes longer to see results. Retinaldehyde is a perfect choice for those who do not want to use a prescription drug but still want to obtain the benefits of a retinoid. This ingredient is gentler than retinoic acid but stronger than retinol. Retinoic acid (tretinoin) is a prescription drug and the strongest and most widely studied of the retinoid family. It is an ideal option for those who can tolerate the side effects, which can vary from person to person. Tretinoin is considered the leading standard for addressing photoaged skin and acne vulgaris. There are different retinoids for everyone, based on their tolerance and commitment level. Retinoids are a vital ingredient for a daily care regimen for healthy, youthful looking, clear skin.

## Is H<sub>2</sub>O a No Go?

### WHY WATERLESS SKIN CARE PRODUCTS ARE TRENDING

**W**ith the many alternative skin care products on the market, waterless skin care products are finally making their debut within western societies. Popular in Korean skin care routines, waterless skin care gives consumers the option to use products that leave out the 70% of water found in most lotions and creams. These waterless skin care products allow for the remaining 30% to become the main attraction of the product, while simultaneously giving the user the real ingredients that skin craves.

Despite popular belief, water-based skin care products can take away from the hydration of skin. Skin naturally releases oils to aid in protection against foreign and unwanted elements, and, therefore, can deliver vitamins and antioxidants to the epidermis in order to keep skin hydrated and moisturized. Adding too many water-based products to the skin can sometimes cause more harm than good. Water-based products can, in some cases, strip away the natural oil barrier that the skin holds in place. As the water-based products evaporate off the skin, it can also take the skin's natural oils with it. And, while hydrating skin is of utmost importance, some waterless products can be just as beneficial to the skin.

Waterless products contain pure, potent botanical extracts and oils as their base instead of water. The non-dilution of the product allows for less filler and other hydrating ingredients, like aloe vera extract, hyaluronic acid, honey, marine extracts, or, of course, alpha hydroxy acids. Some skin care professionals recommend using waterless skin care and beauty products so that the skin can drink up the potent ingredients contained inside the product. Almost all skin types can benefit from using some waterless-based products in their regimen. Skin care professionals may also recommend a client try waterless products to help them achieve brighter, firmer, or clearer-looking skin if they find their water-based products are too diluted or not potent enough.

While water-based products do benefit most skin care needs, it is important to keep in mind that most skin care and beauty products use water due to its affordability as an emulsifier and filler. Waterless-based products are great for professionals and clients who want to see results with a concentrated dose of active ingredients that are not watered down. Some may find waterless products to be more hydrating if they are oil-based or contain waxes or balms, but this may be the case for only certain skin types, as others may find them to be too greasy or not a right fit for their skin type. It is important to keep this in mind when recommending water-based or waterless products to clients, as their specific skin type may not adhere to one or the other.