



In better skin.

The Ultimate Guide to
Pigmentation & Skin Blemishes



Page	Content
04.	What is Pigmentation?
05.	What is Hyperpigmentation?
06.	Types of Hyperpigmentation.
10.	What is Hypopigmentation?
11.	Types of Hypopigmentation.
14.	What are Skin Blemishes?
15.	Pigmentation Causes.
22.	Hyperpigmentation Treatments.
23.	SkinBase MD for Pigmentation.
24.	SkinBase Hydro for Pigmentation.
25.	SkinBase IPL for Pigmentation.
26.	Lifestyle Tips for Pigmentation Sufferers.
27.	Pigmentation Skincare
42.	Pigmentation & Diet
43.	Pigmentation & Stress
44.	Pigmentation & Smoking
45.	Treatment Results.



The Guide to Pigmentation & Skin Blemishes

Our skin is constantly changing, and pigmentation issues can appear at any stage of life. Whether it's sun spots, or post-acne marks, these changes are usually harmless. However, they can affect how we feel about our skin.

Understanding the causes and treatments for uneven skin tone is the first step toward regaining confidence and achieving a clearer, more radiant complexion.

Keep reading to uncover everything you need to know about managing pigmentation effectively!

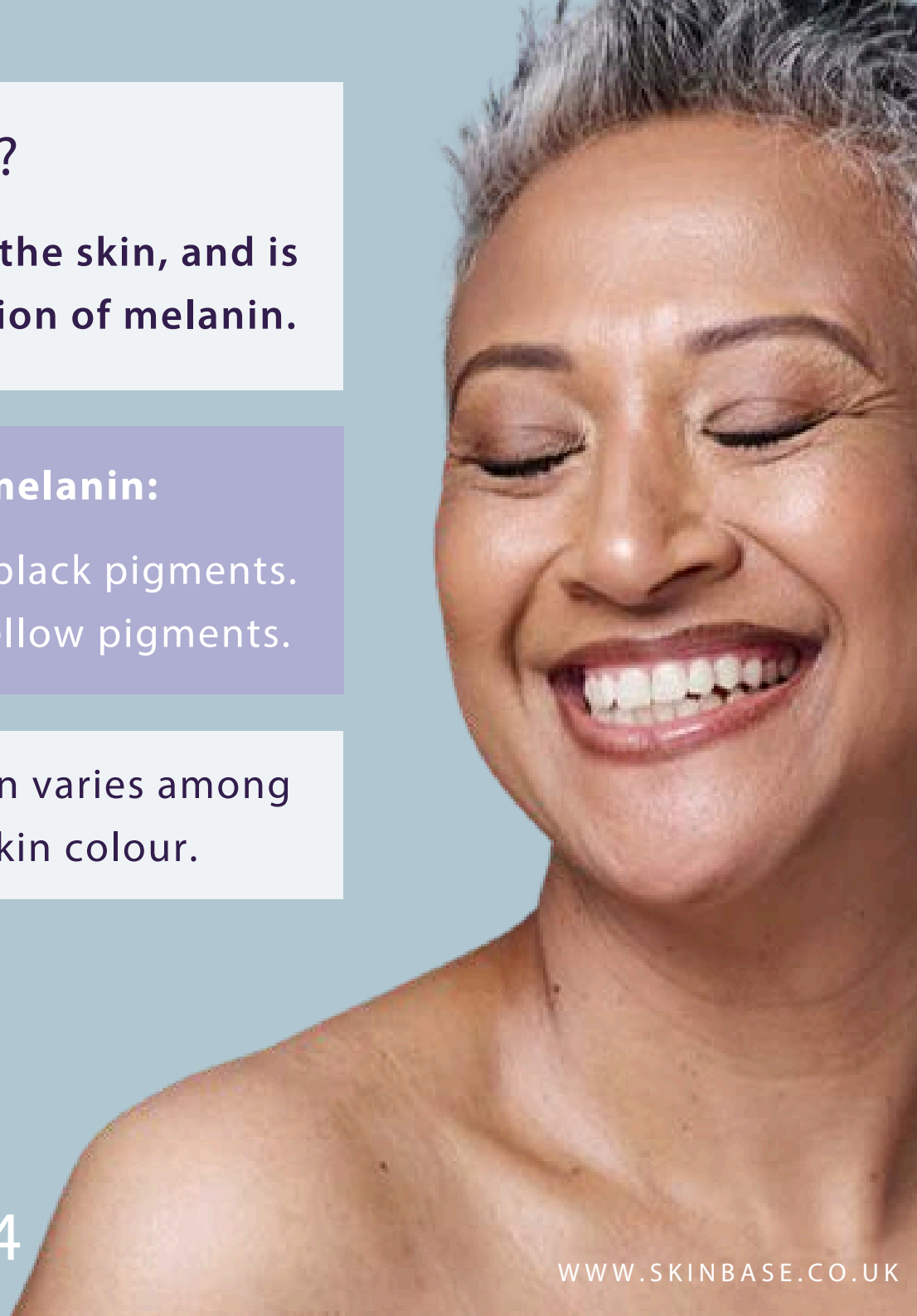
What Is Pigmentation?

