



ANOTHER SERUM. OR A QUESTION WE HAVEN'T ASKED?

Philip and I talk about the pressure to fix every change in the mirror. There's a lot being sold to us, isn't there? We get into skin health, what changes as we age and the questions to take to someone who knows your skin.

Dr Philip Tong and I talk about looking after our skin, and making sense of all the promises.

FEWER STEPS. BETTER QUESTIONS.

01 YOUR FACE ISN'T SOMETHING YOU'VE FAILED AT.

Philip explains changes in elasticity, pigmentation and facial volume as we age. We can understand what's happening without treating every change as something we've done wrong.

02 DO WE NEED ALL THOSE STEPS?

Philip brings it back to cleanser, moisturiser and sunscreen. He also talks about prescription tretinoin, which is a question for your clinician, rather than another automatic addition to the shelf.

03 WHAT'S BEHIND THE PROMISE ON THE BOTTLE?

Philip questions skin-firming claims and discusses uncertainty around collagen supplements. Before spending, ask about the evidence, suitability, risks and what's realistic for your skin.

04 THE SUNBATHING YEARS AREN'T A REASON TO GIVE UP NOW.

Philip challenges the idea that past damage makes future protection pointless. Sun protection still matters. Sunscreen isn't a reason to stay out for longer.

05 KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO BRING TO THE APPOINTMENT.

Philip talks about a trusted GP or dermatologist and keeping track of changes. Photos can help that conversation. A new, changing or concerning spot still needs medical assessment.



LESS SCRUBBING. MORE CHECKING.

06 EASE UP ON GRITTY SCRUBS

Philip says bead scrubs can dry skin unnecessarily. If your skin feels stripped, more scrubbing may work against you. **Try it:** Ask your GP or pharmacist about a gentler option if your skin feels dry or irritated.

08 BE WARY OF BANKING PROMISES

Philip says there isn't yet evidence that starting collagen treatments before menopause prevents later changes. **Try it:** Ask what evidence supports starting now, and what it costs, before booking a package.

10 ASK ABOUT REMOTE ADVICE

Philip helps regional GPs from a photo and a short summary. Distance doesn't have to mean waiting. **Try it:** If you live regionally, ask your GP whether photo-based specialist advice could help.

07 QUESTION THE TONER

In Philip's view, modern cleansers have replaced the need for toner. Squeaky-clean isn't a reason on its own. **Try it:** Check your toner has a clear job before you buy another bottle.

09 USE TWO MIRRORS

Philip suggests two mirrors so you can see your back during a skin check. **Try it:** Ask your GP how and how often to check the spots you can't see.



PROTECT TODAY. ASK ABOUT THAT SPOT.

Your skin. Your questions.

1 MAKE SUN PROTECTION PART OF THE DAY.

When UV is 3 or above, use protective clothing, a hat, shade, sunglasses and SPF50+ sunscreen. Reapply every two hours outdoors, and after swimming, sweating or towel-drying.

2 YOU CAN ASK ABOUT THAT SPOT.

If a spot is new, changing or worrying you, see your doctor. Ask which skin-check schedule and photography, if any, suit your own risk.

3 TAKE THREE QUESTIONS WITH YOU.

What does my skin need? Which products or treatments suit me? What should I watch for, and when should I contact you?

ONE THING BEFORE 50. OR STARTING NOW.

Philip's before-50 challenge is a letter from your future 60-year-old self. What does life look like? Who's in it? What are you doing? Keep the letter somewhere you can come back to.

OVER TO YOU

The skin question I've been meaning to ask is...

Something my future self would thank me for is...