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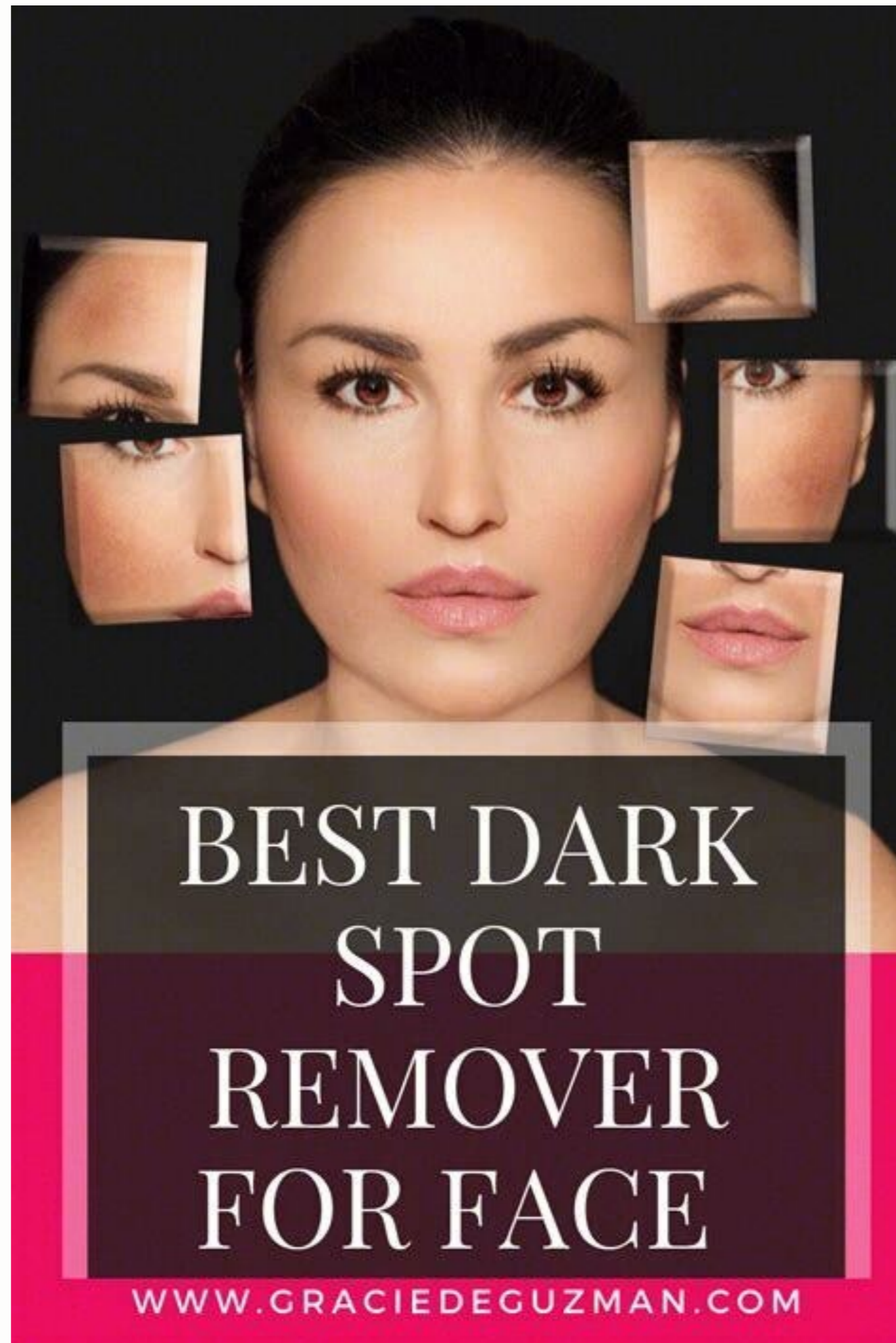
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## Dark spot remover for face

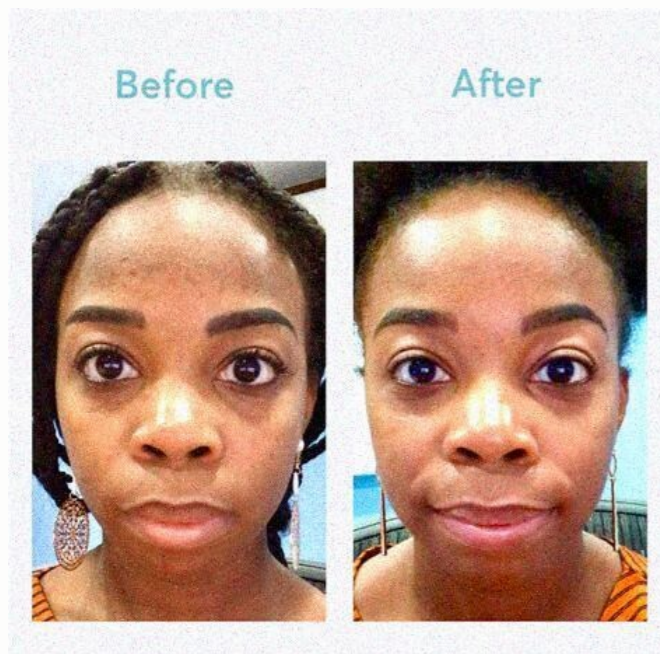
Dark spots on the skin, or hyperpigmentation, occur due to an overproduction of melanin. Melanin gives the eyes, skin, and hair their color. Dark spots on the skin are not a cause for concern and do not need treatment, though people may choose to remove them for cosmetic reasons.