Skin pigmentation refers to the colour of the skin, and is determined by the presence and distribution of melanin.

There are primarily two types of melanin:

- Eumelanin: responsible for brown and black pigments.
- Pheomelanin: contributes to red and yellow pigments.

The amount and type of melanin in the skin varies among individuals, leading to differences in skin colour.



What is Hyperpigmentation?

Excess production of melanin in certain areas of the skin can result in hyperpigmentation, a common condition characterised by patches of darker or discoloured skin.



Types of Hyperpigmentation

There are three common types of hyperpigmentation.

Melasma



Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation



Sunspots





Sunspots

Sun spots, also known as solar lentigines, are **darkened areas on the skin caused by prolonged exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays.**

These sun spots are often found on areas of the skin that receive the most sun exposure, such as the face, hands, shoulders, and arms.

Sun spots are a result of the skin's natural defence mechanism against UV damage, leading to an overproduction of melanin.

1. Epidermal Melasma

The most superficial type, affecting the top layer of skin and characterised by a dark brown colour and a well-defined border.

2. Dermal Melasma

Affects the second, deeper layer of the skin, appearing as a light brown or bluish colour with a blurry border.

3. Mixed Melasma

Mixed melasma is the most common type, affecting the top and second layer of skin, with both bluish and brown patches.

Melasma

Also known as 'chloasma' or 'pregnancy mask', melasma is a common hyperpigmentation skin condition, **characterised by patches of brown or grey-brown discolouration, usually on the face.**

Melasma can be divided into three different types, depending on the pigment depth.

A close-up photograph of a person's face, focusing on the skin texture and lips. The skin appears slightly reddened and irritated, particularly around the mouth and nose, which is consistent with the topic of Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation (PIH). The lips are a natural pinkish-red color.

Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation

Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation, known as acquired melanosis, is a condition causing areas of skin affected by inflammation or injury to darken.

The darkened patches may be flat or raised, and they can appear black, brown or red in colour.

PIH is not restricted to certain areas (as some conditions usually are) and can occur anywhere.

Individuals classified as a Fitzpatrick skin type 3-6 are more at risk of developing stubborn PIH.



What is Hypopigmentation?

A reduction of melanin in certain areas of the skin can result in hypopigmentation, a common condition characterised by patches of lighter or white skin.

Types of Hypopigmentation

There are two common types of hypopigmentation.

Vitiligo



Post-Inflammatory Hypopigmentation



Vitiligo

Vitiligo is a long-term skin condition characterised by the loss of pigment, resulting in white patches on the skin.

Vitiligo can affect any area of skin, but it commonly happens on the face, neck, hands, and in skin creases.

There are 2 main types of vitiligo.

1. Non-Segmental Vitiligo

The most common type of vitiligo, where symptoms appear on both sides of the body as symmetrical white patches.

2. Segmental Vitiligo

Less common, where the white patches only affect one area of your body, e.g. the face.



Post-Inflammatory Hypopigmentation

Post-Inflammatory Hypopigmentation is a condition causing areas of the skin affected by inflammation or injury to lighten.

Hypopigmentation from injuries or certain conditions may go away on its own or after treatment.

There currently aren't any effective treatments for hypopigmentation caused by scarring/from genetic conditions e.g. albinism. So, it can be permanent.

What are Skin Blemishes?

Skin blemishes are any type of discolouration, mark, spot, or flaw that appears on the surface of the skin.

This encompasses a wide range of issues such as acne, dark spots, redness, and even birthmarks or moles.

