

INSIDER SPOTLIGHT

VITAMIN C SKINCARE

Does it really work?



LANCÔME
Visionnaire Skin Solutions
15% Vitamin C, \$115
Used once a day in the morning, this new serum from Lancôme promises to improve your skin tone and texture in one week and then progressively reduce dark spots and pigmentation.

CLINIQUE
Fresh Pressed
Renewing Powder
Cleanser With
Pure Vitamin C,
\$57

Used in the mornings, this powder cleanser activates with water to jump-start the skin's natural cellular renewal process and brighten the complexion.



THE BODY SHOP
Vitamin C
Energising Face
Spritz, \$19

For a quick hit of vitamin C, the Body Shop has an energising face spritz which is meant to smooth, hydrate and refresh your skin. You can apply in the morning or throughout the day if you need a boost.



Nicole Kidman is a fan of Vitamin C beauty boosters.

We all know we should eat plenty of vitamin C, but you probably weren't aware you are meant to slather it on your skin as well. The latest wonder-ingredient in the beauty industry, vitamin C has become one of the hottest trends in skincare and is being touted by everyone from Nicole Kidman to Olivia Wilde, who swear by the beauty booster that promises to brighten and tighten your skin. Appearing in everything from serums to moisturisers, face masks to spritzes, the powerful antioxidant is said to give you a boost and lift your complexion, aid collagen production, combat sun damage and smooth skin tone. So does it really work? Victorian dermatologist Dr Adam Sheridan says it's not just hype, it does deliver.

"Vitamin C is the cornerstone of many dermatological products. It is a potent antioxidant that protects the skin from oxidative damage, from excessive sun exposure and environmental pollutants," he says. "It is also involved in the production and maintenance of healthy collagen and reduces the production and deposition of abnormal pigmentation."

However, he warns that all products are not equal — vitamin C is a tricky ingredient to utilise as it oxidises when exposed to light — and he advises caution when buying.

Brands that simply say "contains vitamin C" might not mean the small amount in them is doing any good. Look for reputable products with intensive formulations. Here's how to give your skin a juice-boost:

KERRY PARNELL

ULTRADERM
Absolute C Cream, \$64
This vitamin-C enriched moisturiser aids collagen synthesis and promises to improve skin tone and radiance as well as protect from antioxidants.



A'KIN
Certified Organic Rosehip Oil with Vitamin C, \$29.95
Devotees of rosehip oil will love this A'kin version with added vitamin C. The rosehip oil moisturises the skin and leaves it smooth while the vitamin C promises to boost collagen and brighten the skin tone. It's non-greasy and fast-absorbing.



GARNIER
Fresh-Mix Tissue Mask — Vitamin C Shot, \$6.95
For a face-brightening boost Garnier has launched a face mask with a shot of vitamin C which promises to help rehydrate skin and brighten the complexion, correct dark spots and even skin tone.

Meghan's birth plan is nobody else's business

Why are women so bothered about how someone else gives birth? As any mother-to-be discovers, your birth-plan is the most contentious topic of all in antenatal circles and best kept to yourself.

It's no wonder Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, decided to keep hers quiet — after all, whatever she chose would have been wrong in someone's opinion.

It really is nobody's business how you have your baby — or often, how you don't choose but end up delivering it anyway.



KERRY PARNELL

TWITTER.COM/KERRYPARNELL

You can plan everything down to the minutest detail, from your playlist to a mindfulness image on the wall, to your favourite pillow, but

believe me, once you are in labour, the very last thing you will care about is whether Lady Gaga is playing, your sunflower snap is hanging straight or someone remembered to light the scented flipping candle.

When I was expecting my first child I sat in the antenatal class in the hospital with 14 other freaked-out couples.

Every single woman in the room declared she was going to have an all-natural birth, until one brave lady volunteered she thought she would have an epidural, to which there was a collective intake of breath.

I muttered something about waiting to see, which was just as well as my son's

birth went dramatically wrong. The midwife went from saying in a derisory tone that I couldn't possibly be in that much discomfort so soon, to realising it was not following the textbook pattern, the baby was in serious distress and I ended up being rushed into theatre for an emergency C-section with the anaesthetist doing the epidural down the corridor.

Seeing panic on your obstetrician's face is not on anyone's birth plan, so it's a good job I didn't have one.

It is also not a competition — you are not a better mother whether you give birth with no pain relief while doing yoga, or if you have every medical intervention possible. You are

a better mother when, you know, you do the actual mothering bit afterwards.

Similarly, Meghan is not better or worse than her sister-in-law Catherine because of her choices — Catherine dutifully stood on the steps of the Lindo Wing sporting a smart frock and post-partum blow-dry after having all three of her children, but Zara Tindall did not. Nobody vilified her for simply heading home like a normal family.

The relentless criticism of Meghan is making me increasingly concerned — especially the headlines in the UK. One Sunday paper recently splashed "Meghan snub to Queen's doctors" on its front page after it was

revealed she had the temerity to choose her own medical team. Once again compare to Zara Tindall, who nobody cared a hoot about where, how and who she gave birth with.

As to my antenatal class, all those first-time mums were talking rubbish. Just like the Australian average, a third of them ended up having Caesareans and the rest had pain relief of some kind. I don't know if anyone had a spiritual experience, but certainly the one who had to sit on a rubber ring for a week did not.

So for all those about to give birth, take my advice and do a Meghan. If anyone asks about your birth plan, tell them you'll issue a statement later.