The condition is more common in women, especially during pregnancy. According to the American Academy of Dermatology, hormones may trigger melasma. Medication side effects Certain medications can increase skin pigmentation and lead to dark spots. The most common culprits are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), tetracyclines, and psychotropic drugs. Inflammation Dark spots can develop after a bout of inflammation on the skin. Inflammation may occur for various reasons that include eczema, psoriasis, injury to the skin, and acne. Wound healing Dark spots may remain after an insect bite, burn, or cut heals. These may fade with time. Irritation Cosmetic skin or hair products can irritate the skin, causing dark patches to form. Diabetes Diabetes can cause areas of the skin to become darker. Conditions associated with diabetes include acanthosis nigricans, which causes darkened, velvety skin, and shin spots or diabetic dermopathy, which people may confuse with age spots. Share on Pinterest Laser treatment can remove dark spots on the skin. Dark spots on the skin do not require treatment, but some people may want to remove the spots for cosmetic reasons. A dermatologist can offer creams or procedures to lighten dark spots, or in some cases, remove them. Procedures are more expensive than creams and are more likely to cause side effects, though they tend to work faster. The best treatment option may depend on the cause, the size of the dark spot, and the area of the body. A dermatologist may recommend one of the following treatments for dark spots on the skin: Laser treatment Different types of lasers are available.



Deep color changes often appear blue or gray, though a spot may also be a much darker brown than a person's natural skin color. There are several different causes of dark spots, as we describe here: Sun damage Also called sunspots, solar lentigines, or liver spots, people can develop dark spots on their skin after being exposed to the sun or tanning beds. Areas of the body that receive the most sun exposure, such as the face, hands, or arms, are most likely to develop sun spots. Hormonal changes Melasma is a skin condition that leads to small patches of skin discoloration. The condition is more common in women, especially during pregnancy. According to the American Academy of Dermatology, hormones may trigger melasma. Medication side effects Certain medications can increase skin pigmentation and lead to dark spots. The most common culprits are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), tetracyclines, and psychotropic drugs. Inflammation Dark spots can develop after a bout of inflammation on the skin. Inflammation may occur for various reasons that include eczema, psoriasis, injury to the skin, and acne. Wound healing Dark spots may remain after an insect bite, burn, or cut heals. These may fade with time. Irritation Cosmetic skin or hair products can irritate the skin, causing dark patches to form. Diabetes Diabetes can cause areas of the skin to become darker. Conditions associated with diabetes include acanthosis nigricans, which causes darkened, velvety skin, and shin spots or diabetic dermopathy, which people may confuse with age spots. Share on Pinterest Laser treatment can remove dark spots on the skin. Dark spots on the skin do not require treatment, but some people may want to remove the spots for cosmetic reasons. A dermatologist can offer creams or procedures to lighten dark spots, or in some cases, remove them. Procedures are more expensive than creams and are more likely to cause side effects, though they tend to work faster. The best treatment option may depend on the cause, the size of the dark spot, and the area of the body. A dermatologist may recommend one of the following treatments for dark spots on the skin: Laser treatment Different types of lasers are available. The most common laser to treat dark spots on the skin uses an intense pulse light laser. The light targets melanin and breaks up the dark spots. Microdermabrasion During microdermabrasion, a dermatologist uses a special device that has an abrasive surface to remove the outer layer of the skin. This treatment promotes new collagen growth, which may help reduce spots. Chemical peels A chemical peel involves applying a solution to the skin, which exfoliates the surface, leading to new skin growth. It may gradually fade dark spots on the skin. Cryotherapy Cryotherapy is a procedure that involves applying liquid nitrogen to the dark patches to freeze them, which injures the skin cells.



