

Leave the Turkey Neck on the Thanksgiving Table: Anti-aging Approaches for a Youthful Neck and Chest

by Mary Anne Fuchs, MD, FACEP

Does the sight of your turkey neck make you want to stick your chin out to avoid those unsightly folds of skin? Read on for the best kept secret for a firm, youthful neck and chest.

If you're like most of us, you've spend a lot more time and money taking care of the skin on your face while pretty much ignoring your neck and chest. And now, if you're 40+, your neck and chest are where your age shows most. The good news is that it's never too late to fight the effects of aging.

Why does my neck and chest look so old, so fast?

The lack of oil glands on your neck can cause dryness, which may accelerate the aging process and make your neck appear more weathered. Neck skin also has a tendency toward laxity. Couple that with all the years of daily twisting and turning and you have a recipe for “crepey texture”, a term that describes skin that is both finely lined and saggy. Plus, platysmal bands become more prominent as the platysma muscle contracts over the years. The skin on the chest, or décolletage, is typically hardier, but takes more of a beating from the sun, since your neck is often shaded by your chin, your hair, or a hat. This is especially noticeable in large bosomed women because of a more direct angle of the sun to the chest. Side sleepers also are more prone to chest wrinkles, affectionately nicknamed “chinkles”, caused by compression of the décolletage by the breast tissue.

Daily maintenance can make a difference

Prevention of ongoing damage is the most important first step. Apply (and reapply) to your neck and chest a good broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF of 30 or higher, and an effective moisturizer. This will help combat dryness and sun damage.

If you already have some discoloration due to sun damage or sagginess on your neck and chest, extending your “face creams” to these areas is beneficial. Don’t take the words ‘face cream’ too literally. Anything for the face is generally fine for the rest of the body. Extending your facial anti-agers like Retinoids, Growth Factors, Ceramides, Vitamin C, lightening agents to your neck and chest, will help rejuvenate these problem areas and avoid the “floating head” appearance where the skin of the face doesn’t match the rest of your body. If you have sensitive skin on your neck and chest, consult with a skin care expert first. You might also want to try SkinMedica’s TNS serum – our clients rave about its results.

Intensive care offer dramatic results with little down time

If your neck and chest are looking very weathered, an in-office treatment or series of treatments may be necessary for dramatic improvement. We offer a number of resurfacing treatments, ranging from chemical peels, microdermabrasion, and dermaplane -- all of which will exfoliate dead skin and jumpstart the skin rejuvenation process. Each of these treatments stimulate collagen synthesis; they also help topical treatments, light and energy therapies to work more efficiently.

In addition, lasers such as Fraxel® and Radio frequency skin tightening (such as Exilis™), and more recently Ultherapy® will reduce fine lines and crepiness, and improvement in firmness and overall texture of the skin (including scars) can be achieved with Exilis™ Skin Tightening, Fraxel Re:Store, and Ultherapy®.

Sunspots and irregular pigmentation can be addressed with a combination of treatments. Light therapy (IPL) and lasers (Fraxel® Re:Store) enhance the effects of lightening agents and/or exfoliating treatments to even the skin tone and lighten irregular pigmentation.

As for treating the “wattle,” a Botox injection can soften the ropey look by weakening the muscle movement that can lead to a saggy neck.

Ultherapy® targets the deepest layers of the skin of the jowl, neck, and chest, for moderate lifting and tightening without surgery. For a serious “wattle”, surgery may be the best option for more dramatic results, but

prepping and tightening the skin will improve your surgical results and help protect your investment.

For more information, please contact Del Mar Aesthetic Clinic
13983 Mango Drive #102, Del Mar, CA 92014
yourbestyou@delmaraesthetic.com
858-259-4772