

All that Glitters:

Gold Ingredients in Skin Care Not Worth their Weight

December 14, 2009 by Allison Giuffre



Is gold the secret ingredient in the fountain of youth?

Diamonds might be a girl's best friend, but are pricey precious metals the scientifically sound solution to keep her skin free of fine lines and wrinkles?

The latest ingredients to be touted by some skin care lines are no strangers to glowing adoration: genuine gold and silver. They've always worked wonders as accessories *on* our skin (in case anyone's looking for [holiday gift ideas](#)) but what they can do *to* our skin is a different story.

Though gold isn't exclusive to any one skin care line, some skin care lines are exclusively gold. Take, for instance, [Oro Gold Cosmetics](#), a line that features gold in every one of its products. Oro Gold praises gold's "luxurious and beautifying properties" as acknowledged since Cleopatra – among them, it says, includes the ability to reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, restore tissue elasticity, slow down collagen depletion and reduce age spots.

[Prana SpaCeuticals](#), on the other hand, includes gold in only two of its many products. This natural skin care line notes Cleopatra's discovery of gold's ability to regenerate the skin, decrease inflammation and get rid of fine lines and wrinkles.

From Oro Gold's [24k Gold Day Moisturizer](#) (\$114) and [24k Collagen Renewal Serum](#) (\$349) to Prana's [AU 24K Gold Serum](#) (\$96) and [Gold Body Whip](#) (\$36), the messages are generally the same: Cleopatra wore a mask made of pure gold to bed every night, they say, and now you should too.

What's the right message?

With some 24k prices reaching upward of \$400 and the sake of our skin at hand, we just had to wonder: Can an ancient Egyptian queen's alleged night time regimen be our ticket to flawless skin?



Dr. Jeannette Graf

"Poor Cleo's not here to speak for herself," said [Dr. Jeannette Graf](#), a board-certified clinical and research dermatologist with a private practice in Great Neck, NY and the author of [Stop Aging, Start Living](#), a real-life guide to slowing down aging. "There's absolutely no science to support that."

After researching the claims made by various companies, Graf said that she had found "absolutely nothing about gold in literature." There is an anti-inflammatory property in gold, she concluded, but only when it is taken orally or injected for rheumatoid arthritis.



Dr. Judith Hellmann

[Dr. Judith Hellman](#), a board-certified dermatologist and clinical instructor at the Department of Dermatology at Mt. Sinai Medical Center, who specializes in anti-aging treatments at her private practice in NYC, added that not only did these companies get the science wrong, but they got the history wrong too.

"Supposedly, Cleopatra used milk to make her skin beautiful since it contains lactic acid, an [alpha hydroxy acid](#) similar to glycolic acid. Glycolic acid is widely used in skin rejuvenation, as

biopsies showed an increase in elastic tissue after use. I could find nothing of the kind about gold or silver,” she said.

Though both dermatologists were unimpressed by gold’s anti-aging qualities, neither expressed concern that gold could be potentially harmful when used as a topical ingredient.

“It’s easy to state anything, especially if one makes it sound scientific. I don’t want to pass judgment lightly, but I can’t see evidence other than quoting holistic or Chinese medicine and some unsubstantiated descriptions of actions that may, or very possibly may not be true,” said Hellman.

The additional active ingredients in many of the gold products include organic aloe vera gel, [green tea](#) and marine collagen – ingredients already acknowledged for their skin care benefits.

If you’re on the search for products that turn back the clock (or at least slow it down), don’t despair — try looking for what Dr. Graf called “the master of anti-aging ingredients,” Vitamin A (Retinol). It’s an accessible ingredient that you can find in products available in drugstores to dermatologist offices.

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