The spots are the same texture as the skin and are not painful. Dark spots also vary in size and can develop on any part of the body but are most common in areas often exposed to the sun. Dark spots are common in the following areas: back of the hands, face, back, shoulders. In people with darker skin, a spot that is a few shades darker than the skin usually fades away within 6 to 12 months. Deeper coloration can take years to fade. Deep color changes often appear blue or gray, though a spot may also be a much darker brown than a person's natural skin color. There are several different causes of dark spots, as we describe here: Sun damage Also called sunspots, solar lentigines, or liver spots, people can develop dark spots on their skin after being exposed to the sun or tanning beds. Areas of the body that receive the most sun exposure, such as the face, hands, or arms, are most likely to develop sun spots. 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Injectable skin lightening products are available, but the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) do not recommend them. There is not enough evidence to suggest that they work, and there may be associated health risks. In addition to dermatological procedures and prescription medications, people may find that some home remedies might fade dark spots on the skin, as the following sections discuss. Over-the-counter creams Over-the-counter skin creams to lighten skin are not as strong as prescription medications, but they may also work. Creams and serums contain various ingredients, including retinol or alpha hydroxy acid, which may speed up the exfoliation of the skin and promote new skin growth. When looking for a skin-lightening cream, always choose one recommended by a dermatologist, as some products can be harmful. Natural remedies Products with certain natural ingredients may help treat dark spots on the skin. Researchers published a systematic review of clinical studies that used natural products to treat dark spots on the skin. They looked at several ingredients including niacinamide (a form of vitamin B-3), soy, licorice extracts, and mulberry. Although studies were limited, the researchers said that these natural treatments showed promise in lightening hyperpigmentation. Results of a small-scale 2017 study suggest that applying an aloe vera gel to the skin could help reduce melasma during pregnancy after 5 weeks. Cosmetics Although cosmetics do not lighten dark spots, they might cover them up. People can consider using a cream-based concealer to decrease the appearance of spots. People may wish to keep in mind that many of the home remedies that webpages recommend may have side effects or no evidence of effectiveness.



The color of dark spots may depend on the tone of a person's skin. The spots are the same texture as the skin and are not painful. Dark spots also vary in size and can develop on any part of the body but are most common in areas often exposed to the sun. Dark spots are common in the following areas: back of the hands, face, back, shoulders. In people with darker skin, a spot that is a few shades darker than the skin usually fades away within 6 to 12 months.



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Share on Pinterest: Laser treatment can remove dark spots on the skin. Dark spots on the skin do not require treatment, but some people may want to remove the spots for cosmetic reasons. A dermatologist can offer creams or procedures to lighten dark spots, or in some cases, remove them. Procedures are more expensive than creams and are more likely to cause side effects, though they tend to work faster. The best treatment option may depend on the cause, the size of the dark spot, and the area of the body. A dermatologist may recommend one of the following treatments for dark spots on the skin: Laser treatment: Different types of lasers are available. The most common laser to treat dark spots on the skin uses an intense pulse light laser. The light targets melanin and breaks up the dark spots. Microdermabrasion: During microdermabrasion, a dermatologist uses a special device that has an abrasive surface to remove the outer layer of the skin. 