

Abstract

Good Cosmetics

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Cosmetics can provide skin benefits to augment prescription therapy. Most topical pharmaceuticals are designed to deliver the drug to the skin surface subsequently damaging the skin barrier to induce penetration. This barrier damage can be mitigated with cosmetics containing flexible polymers and ingredients that enhance the water holding capacity of the skin through aquaporin modulation. Further, prescription ingredients to improve pigmentation, such as hydroquinone, may have detrimental skin effects. A variety of cosmetic alternatives have emerged affecting each of the steps in pigment production, such as melanin production, melanosome transfer, and melanin breakdown. Cosmetic skin lightening ingredients can be used singly or in combination to improve melasma and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. Thus, cosmetics can be a valuable part of the dermatologic armamentarium.