

5 cheap versions of expensive skincare products that work just as well, according to dermatologists

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Amber Middleton

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You don't have to spend a lot of money to get good skincare products, dermatologists said. Images courtesy of CeraVe, Vaseline and The Ordinary

- ***Dermatologist Dr. Rebecca Baxt said expensive skincare products aren't always worth the money.***

- La Mer has a great lip balm, but nothing beats Vaseline, dermatologist, Dr. Mia Jing Gao said.
- CeraVe and The Ordinary are cheap brands dermatologists recommend.

Dermatologists have shared their favorite skincare swaps for luxury products that they say work just as well as the expensive versions.

"I'm a huge believer that you don't have to spend a lot of money to get good skincare products," Mia Jing Gao, a consultant dermatologist in London told Insider.

Gao said that in almost every category of skincare products, you can find products that are good value.

Rebecca Baxt, a dermatologist based in New Jersey, agreed that people often spend a lot of money on skincare products but that the majority of them are not worth it.

Here are the skincare swaps they recommended.

Vaseline and Aquaphor versus La Mer lip balm

La Mer has a great lip balm, but nothing beats a pot of Vaseline, Gao said. And while La Mer lip balm can set you back \$75, Vaseline can be as cheap as a couple of bucks.

Baxt said Vaseline is a great moisturizer generally, especially for hands, feet, knees, and elbows.

Gao also recommended Aquaphor Ointment as a lip balm that costs less than \$5. She said it has lots of humectants and occlusives in it, which both lock in moisture. Baxt added that it can be used as a cheap moisturizer too.

The INKEY List Vitamin C Serum versus SkinCeuticals

The INKEY List 15% Vitamin C + EGF serum can be a cheap alternative to expensive Vitamin C treatments. Image courtesy of The INKY List

Vitamin C treatments can brighten your skin and, according to some experts, also reduce the signs of aging. But they can be pricey because it's difficult to formulate, Gao said. SkinCeuticals' C E Ferulic Vitamin C Antioxidant Serum is an excellent product, Gao said, but costs \$182. However, there are reasonably priced alternatives such as The INKEY List 15% Vitamin C + EGF Serum, which, at \$15.99, costs a tenth of its SkinCeuticals counterpart, Gao said.

CeraVe moisturizer versus Dr. Barbara Sturm

Dr. Barbara Sturm's moisturizing products are popular but expensive, Gao said, with the face cream costing \$225. La Mer Moisturizing Cream is also pricey, costing \$380 at Sephora for a 60ml pot.

Instead, Gao recommended CeraVe Moisturizing Cream, which she said works just as well. Shoppers can grab this product at Walmart for under \$15.

Baxt said people unnecessarily spend a lot of money on moisturizers. "There are many good brands of creams that are all reasonably priced," she said. She recommended products by Vanicream, CeraVe, and Aveeno as regular-use moisturizers to her patients.

CeraVe cleansers versus Dr. Dennis Gross

You don't have to spend a lot of money on cleansers either, Gao said. She said to choose a cleanser based on your skin type, but that CeraVe's Hydrating Facial Cleanser and their Blemish Control Cleanser both work well and cost less than \$20 a bottle. That is almost half the price of cleansers by Dr. Dennis Gross.

Dr. Dennis Gross Alpha Beta AHA/BHA Daily Cleansing Gel is \$39 for a 7.5-ounce bottle compared to CeraVe's 12-ounce standard size.

Gao said the Dr. Dennis Gross cleanser does a similar job to the CeraVe SA Smoothing Cleanser or the Blemish Control Cleanser.

In a previous Insider article, Baxt also recommended CeraVe cleansers.

The Ordinary Retinoid versus SkinCeuticals retinol

Gao said that anti-aging retinol products are popular, including SkinCeuticals' \$78 Retinol 0.3 Face Cream, which she has found works well. But for those on a tighter budget, The Ordinary has a retinol product — Granactive Retinoid* 2% Emulsion — that is less potent, but still works, Gao said. It only costs \$11.70.

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