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They looked at several ingredients including niacinamide (a form of vitamin B-3), soy, licorice extracts, and mulberry. Although studies were limited, the researchers said that these natural treatments showed promise in lightening hyperpigmentation. Results of a small-scale 2017 study suggest that applying an aloe vera gel to the skin could help reduce melasma during pregnancy after 5 weeks. Cosmetics: Although cosmetics do not lighten dark spots, they might cover them up. People can consider using a cream-based concealer to decrease the appearance of spots. People may wish to keep in mind that many of the home remedies that webpages recommend may have side effects or no evidence of effectiveness. Examples include lemon and apple cider vinegar. No studies back the claims that these treatments work. In some cases, unproven treatments may aggravate the skin. For example, the American Society for Dermatological Surgery do not recommend lemon juice or abrasive scrubs, as these methods could make dark spots worse. Some skin lightening products can do more harm than good. Many contain ingredients that can harm the skin or overall health, such as mercury or steroids. Applying these can cause pimples, rashes, and fragile skin over time. Share on Pinterest: A doctor or dermatologist may use a Wood's lamp skin exam to diagnose dark spots on the skin. A doctor or dermatologist can often work out the cause of dark spots on the skin by examining them and taking a medical history. During a physical exam, the healthcare professional might perform a Wood's lamp skin exam, where they view the spots through a special device that emits black light. In some instances, specific characteristics of a spot might require more tests to make sure skin cancer is not causing the spot. Anyone can develop dark spots on the skin. Certain risk factors appear to increase a person's chances including: sun exposure, pregnancy, skin conditions, such as acne, eczema, or psoriasis, trauma or injury to the skin, medications that increase pigmentation, liver disease, diabetes, but not always be possible to prevent dark spots on the skin from developing. For example, hormonal changes during pregnancy that may lead to melasma are not preventable. There are, however, a few things people can do to decrease the chances of dark spots and prevent them from getting darker: Use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 every day, even when the sun is not bright. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses to protect the skin further. Treat skin conditions, such as acne, which may lead to inflammation. Avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when it tends to be strongest. In most cases, dark spots on the skin are not harmful. But in some instances, it might be hard to tell the difference between a dark spot and other skin changes, such as melanoma, which is a type of skin cancer. People who are unsure what a dark spot is or have not been able to get rid of it can see a doctor to find out more. It is important to talk to a doctor if any dark spot on the skin appears suddenly, itches, stings, bleeds, changes color, or size. Learn about how to identify melanoma and other forms of skin cancer here. Dark spots on the skin, or hyperpigmentation, can have a range of causes. They are usually harmless and do not need treatment. If a person wants to get rid of dark spots, they can try a range of treatments, including working with a dermatologist for cosmetic procedures or using over-the-counter products. The effectiveness of treatment may depend on the cause of the dark spots and their extent. Dark spots on the skin may not completely fade. It may take a while to see a difference, but treatment often lightens the spots. Read the article in Spanish. Last medically reviewed on March 29, 2019. DermatologyCosmetic Medicine / Plastic SurgerySeniors / AgingMedical News Today has strict sourcing guidelines and draws only from peer-reviewed studies, academic research institutions, and medical journals and associations. We avoid using tertiary references. We link primary sources — including studies, scientific references, and statistics — within each article and also list them in the resources section at the bottom of our articles. You can learn more about how we ensure our content is accurate and current by reading our editorial policy. 1Best Overall Dark Spot Corrector Cream1Best Overall Dark Spot Corrector CreamCredit: AvonProsMeasurably fades dark spotsEffectively firms and hydrates skin Boosts radianceConsContent may be polarizingAvon's cream with high levels of glycolic acid showed stellar performance in GH Beauty Lab testing, earning a perfect score for helping reduce the appearance of UV spots by an impressive 12%, plus top rankings for improving skin firmness and hydration. Several testers noted that it gave their skin a glow, though some commented that they didn't like the "strong perfume scent." "It really diminished the look of age spots and kept skin well moisturized at night," one commented. Key ingredients: Glycolic acid, peptidesProduct type: CreamSize: 1.7 oz. 2Best Value Dark Spot Corrector2Best Value Dark Spot CorrectorCredit: L'OréalParisFirms skin and reduces wrinklesMeasurably fades dark spotsContains SPFConsScent was too strong for someThis all-in-one daily moisturizer with SPF 30 sunscreen from Roc was the consumer favorite in the GH Beauty Lab's