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## Dark shadows, be gone! We spoke to the experts, and got their tips on how to minimize discoloration.

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### CAUSES: FROM AGING TO ALLERGIES

There are many different causes of dark under-eye circles. **Dermatologist Rebecca Baxt, MD**, noted that genetics often play a role in discoloration—if your parents both have hyperpigmentation in the area, you could, too. According to dermatologist Heidi Waldorf, MD, aging can also cause volume depletion under the eyes, resulting in hollowed-out shadows. Some people, especially those with thin, pale skin, have superficial blood vessels, which results in a reddish-purple hue showing through. Allergies are also a big culprit, and frequent rubbing of the eyes can result in thickening and darkening in the area. But all hope is not lost!

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### TOPICAL TREATMENTS: EYE CREAMS

Need more help? You're in luck—there are a slew of topical treatments that can help hyperpigmentation. But be careful when using ingredients like retinoids, alpha hydroxy acids, and vitamin C; they can irritate the sensitive skin around the eye area, warned Waldorf. "I usually start with a bionic acid product, like NeoStrata [Bionic Eye Cream]," Waldorf said. "You can also use a gentler retinoid, like La Roche-Posay Redermic Eyes, which contains a time-release retinol to reduce irritation." Glow by Dr. Brandt Revitalizing Retinol Eye Cream also contains time-released retinols.

NeoStrata Bionic Eye Cream, \$59; [neostrata.com](http://neostrata.com); La Roche-Posay Redermic [C] Eyes, \$44.99; [laroche-posay.us.com](http://laroche-posay.us.com); Glow by Dr. Brandt Revitalizing Retinol Eye Cream, \$55; [sephora.com](http://sephora.com)

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### PREVENTATIVES: SLEEP, HYDRATION, AND SUNSCREEN

While you can't totally prevent dark under-eye circles, you can minimize them, according to the dermatologists. First: Get enough sleep. Also, put down the champagne. Too much alcohol and salt will dehydrate you, making your eyes puffy, which in turn makes your circles look worse. Try hydrating, gentle cleansers instead of drying ones that can irritate the delicate skin in the area. Always wear a sunscreen, as ultraviolet rays damage skin and contribute to



the problem. And, if your under-eye circles are exacerbated by allergies, see a doctor to get a prescription for antihistamines and eyedrops.

CeraVe Hydrating Cleanser, \$9.59; [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com); Boscia Soothing Cleansing Cream, \$26; [sephora.com](http://sephora.com); Estée Lauder DayWear, \$39; [esteelauder.com](http://esteelauder.com); Clarins Sunscreen for Eyes Wrinkle Control Cream SPF 30, \$28; [clarinsusa.com](http://clarinsusa.com)

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### TOPICAL TREATMENTS: DAILY MOISTURIZERS

Dermatologists and makeup artists all agree you need a hardworking, moisturizing eye cream to ensure the area stays hydrated. "Make sure the skin around the eyes is moist when you go to bed so it doesn't get irritated or inflamed," **Baxt said**. A good daily eye cream should have plumping ingredients, like hyaluronic acid and glycerin. You should apply the cream at night, and then use the same one in the morning prior to trying to conceal dark circles. "Eye cream helps concealer to go on smoother," said makeup artist John Stapleton. "It helps thin it out a little better so it doesn't get cakey."

GlamGlow Brightmud Eye Treatment, \$69; [sephora.com](http://sephora.com); M.A.C Fast Response Eye Cream, \$31; [maccosmetics.com](http://maccosmetics.com); Caudalie Premier Cru The Eye Cream, \$98; [caudalie.com](http://caudalie.com); Koh Gen Do Macro Vintage Eye Treatment, \$138; [kohgendocosmetics.com](http://kohgendocosmetics.com)



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### MAKEUP SOLUTIONS: APPLYING A CONCEALER

Makeup artist Billy B. recommended applying your concealer after you apply all your other eye makeup, as specs of eye shadow powder can fall and ruin a good concealing job. After prepping with a moisturizing eye cream, put concealer *only* where you need it, which might not necessarily be your whole under-eye area. Makeup artist Sarah Lucero suggested beginning a little below where the darkness starts. If you apply it too high, you'll get product too close to your lower lash line and it can crease and also smear your mascara. Also apply concealer sparingly. Then use a concealer brush to sweep the product up to cover the area. Stapleton recommended using a fluffier concealer brush because flatter, firmer versions can apply too much product. Once you have brushed the product where you want it, use the pad of your ring finger to gently pat it into place.



Hourglass Concealer Brush, \$25; [barneys.com](http://barneys.com)

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## MAKEUP SOLUTIONS: CHOOSING A CONCEALER

If you need to hide the circles, make sure you conceal like a pro. When covering blemishes, you need a product that matches your skin tone. But to cover dark circles under your eyes, Stapleton recommended using color theory to choose the right concealer. Opposite colors on the color wheel cancel one another out. What this means is that if you're trying to cover a purple hue under the eyes, use a yellow-toned concealer. If you have redness, a green-toned product will help camouflage it. However, most under-eye circles tend to be blueish, which requires a peach-colored hue. You can also try a color-correcting primer prior to concealing, which will help neutralize any under-eye discoloration.

Makeup Forever Full Cover Concealer, \$32; [sephora.com](http://sephora.com); ByTerry Touche Veloutée Concealer, \$58; [barneys.com](http://barneys.com); M.A.C Select MoistureCover, \$18; [nordstrom.com](http://nordstrom.com); Clinique Airbrush Concealer, \$19.50; [clinique.com](http://clinique.com); Stila Perfecting Concealer, \$23; [stilacosmetics.com](http://stilacosmetics.com); Smashbox Photo Finishing Color Correcting Primer, \$38; [sephora.com](http://sephora.com)



## MEDICAL TREATMENTS: FILLING AGENTS AND LASERS

If you've lost the fat under your eyes thanks to age, Waldorf said the problem is relatively easy to fix with a hyaluronic-acid filling agent, like Restylane or Belotero. "Just be careful not to overfill, or you will end up looking like you have more bags under the eyes," she said. If the depletion in the area is extensive, Waldorf will use a volumizer, like Sculptra, in the cheeks and temple to give more support to the area. But be aware of the Tyndall effect, which happens when fillers are placed too superficially. It causes a blue-green tint under the eye, making the problem worse. If the darkness is related to visible blood vessels, which manifests as a reddish-purple hue, a doctor can treat it with a vascular laser, like the V-Beam. Unfortunately this is a problem that tends to get worse with age and generally doesn't respond well to treatments. Always be sure to look for a board-certified dermatologist or cosmetic physician to increase your

chances of getting the best results.

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