

Lucky.



NOBODY'S BORN WITH *Flawless Skin*

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**It's true:
A SKIRT
SUIT CAN
BE COOL**
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MIXING SKIN MEDS

Is it bad to mix over-the-counter beauty products with prescriptions from my dermatologist?

I apply a topical Retin-A cream every other night, but recently I stumbled across a cool-looking moisturizer for day that, in addition to other substances, claims to contain vitamins A and C. How carefully do I need to consider these ingredient lists?

Good question. Treat mixing substances on your face with the same caution you exercise with the pills in your medicine cabinet—rather than the kind you use for the spirits in your liquor cabinet. "Always avoid double-dosing yourself," says Dr. Debra Luftman, a cosmetic dermatologist at UCLA. "Retin-A is vitamin A, so you need to avoid a product that contains

Your pressing style issues addressed by our experts.

retinol. Also, if you're confused, try to alternate the products each day."

Another rule: Avoid mixing prescription-strength anything with products that contain skin-sloughing ingredients like glycolic and salicylic acids unless you discuss it first with your doctor. Retin-A is a powerful medication, and too much of it will result in reddened, patchy, stinging skin. It's also important to wait at least 20 minutes after you've applied a prescription product (including Differin, Retin-A, Tazorac, or Retin-A Micro) to put on a moisturizer

containing antioxidants like vitamin C or green tea. Vitamin C is notoriously unstable and when mixed with some things, it's rendered ineffective.

the highlight handbook

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