anti-aging day cream test and scored high for reducing visible spots by 4.5%, over four weeks in Lab measurements. Testers gave it the best marks for softening, firming and reducing wrinkles, and a few said it was perfect for wearing under makeup. "It left my skin feeling plump and looking smooth and glowing," one said, and another noted that it seemed to have lightened her brown spots. A few users weren't fans of the product's "strong" scent. Key ingredients: Vitamin C, resorcinolProduct type: LotionSize: 1.7 oz. Advertisement - Continue Reading Below4Best Lightweight Dark Spot Corrector4Best Lightweight Dark Spot CorrectorCredit: VersedProsContains several ingredients to target hyperpigmentationTargeted applicatorLight gel textureConsMay feel sticky when appliedThis GH Beauty Award winner from Versed contains a potent blend of ingredients (kojic acid, niacinamide, licorice root extract, tranexamic acid), balanced by botanicals like aloe and orange fruit water, that work to fade hyperpigmentation. In an eight-week trial of this "lightweight" spot treatment, 85% of users agreed that it minimized the look of dark spots. GH Beauty Lab data evaluation confirmed. A gel formulation, some reviewers found that it was tacky upon application. Key ingredients: Kojic acid, niacinamide, licorice extract, tranexamic acidProduct type: GelSize: 0.5 oz. ProsImproves dark spots and brightensMeasurably moisturizes skinConsSome users said it irritated their skinTo moisturize skin and reduce dark spots at the same time, smooth on this Good Housekeeping Seal star Olay face cream made with brightening antioxidant vitamin C and niacinamide. It significantly improved dark spots and brightness, plus increased skin's hydration by 31% over six hours after four weeks, GH Beauty Lab data evaluation confirmed. (A caveat: Some reviewers noted that it caused irritation.) In a 180-woman study, 91% said their skin had a healthy glow after five days of use. Key ingredients: Vitamin C, niacinamideFormula: CreamSize: 1.7 oz. 6Best Dark Spot Corrector for Sensitive Skin6Best Dark Spot Corrector for Sensitive SkinNow 29% OffCredit: OlayProsPotent levels of vitamin CFragrance-freeGood valueConsThe dropper may cause product to leak outBacked by the Good Housekeeping Seal, Olay's serum is supercharged with high levels of skin tone-evening vitamin C and free of fragrance for those with sensitivities. In a split-face study, imaging analysis showed significant improvement in spots and evenness in skin tone and color starting after two weeks of use, GH Beauty Lab data evaluation found. A caveat: Some users had difficulty with the dropper and excess product leaking out. Key ingredients: Niacinamide, vitamin CProduct type: SerumSize: 1.3 oz. Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowProsMeasurably reduces dark spotsHighly moisturizingConsMay be too thick for someA standout night cream in the GH Beauty Lab's test, Algernon was the best at minimizing the look of dark spots (by 10.5%) in calculations with the Lab's Visia Complexion Analyzer device. It also earned the highest moisturization scores from consumers and boosted skin's hydration by 33% over six hours in Corneometer machine measurements. Though some didn't like the formula's thickness, one tester reported it "really is removing my dark spots." Key ingredients: Vitamin C, peptidesProduct type: CreamSize: 2 oz. ProsImproves skin discoloration Boosts radianceConsMay sting when applied Pipette's translucent gel exfoliating mask, a GH Beauty Award winner, is left on overnight to illuminate skin using lactic acid and citrus extracts. In a study, 82% of users agreed that it improved the look of discoloration and gave skin a healthy glow. Lab data analysis confirmed. Note that it could sting a bit upon application, some users commented. Key ingredients: Lactic acid and malic acidsFormula: GelSize: 2 oz. ProsHelps fade dark marksTargeted applicatorConsSome users commented that it took a long time to see resultsThe slim, pointed applicator of this Rodan + Fields treatment helps zero in on specific dark spots. "It has faded a sunspot on my face noticeably over two months of use," GH Beauty Lab Senior Chemist Sabina Wizemann revealed. (Note that some reviewers complained they didn't see results quickly when using this.) "It contains known ingredients that can combat dark spots, including niacinamide and licorice root extract," she explains. Key ingredients: Niacinamide, licorice root extractFormula: SerumSize: 0.5 oz. Advertisement - Continue Reading Below10Best Dermatologist-Recommended Dark Spot CorrectorProsContains several dark spot-minimizing ingredientsAntioxidant effectsConsExpensiveCaused breakouts for a few usersRecommended by both Dr. Turegano and Dr. Parks, SkinMedica's serum is made with a plethora of proven dark spot-reducing ingredients, including