

BEAUTY SCOURGE LARGE PORES

What you're tackling

"This condition is often genetic," says Dr Patrick Bowler, cosmetic physician at The Court House Clinics. Large pores are more common later in life when skin loses its elasticity, and with oilier skins, as pores tend to stretch to allow sebum to escape.

Quick fix

The trend for silicone-based products is no fluke; according to make-up artist Ariane Poole, these skin-perfecting bases are the best way to minimise pores' appearance. "Dab it on over foundation where needed," she says. Try Dr Feelgood, £19, by Benefit (0901 113 0001) or Velvet Pore Minimiser, £15, by Ariane Poole (0845 601 8360).

Daily routine

There are two ways to target the problem. "Deep cleansing removes debris that makes pores look bigger," says Dr Bowler. Try an exfoliating wash, such as Glycolic Foaming Cleanser, £13.50, by Mario Badescu (hghair.

com), then apply Pore Minimizer Refining Lotion, £15.50, by Clinique (01730 232 566). Secondly, target collagen, the fibres responsible for skin firmness and, hence, pore size. Dr Nicholas Lowe, consultant dermatologist at The Cranley Clinic, prescribes Retin-A, a skin rejuvenator that speeds cell renewal and stimulates collagen production. The over-the-counter equivalent, retinol, won't offer the same results, but you'll see improvements. Try Retinol 0.5 Night Refining Cream, £37, by SkinCeuticals (020 8997 8541).

The professional solution

Chemical peels and microdermabrasion (where aluminium oxide particles are blown across the surface and then vacuumed away) remove the top layer of skin to reveal finer pores beneath. Dr Lowe also uses radio frequency to tackle the problem. "One treatment may be enough to tighten collagen and reduce pore size," he says. But, keeping up the effects requires ongoing maintenance as the skin sheds and renews itself.

BEAUTY SCOURGE SPIDER VEINS

What you're tackling

"Veins that easily flush will eventually stay enlarged, appearing red on the surface," says Dr Lowe, author of *Away with Wrinkles* (£14.99, Kyle Cathie). One enlarged vein may cause blood to pool in surrounding capillaries, creating a spider effect on the surface. These can be hereditary, the result of hormone changes or prolonged exposure to dramatic temperature fluctuations.

Quick fix

Use a fine-point brush dabbed in a dense concealer, such as Secret Camouflage, £25, by Laura Mercier (020 7318 3378). Yellow tones will counteract the blue of the vein.

Daily routine

Take preventive action with a protecting moisturiser, such as Barrier Repair, £23.65, by Dermalogica (0800 591 818). Or try a treatment like Vein Away Plus, £19.95, by Skin Doctors Dermaceuticals (0800 298 9600),

which aims to strengthen the capillaries while retinol works on the skin's appearance.

The professional solution

Dr Philip Bull, vascular specialist at the London Vein Clinic, performs sclerotherapy (where an irritant is injected into the vein to close the walls, causing blood to fade over time). "If you target the central feeding vein, the dependent vessels will also disappear," he says. Mainly reserved for the body, this technique requires absolute accuracy when used on the face, so many practitioners prefer the needle-free approach of intense pulse light (IPL) therapy or lasers. Here, the light emitted causes a controlled heating of the vein, narrowing it and restricting blood flow. "You may need several treatments, which can cause redness, but usually only for a few days," says Rachael Morris-Jones, dermatology consultant to Vichy. You may always be susceptible, so Dr Bull suggests an annual check-up: "It's easier to treat if caught early."

