



# YOUR SKIN'S SECRET WEAPON

Experts share why niacinamide is the latest 'It' ingredient  
By Emily MacCulloch

If you've been scrolling through beauty feeds on Instagram, you may have noticed one word popping up with increasing frequency: niacinamide. Complexion-conscious stars like Kaia Gerber and Hailey Bieber swear by the do-it-all ingredient, which tackles some of the most common concerns, including dark spots and large pores. And you know something has attained star status once it gets name-checked on the front of a bottle or jar!

While trending now, niacinamide isn't new. "It's been around forever," says Dr. Kavita Mariwalla, a U.S. double board-certified dermatologist and member of the

IT Cosmetics Advisory Board. She attributes its resurgence in popularity not just to its efficacy – "it's a tried-and-true ingredient that can be trusted to deliver" – but to the fact that content creators and celebrities alike have been doing their research, especially during lockdowns when spas and clinics were closed.

Those in the know are already aware that niacinamide is a form of vitamin B3 (niacin) and is right up there with skin-care heavy hitters like retinol and vitamin C. However, the essential water-soluble vitamin is not synthesized in the body, meaning we have to eat or apply it topically to receive its

benefits. These topical forms have been found to reduce redness, regulate oil production, minimize the appearance of fine lines and lighten dark patches, according to Joanna Auguste, esthetic nurse practitioner and owner of the Face Lab in Toronto. Dr. Mariwalla, meanwhile, recommends it for overall skin smoothness as well as reducing hyperpigmentation and large pores.

If you're intrigued by this new-to-you skin-care ingredient (and frankly, you should be!), we're breaking down the top tips on how to add niacinamide to your daily routine to make 2022 your most radiant year yet.

## JUST DO IT

Unlike other active ingredients such as exfoliating AHAs that can be difficult to incorporate into a skin-care routine because of their potential to irritate sensitive skin, niacinamide is decidedly simpler. One of the biggest pros of the in-demand ingredient is that it's versatile, meaning it can work with all skin types and tones to address a long list of concerns. "It has been shown to reduce excess oil production and inflammation in acne-prone skin, brighten skin in people with hyperpigmentation and reduce water loss and support a stronger barrier in dry skin types," explains Joanna. So, no matter if you're dry, oily or somewhere in-between, you can reap the benefits of niacinamide. Not only is it a safe bet for all types of skin, but niacinamide also plays nicely with other ingredients, including vitamin C and retinol, which means it's unlikely to cause irritation when layered with other steps in your routine.

## KNOW YOUR PERCENTAGES

Since niacinamide was used for years in skin care before it became trendy, it's common to spot it on ingredient lists if you start looking at your daily lineup. But it's all about finding the right percentage for your skin to really reap its skin-boosting benefits. Dr. Mariwalla suggests that a four-per-cent concentration is the sweet spot for seeing results without irritation, but anywhere up to 10 per cent is a good option, depending on what your skin can tolerate. Generally, niacinamide is not known to cause irritation, but as you increase the percentage, you run the risk of an adverse skin reaction such as redness or dry patches. Joanna recommends that sensitive skin types start out with a product that contains just two per cent, to avoid the risk of irritation.

## FIND YOUR FORMULA

OK, now you know what niacinamide can do for your skin, but how exactly do you use it? The blockbuster ingredient can be found in everything from essences to masks – all effective ways to benefit from the brightening boost it can offer. To get the most bang for your buck, Joanna recommends a niacinamide-rich serum or moisturizer. Serums are thinner in texture and allow for more of the active ingredient to be absorbed into the deeper layers of the skin, which means that the niacinamide is being delivered where it needs to go to maximize its impact. She also advises reaching for a moisturizer that contains both niacinamide and a humectant like glycerin or hyaluronic acid to really amp up its nourishing properties. You can add it to both your morning and nighttime routines; after four to six weeks of consistent use, you should start to see smoother, more even skin when you look in the mirror. 🇨🇦

**Peace Out Microneedling Dark Spot Brightening Dots**, \$37, [sephora.ca](https://www.sephora.ca)

**Moon Juice Acid Potion**, \$58, [sephora.ca](https://www.sephora.ca)

**Caudalie Vinoperfect Instant Brightening Moisturizer**, \$74, [caudalie.com](https://www.caudalie.com)

**Algenist Algae Niacinamide Moisture Veil**, \$85, [sephora.ca](https://www.sephora.ca)

**Youth to the People Superclay Purify + Clear Power Mask**, \$47, [sephora.ca](https://www.sephora.ca)

**IT Cosmetics Bye Bye Dark Spots 4% Niacinamide Serum**, \$35, [itcosmetics.ca](https://www.itcosmetics.ca)

**Lancôme Rénergie H.C.F. Triple Serum**, \$165, [lancome.ca](https://www.lancome.ca)

**Dermologica Smart Response Serum**, \$189, [dermologica.ca](https://www.dermologica.ca)

**L'Oréal Paris Revitalift Triple Power LZR Pressed Night Cream With Retinol + Niacinamide**, \$40, [shoppersdrugmart.ca](https://www.shoppersdrugmart.ca)

**HELLO, GLOW!**  
Do your skin a favour and add one of these must-haves to your skin-care routine ASAP

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