tranexamic acid, niacinamide, phenylethylresorcinol and phytic acid. "It addresses discoloration and hyperpigmentation of the skin and reveals a brighter, more even complexion," Dr. Parks says. Note that a few users reported bumps or breakouts after application. Key ingredients: Niacinamide, tranexamic acidProduct type: SerumSize: 2 oz. ProsEffectively brightens skinTone smooths skinTester favoriteConsTubes can be tricky to openDermatologist's professional-level lactic acid peel was the best at brightening skin in the GH Beauty Lab's face peel test. An impressive 100% of testers agreed that it brightened their skin, improved skin tone and left skin looking smoother. All reported they'd use it again, although the tubes can be difficult to open. It also performed impressively at boosting skin's radiance. "My skin immediately felt so smooth and looked even and bright," and "it seemed to lighten brown spots," two testers reported. Key ingredient: Lactic acidProduct type: Exfoliating liquidSize: 0.1 oz., per tube (10 tubes total)ProsMeasurably minimized dark spotsNot irritatingConsSome users didn't love the foam textureEffectively tackle dark spots with the anti-aging ingredient retinol in this GH Beauty Award-winning Kate Somerville serum, which dispenses as a foam to accelerate absorption. In GH Beauty Lab digital imaging tests with the Visia Complexion analyzer, it reduced UV spots by nearly 10% over four weeks of use, yet wasn't irritating as some retinol treatments can be. "My dark spots are fading," and "It lightened my melasma," two testers reported. Several commented on how the formula evened their skin tone, though the unique mousse-like texture was polarizing. Key ingredients: Retinol, hyaluronic acidFormula: Foam serumSize: 2.5 oz. Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowProseffectively brightens skin and boosts radianceVisible effects for daysCan be used on body skinConsSingle-useIn the GH Beauty Lab's face peel test, Philosophy's individually-packed pads, which can also be used on the body, earned the top score for brightening skin according to consumer testers and ranked highly for evening skin tone. Great for use before a special event, a few testers found their skin glowing for days after application. "After each use, my skin looked brighter for two days," one said. "It also felt softer and smoother." Key ingredients: Glycolic, mandelic and malic acids; niacinamideProduct type: Exfoliating padsQuantity: 12ProsMade with 20% brightening vitamin CTargets hyperpigmentation on dark skin tonesConsCould cause irritationFrom BeautyStat, a Black-owned brand created by cosmetic chemist Ron Robinson, this multi-benefit serum contains a high 20% concentration of the gold standard brightening ingredient vitamin C, especially beneficial for dark skin tones that are prone to hyperpigmentation. Though it hasn't been tested by the GH Beauty Lab, reviewers swear by it: "Helps combat dark spots, breakouts, signs of aging," a Skinstore reviewer reported. "It's a miracle product that truly tackles it all." Note that a few users found the texture too rich and that it irritated their skin. Key ingredients: Vitamin C, green teaProduct type: SerumSize: 1 oz. 15Best Dark Spot Corrector Serum15Best Dark Spot Corrector SerumCredit: BiopelleProsPacked with proven brightening ingredientsAnti-aging benefitsConsPriceyMamma Turegano, M.D., a dermatologist in Metairie, Louisiana and co-founder of Skintap.com recommends this multipurpose Biopelle serum, which is blended with both dark spot-fading and anti-aging ingredients. Though it is a splurge, the treatment is packed with active ingredients: "It contains kojic acid, niacinamide, retinol and vitamin C to help with dark spots," she says. "The formula also has peptides to help rejuvenate the skin." Key ingredients: Niacinamide, retinol, vitamin C, kojic acidProduct type: SerumSize: 1 oz. Advertisement - Continue Reading Below16Best Dark Spot Corrector for Acne ScarsProsFormulated for dark spots from breakoutsTargets individual spotsConsSingle-useOne box may not deliver desired resultsThese innovative ZitSticka patches, infused with a laundry list of brightening ingredients like niacinamide, vitamin C, arbutin, licorice root extract and kojic acid, pinpoint and tackle dark marks from acne. Know that the kit includes four sets of patches to be used over the course of two weeks, and some users didn't see results during that time period since dark spot correctors often require a longer period for benefits to be noticeable. "They work really well for hyperpigmentation after acne, and I like how targeted they are, so you can ensure they're working on the area you want them to," says GH's former beauty assistant. Key ingredients: Niacinamide, vitamin C, arbutin, licorice root extract, kojic acidProduct type: PatchesSize: 0.12 oz. 