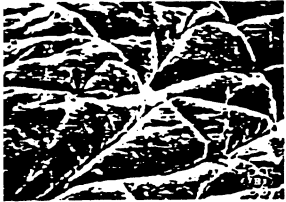


# AGE OR OPPORTUNITY FOR A WOMAN'S SKIN AS



A. Sebaceous gland with hair follicle



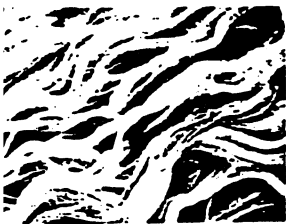
B. Normal skin surface



C. Cross section of normal skin



D. Sun-damaged collagen



E. Young collagen



F. Dry skin surface

## Characteristics:

## Danger Zones:

## Recommendations:

	INFANT	ADOLESCENT/ TEENAGE	ADULT
Characteristics:	<p>At birth, skin has an alkaline pH, which changes on average from 6.9 to 4.6 over the first thirty days as it begins to develop its acid mantle and protective buffering capacity. In the first few months of life skin thickness may vary in different parts of the body, but nevertheless a baby's skin is soft and smooth with excellent blood supply and incredible healing power. Some studies have suggested the skin of newborn girls is slightly more responsive to touch than that of boys.</p>	<p>By age eleven or twelve, with the sebaceous glands fully developed, an increase in surface oil results and remains constant until menopause. The genes dictate whether production is "normal" or "excessive", as they also dictate the activity of the androgenic and growth hormones during adolescence. Normal skin has excellent elasticity and ability to resist wrinkling: it "fits" like a new girdle, snapping easily back into place after every expression, leaving no trace.</p>	<p>A fully developed young woman carries about twice as much body fat as a man (who carries one and a half times more muscle and bone). In good skin (the luck of the genes), collagen and elastin (part of skin's support system), contribute enormously to smooth luster - the "bloom of youth". For those with poor skin, encouraging news: recent studies suggest that constant inflammation strengthens collagen and elastin, delaying sag.</p>
Danger Zones:	<p>An infant's skin secretes less sebum than an older child's (although it is not necessarily "dry") because the sebaceous glands are not fully developed. The darker the pigment, the more natural protection from the sun is in place, but skin at this age, and particularly nonblack skin, is highly sensitive to sunlight. Skin damage that shows up years later can be caused by overexposure to the sun in early childhood.</p>	<p>Puberty's scourge is acne, when too much sebum produced at too rapid a rate clogs pores. The result - infection and ugly pimples. Often inherited, acne can cause hang-ups out of proportion to its medical status - because it hits when self-confidence may be shaky. The catch-22 is that stress can aggravate acne. Overactive sebaceous glands don't always cause acne but can lead to breakouts and oiliness that don't necessarily submit to cleansing and can swamp makeup.</p>	<p>Although there may be no visible sign, 80% of the damaging effect of too much sun occurs before age twenty - leading to prematurely aged skin later. "Without protection, sun exposure causes a decrease in elasticity, thus increasing skin's stiffness," says Jack Mausner, Ph.D., Chanel's senior vice president of research and development. The fairer the skin, the more likely the damage. Black skin's extra pigmentation tends to reflect rather than absorb sunlight.</p>
Recommendations:	<p>Use gentle products to avoid irritation. Sidney Hurwitz, M.D., clinical professor of pediatrics and dermatology, Yale University School of Medicine, says, "Toxic effects become more acute in infants because of greater skin-to-body-size ratio and higher blood level accumulations. When applying topical products, a little goes a long way." A Food and Drug Administration panel advises against sunscreens for babies under six months.</p>	<p>James Leyden, M.D., professor of dermatology, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, believes medical intervention should start as soon as a child's skin overproduces oil (but also advises waiting until tooth enamel production is completed, by about age twelve). Retin-A, the acne drug, is now available in several different strengths. Products that help: Neutrogena's Cleansing Bar for acne-prone skin, Almay's Oil Control Facial Soap.</p>	<p>Eschew sunbathing: escalate aerobic exercise - brisk walking, cycling, swimming, dancing - which stimulate blood flow to peripheral capillaries, keeping collagen fibers nourished. Exertion also improves thoracic capacity and oxygen intake, and contributes to skin elasticity. Think "sun care" and adapt a daily sunscreen habit with low SPF moisturizers and makeup.</p>