

If you pay attention to the ingredients used in your skincare products, you've likely come across something called hyaluronic acid for skin. Although its name makes it sound kind of complicated, what it does is simple — hyaluronic acid (sometimes referred to as HA) helps retain moisture, making it one of the most effective ingredients for hydrating skin. When applied, it creates a protective barrier, helping to **retain moisture** and improve skin texture.

What Is Hyaluronic Acid, Exactly?

Hydration is the key to maintaining a radiant complexion, but some skin types can't tolerate the harsh chemicals found in many over-the-counter anti-wrinkle creams. Hyaluronic acid can effectively deliver the moisturizing benefits your skin needs *without causing irritation*. It's a common ingredient in moisturizers, cleansers and makeup products. It's also found naturally in your skin!

Using hyaluronic acid topically can **smooth out wrinkles** and help skin retain moisture deep below its barrier — it works best when applied right after cleansing and right before moisturizing. Want an intense boost of hydration a couple times a week? A facial cream mask featuring hyaluronic acid can provide a noticeable difference in skin's appearance after just 15 minutes. This adaptable ingredient that can work on any level you want it to.

What Type of Skin Is It Best For?

Unlike some skincare ingredients, HA is super versatile and can be used with all skin types. However, there's still a right and a wrong way to use it; the key to maximizing its potential is to add water.

"When used alone topically, oily skin types may fare better than dry," notes Erum Ilyas, MD, a dermatologist at [Montgomery Dermatology](#). "However, dry skin unfortunately may not have the moisture HA-containing topical products need to work."

In other words, hyaluronic acid brings in moisture, and it doesn't really care where that moisture comes from. This means that if you're in a dry environment, it may actually pull moisture out of your skin and up toward the product, leaving you feeling dryer than before. If you do live in a dry climate, try applying an HA-containing product to damp or wet skin, then topping off that product with a moisturizer for optimal results.

What Kind of Products Contain Hyaluronic Acid?

You shouldn't have trouble finding products that contain hyaluronic acid for skin. It's been popping up as an ingredient in a variety of products, thanks to its impressive hydrating benefits. Most commonly, however, it's found in moisturizers and anti-aging products. For sunscreens and cosmetics, the hydration factor is helpful, but the other real benefit is that HA can help these products work more easily and effectively.

Most topical hyaluronic acid products contain between 1-2 percent. That may not sound like a lot, but a little goes a long way! In fact, a higher percentage could pull too much moisture. According to Dr. Ilyas, really potent HA products can "deplete the natural moisture deep inside your skin as the moisture gets absorbed by the HA molecules."

How Often Should You Use It?

As part of your skincare routine, hyaluronic acid-containing products can be used daily, ideally after cleansing. Additionally, HA can be a wonderful post-treatment application for those who have microneedling procedures done. For best results, choose a safe and gentle hydrating gel in the 48 hours after the procedure.

Remember, if you're looking to update your skincare regimen, it's important to slowly introduce these types of products and observe the difference they make. Once you've fully integrated it into your daily routine, you're likely to start noticing all the benefits hyaluronic acid has to offer — and telling your friends about its advantages.