

elastin the skin needs to look fresh, supple and firm. "DNA is continually being assaulted," says Dr. Maria Langhals, corporate director of research and development at NIVEA, the makers of the DNAge line, launched earlier this year. "The cell has processes to repair its own damaged DNA, but when it's busy repairing, it's not doing other things—like manufacturing collagen and elastin or dividing and regenerating. We want to relieve the DNA of some of that work so that it can get busy doing other important tasks."

That means spoon-feeding skin cells the ingredients they need to speed up the natural process and mend broken DNA chains—most importantly, enzymes. They act using molecules synthesized from food nutrients to build DNA—the molecules are the bricks, if you will, and the enzymes are the muscle. Theoretically, then, by adding more muscle to the chain gang, these enzymes can do their repair work in a fraction of the time it would take DNA to heal itself. (Yarosh claims that the enzymes in his Remergent cream piece

NIVEA Visage  
DNAge Night  
Crème (\$23)

Swiss Line by  
Dermalab Ultimate  
Radiance Supreme  
Pearl Cream (\$390)

Yves Rocher  
ADN Végétal  
The Cellular  
Cure (\$125 for  
28 capsules)

Remergent  
DNA Repair  
Formula  
(\$128)

Remergent

DNA Repair Formula  
Age Restorative Serum  
Retinol Lifter Dermatolift

1.7 FL. OZ. (51.96 ML)

Orlane  
Paris Crème  
de Nuit (\$300)

ORLANE

DermaDNA  
Advanced  
Cellular Repair  
(\$120).  
For details, see  
Shopping Guide.

together broken DNA in just four to six hours, compared to the standard 24 to 48 hours.) "The theory is that sirtuins [a type of enzyme] promote cell longevity," says Calvin Davies, a research pharmacist and >

## WEIRD SCIENCE

Can stem-cell technology delay the aging process? TEXT: MICHELLE VILLET

Besides our DNA, some beauty companies are going after our stem cells. But, rest assured, the bevy of new products don't actually contain the cells; they just target them. Apparently, stem cells are present in many organs, including skin, but are dormant until they're needed for repair work, such as creating new tissues. (That's why many medical researchers believe that they're a boon for reversing spinal cord injuries and curing diseases like Alzheimer's.) But as we age, the number of stem cells we have decreases—and for the skin, that

means wrinkles, dullness and loss of elasticity. New products from Dior, AmatoKin and ReVive are attempting to halt the process by keeping the skin's stem cells alive longer and stimulating their turnover. So, is this the next big beauty trend or just science fiction? "It sounds like hype to me," says Dr. Peter Vignjevic, a dermatologist based in Hamilton, Ont. There's no slam-dunk method for isolating cells in the skin, he says. "Since we're not sure which cells are true stem cells, it would be impossible to say that [a moisturizer] has a direct impact on them." □