

Ageing of the skin:

Ageing is a continuous dynamic chronological process. One starts aging from the time he pops out of the womb, when the age of the baby is started by being counted in days, then months, years and in no time as the number of decades. Later on age is celebrated by various precious metal jubilee. According to the law of nature, everybody will age, some quicker than others. The movie “ The curious case of Benjamin Button” is partially correct, where he ages quickly, however the reverse part is not really possible. The condition that can make a ten year old child look like a sixty years old with very rapid aging is called Progeria. Also Albert Einstein’s theory that if you travel faster than the speed of light, one year of travel in space can make you gain several years is not really feasible for normal people.

A person will age naturally as determined by his genes. Everytime the cells in our replicates, certain DNA chromosomes become slightly shorter and this leads to us become older. However, there are many external factors, that add to this process, making our skin look like that of a geriatric at a faster pace. These extrinsic factors such as UV radiation, temperature variation(global warming), wind, humidity, chemical pollutants and irritants, poor nutrition, physical and mental stress, excessive use of untested abrasive compounds on the face and poor social habits like smoking are important both from the view of premature ageing as well as its therapy.

The older skin is usually dry, there is loss of elasticity, the expression lines are deeper, wrinkles, irregular pigmentation as well as decreased healing from bruises. Associated with old age, there is a list of other unwelcomed skin disorders that are listed in the table I below.

For most people, wrinkles are the earliest and cosmetically most undesirable problem, which at times can be used as an indicator that one should start planning his pension’s policy. These wrinkles can appear in stages, getting deeper with time. Glyphic wrinkles are only accentuated normal skin creases, which are normal in young individuals with increased sun exposure. Thereafter linear furrows start appearing as long grooves, straight or curves on the forehead or radiating as crow’s feet from the lateral side of the eyes. They can also extend as creases from the nose to the corner of the mouth. Finally crinkles are very fine criss-cross wrinkles occurring even in the sun-protected areas of most elderly person. Wrinkles are also classified as being static, when they follow facial expressions or dynamic, when they follow ageing and physical tension.

Pruritus and Asteototic eczema	Itching due the dryness and very dry skin on the anterior tibial area	Emollients, Steroid creams and oral antihistamines
Dyspigmentation	Dark and pale spots- colour of skin is not uniform	Sunscreens, hydroquione, tretinoins, skin peels
Idiopathic guttate hypomelanosis	Small depigmented patches on anterior leg or arms	Better left untreated
Acrochordons, Dermatitis papulosa nigra		

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