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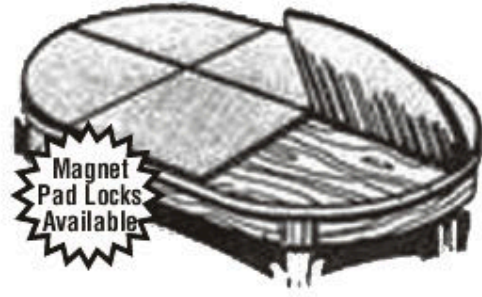
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Smart Solutions Cheaper

Is \$160 eye cream worth it?

By Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz
TRIBUNE NEWSPAPERS

Shortly after I turned 30, a cosmetic aesthetician at a department store counter warned that lest I look to crow's-feet, dark circles and puffiness, I'd better start using eye cream.

Then she showed me a tiny pot of eye cream with a \$98 price tag, and I think I aged a few years from sticker shock.

Is eye cream really worth it? It's true that our eyes need special attention. The skin around the eyes is the thinnest on your body, so it is more susceptible to extrinsic aging, caused mostly by sun exposure, and intrinsic aging, caused mostly by fat loss around the eyes and creasing of the skin due to repetitive contracting of the eye muscles, said Dr. Jeffrey Benabio, a San Diego dermatologist who runs thedermblog.com.

The early signs of aging start to show in the 30s, he said, so that's a good start moisturizing around the eyes to help plump the skin and smooth fine lines. But you don't need an eye-specific cream, he said.

Dr. Lisa Airan, a New York dermatologist, recommends a separate eye cream for patients who have oily skin and a tendency to form milial cysts, which are like tiny whiteheads around their eyes. She says to choose an eye cream that's lightweight and contains a small concentration of retinol, which has been shown to stimulate collagen growth.

for patients who have oily skin and a tendency to form milial cysts, which are like tiny whiteheads around their eyes. She says to choose an eye cream that's lightweight and contains a small concentration of retinol, which has been shown to stimulate collagen growth.

The verdict: If you want to save your pennies, you'll do just fine nourishing your eye area with regular facial moisturizer. But if you're screaming for eye cream, here are a few recommendations from Dr. Airan — for a variety of budgets.

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La Mer's Eye Concentrate

Using multiple forms of La Mer's "miracle broth," a bio-fermented blend of sea kelp, calcium, magnesium, citrus oil, eucalyptus, alfalfa and sunflower, this pricey cream contains a magnetized mineral manufacturers say reduces the appearance of dark circles and puffiness. The silver-tip applicator it comes with, designed to pick up the exact amount of product and improve microcirculation, feels cool to the skin, and each stroke did seem to calm morning puffiness and brighten dark circles. \$165 for a 0.5-ounce tub at cremedelamer.com

BILL HOGAN/TRIBUNE NEWSPAPER'S PHOTO

Kiehl's Creamy Eye Treatment with Avocado

Made with avocado oil, shea butter, beta carotene and vitamins A and E, the green-tinted cream goes on thick and creamy, so it takes a bit of rubbing to blend it in, which "bursts a barrier so that water is then released for maximum moisturization," according to the marketing materials (it's true; you can feel the sudden slickness of the water as you pat the cream into your skin). The cream feels cool and refreshing upon application, and it leaves the eye area glistening for a while. \$25.50 for a 0.5-ounce tub at kiehls.com



BILL HOGAN/TRIBUNE NEWSPAPER'S PHOTO

Oil of Olay Total Effects Eye Transforming Cream

This lightweight eye cream slips on smoothly and absorbs immediately. Promising to treat the seven signs of aging — including minimizing wrinkles, brightening dark circles, reducing puffiness and balancing color — it touts the ingredient VitaNiacin, a blend of vitamins E, B5 and B3, but also contains cucumber extract, aloe vera and dimethicone. Circles do appear slightly brighter after application, and hours later, the area still feels quenched. \$18.29 for a 0.5-ounce tub at amazon.com

cial moisturizer for eye cream, from various brands.

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