

How you can use retinol for acne scars and breakouts

We often talk about retinol and its role in tackling ageing, but its effect on the skin makes it a valuable ingredient in smoothing acne scarring, reducing large pores and slowing the occurrence of breakouts.

Because the powerhouse ingredient works to stimulate collagen production and cell turnover, retinol improves skin texture and fades pigmentation. Of everything else in the beauty world, it really is a solution product for all ages and most skin types whether they are dry or oily. To discover more about using retinol for acne scarring, I spoke with CeraVe's consultant dermatologist Dr Alexis Granite about how to use it effectively.

Dr Granite explained to *Magazine* that the best way to build retinol into your regime is when you start to experience breakouts.

'Start using at the first signs of blemishes and any type of post-inflammatory marks. Again, it comes to prevention, and when you use this early not only is it going to treat what's there, but prevent new spots as well,' she says.

'Go slow to begin with. Don't start every night to begin with. Start with a small amount of product and then increase gradually.

'Those are the main things, ease yourself in; that is what I tell my patients when it comes to retinoids because one of the biggest mistakes is going overboard. This can cause issues if you overuse it,' she adds.

Some people experience drying and flaking when they start to use retinol, is this normal or something to be concerned about? 'It is very common to have a little bit of dryness or flaking or even light redness to the skin when you first start to use retinol. A little bit of this should be normal, but it shouldn't be anything that's uncomfortable

or too severe. Something is not right —

either too much product is being used or too much too soon,' Dr Granite says.

'Often people say they can't use retinol, but this may be that they are using one that's not suitable for their skin or not putting another moisturiser on. Usually you can find a way for most people to use retinol. It may

not be every night, or they may have to take extra steps to minimise dryness or irritation. People with eczema may want to spot-treat with it and instead be a little more conservative with the retinol. Most people can find a way to work retinol into their routine.'

A high-level SPF must be worn every day to protect the skin, but can you use retinol year-round?

'Yes, you should use them all year round and even when you're exposed to the sun, because if you're wearing a high factor SPF and being sensible about sun exposure, one of the main issues that can happen when you have blemish-prone skin is that they actually get worse in the sun,' Dr Granite says.