17Best Dark Spot Corrector for WrinklesProsMinimizes lines and firmsBrightens skinConsPriceyA few testers said it didn't feel hydrating on skinTreat dark spots on the face and wrinkles simultaneously with this serum from dermatologist-recommended brand SkinCeuticals, a winner of the GH Beauty Lab's anti-aging serum test. Not only was it the best at reducing the look of fine lines and wrinkles in Lab evaluations, at-home testers raved that it was the best at firming skin and a great skin brightener. It's formulated with 5% niacinamide, which Beauty Lab chemists say has been shown to brighten skin, improving hyperpigmentation. "My skin tone appears more even," a tester reported. Though it's not a moisturizer, a few commented that it wasn't hydrating enough. Key ingredients: Niacinamide, peptidesProduct type: SerumSize: 1.7 oz. 18Best Exfoliating Dark Spot Corrector18Best Exfoliating Dark Spot CorrectorCredit: La PrairieProsExfoliates and smooths skin with powerful activesBrightens and boosts radianceConsExpensiveMay be difficult to rinse off skinA GH Beauty Lab face peel test winner, La Prairie's fast-acting formula with a potent blend of exfoliating lactic, glycolic and salicylic acids is splurge-worthy. It scored highest in Lab digital imaging evaluations for improving radiance and earned some of the highest scores for brightening skin (though some testers commented that it took effort to rinse off). My skin looked brighter as soon as I washed it off — my family even noticed!" one revealed. Key ingredients: Glycolic, salicylic and lactic acidsProduct type: Exfoliating creamSize: 1.4 oz. Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowTo find the best dark spot corrector products, GH Beauty Lab scientists conduct both rigorous clinical and consumer testing, recruiting women of all ages and skin types to assess the products' results after at home use. In the Lab, their skin is scanned with the Visia Complexion Analyzer machine to measure changes in the size and count of dark spots, plus pores, skin texture and lines and wrinkles before and after weeks of use, as pictured. Consumer testers also report their feedback on factors like ease of use, cosmetic properties (i.e. texture, scent), application and the look and feel of their skin following the testing period. The clinical and consumer data is then tallied to find the products that really perform. When shopping for dark spot correcting treatments, which can include serums, moisturizers and exfoliators like peels, our experts suggest you look for trends directly addressing dark spots or "brightening" and "skin tone-evening" on the packaging. Dr. Parks recommends seeking out formulas that contain skincare ingredients like: Vitamin C, an antioxidant that brightens skin. Niacinamide (a.k.a. vitamin B3), which slows pigment production. Retinol and alpha or beta hydroxy acids (like glycolic and salicylic acids), which increase skin cell turnover to get rid of hyperpigmented cells. Tranexamic acid, kojic acid, alpha-arbutin, cysteamine, azelaic acid, resorcinol, soy and licorice root extract can also lessen hyperpigmentation. Dr. Turegano says - Hydroquinone, which "interrupts melanin synthesis to even tone," says Sara Hogan, M.D., a dermatologist in McLean, Virginia. (Note that this ingredient is only available by prescription.) April FranzinoBeauty DirectorApril (she/her) is the beauty director at Good Housekeeping, Prevention and Woman's Day, where she oversees all beauty content. She has over 15 years of experience under her belt, starting her career as an assistant beauty editor at GH in 2007, and working in the beauty departments of SELF and Fitness magazines. Birnur K. Aral, Ph.D. Beauty, Health & Sustainability Lab Executive DirectorBirnur (she/her) has led the Beauty, Health and Sustainability Lab at the Good Housekeeping Institute since 2007. In addition to overseeing product testing and GH Seal applications, she conducts the brand's annual Beauty Awards selection process and is an active leader in GH's green initiatives, including the Sustainable Innovation Awards and Rise the Green Bar Summit. In addition to earning M.Eng. and Ph.D. degrees in chemical engineering, she recently earned a professional certificate in sustainability management from Columbia University. Tested by Danusia WnekSenior ChemistDanusia (she/her) is a senior chemist in the Beauty, Health and Sustainability Lab at the Good Housekeeping Institute where she evaluates haircare, skincare, cosmetics and beauty tools. She holds a B.S. in chemistry from St. John's University and a M.S. in pharmaceutical sciences with concentration in cosmetic science from the University of Cincinnati. Danusia has over 10 years of experience in the personal care industry including formulation, product development, claim evaluation and efficacy testing. Watch Next