

CONSUMER REPORTS TESTS WRINKLE CREAMS FOR FIRST TIME

Results find no miracles and no correlation between price and effectiveness



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YONKERS, NY — *Consumer Reports*' (*CR*) first test of [wrinkle creams](#) finds that on average these products made little difference in the skin's appearance and there's no correlation between price and effectiveness. The luxury-priced skin-care offerings didn't work any better than the drugstore brands in *CR*'s independent, unbiased tests. Further, *CR*'s tests found no relationship between the types of active ingredients in the products and their overall performance.

Olay Regenerist, which is available in drugstores, was the top performer by a small margin. One of the less-costly products tested, Olay Regenerist, sells for about \$19 apiece for the "enhancing lotion," "perfecting cream," and "regenerating serum" combination recommended by the company. Lancome Paris Renergie, \$176, performed nearly as well. The most-costly product tested, La Prairie Cellular (\$335 for an ounce of day cream and 1.7 ounces of night cream), was among the least effective. The wrinkle creams *CR* tested ranged in price from \$38 to \$335.

In addition to advising consumers on product effectiveness, *CR*'s January report offers tips for preventing wrinkles in the first place and discusses treatments available only by prescription, such as retinoids, and chemical peels available in a doctor's office.

In *CR*'s tests, the top-rated products did smooth out some fine lines and wrinkles after 12 weeks. But even the best performers reduced the average depth of wrinkles by less than 10 percent, a magnitude of change that was barely visible to the naked eye. Reactions to individual products varied significantly. With effects so variable and slight, it was hard for women to judge the performance of the products.

CR conducted the project with Consumers Union's French counterpart, l'Union Fédérale des Consommateurs-Que Choisir. Product testers were recruited by a European laboratory specializing in cosmetic evaluation. *CR* purchased a sampling of top selling mass-market lines and costlier products sold in retail stores. Each tester used a product on one side of her face and the lab's standard moisturizer on the other side for comparison. Their skin was examined at the beginning of the 12-week test, four weeks into it, and at the end. A high-tech optical device that can detect changes in wrinkle depth and skin roughness was used for the examination. In addition, dermatologic technicians examined each woman in person. Further, sensory panelists examined photos of the subjects to score effectiveness. Product testers also gave their opinion about the wrinkle cream they used.

Both the photo assessments and instrument measurements found, on average, only slight improvements. But every product performed better than that for at least some test subjects and failed completely for others. All the creams worked better for some women than for others, but none came close to completely eliminating fine lines and wrinkles. Consumers may need to try more than one wrinkle cream to find one that works for them. *CR* suggests starting with the top-rated product line and moving on only if it's not helpful to the skin's appearance.

The best treatment for wrinkles is prevention. *CR* suggests wearing sunscreen, shading the face, avoiding tanning parlors, and quitting smoking.

[For a complete discussion of prescription wrinkle treatments, log on to \[www.ConsumerReportsMedicalGuide.org\]\(http://www.ConsumerReportsMedicalGuide.org\).](#)

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