

BYRDIE

How the Digital Age Is Harming Your Skin—and How to Fight Back



Once upon a time, we never dreamed about being able to take professional-quality photos with a cell phone or the possibility of 3D-printing makeup (that one still blows our minds). But that's exactly where we are in 2015. In a lot of respects, beauty and technology are great friends. The duo allows us get a [dermatologist consultation in minutes](#) with a selfie snapped from the comfort of our couch, and have a glam squad delivered to our door with the touch of a button. But all that time spent on smartphones and in front of computer screens comes at a price for your skin.

The Culprit: Looking at Your Devices



The act of constantly checking your phone (don't deny it) has led to a rise in what experts have so lovingly dubbed "tech neck." Tech neck is the combination of drooping jowls, sagging skin, and a noticeable crease above the clavicle bone—all hallmarks of an aging neck. The difference is that dermatologists are seeing this in a younger crowd, the 18- to 39-year-olds, attributing the phenomenon to the repeated downward gaze associated with looking at your smartphone and tablet. Every time you bend your neck to check Instagram on your phone, you're accelerating the impact of gravity on your lower face, throat, and upper neck.

To make matters worse, squinting at small screens can cause crow's feet. Cosmetic dermatologist Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank recommends increasing the font size and brightness on your phone to help prevent fine lines around the eyes.

In both instances, retinol is your friend. Incorporate a product like Kate Somerville's RetAsphere 2-in-1 Retinol Night Cream (\$85) into your routine to boost cell turnover.

The Culprit: Light From Your Devices



You know how the blue light your computer screen emits keeps you awake at night? It also ages your skin. Known as high-energy visible (HEV) light, it penetrates your skin more deeply than UV rays, affecting DNA. Research is still developing, but recent discoveries suggest the effects may be as harmful as the damage caused by UVA and UVB light combined. As research continues, more and more products targeting HEV light are sure to develop, but for now we're stocking up on Make's [Moonlight Primer](#) (\$55), which is formulated to shield your skin from harmful HEV and IR (infrared) light.

The Culprit: Electronic Magnetic Fields From Your Devices



It's not just light coming from your devices. They also emit electronic magnetic fields (EMFs) that—you guessed it—damage skin cells. “EMF emitted from our daily tech devices are not to levels of any pressing concern health-wise, but our skin does absorb these electric magnetic frequencies,” Dr. Ramin Sarshad of Cosmetique Aesthetics says. He suggests facials, which stimulate your skin’s lymphatic drainage system, helping your skin release the toxins that can build up. (At-home facial massage is another great option.) Much like with HEV light, the challenge with EMFs is that radiation reaches the deepest layers of our skin. So, in order to target it, your skincare needs to reach those layers, too. Look for products that boast tiny molecules—small enough to penetrate the different layers of your skin—like Hylamide’s [Booster Low-Molecular HA](#) (\$20).