Head over to the [SkinBase Skin Conditions Hub](https://www.skinbase.co.uk/skin-conditions-hub) to find out more about treating skin concerns such as acne, scarring, broken capillaries and thread veins.

Continue reading to find out everything you need to know about pigmentation, including potential causes, treatment options, and lifestyle & prevention tips.





Pigmentation Causes

Pigmentation changes can be influenced by a range of factors. Understanding the root causes of pigmentation is essential for choosing effective treatments and preventing further discolouration.

UV Exposure

Damage caused by excessive sun exposure is one of the main causes of hyperpigmentation.

If you spend too long in the sun, your skin will protect itself from the detrimental rays by triggering the production of more melanin.

The damage caused by sun exposure often appears with age, so the hyperpigmentation is often referred to as sunspots, age spots, or liver spots.



Hormone Fluctuations

Hormones play a vital role in regulating melanin production, and when hormonal levels fluctuate or become imbalanced, it can trigger an overproduction of melanin in specific areas of the skin.

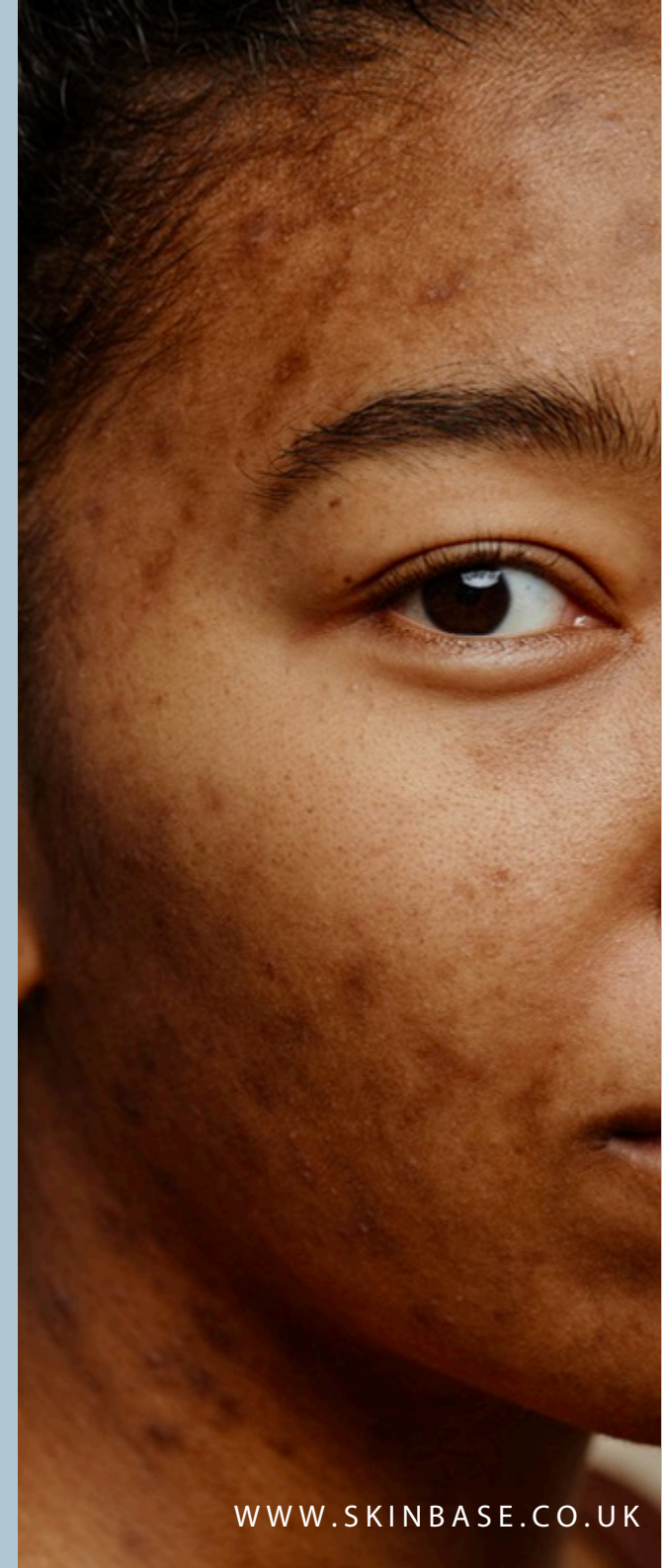
This is a common experience during pregnancy, when levels of oestrogen and progesterone increase significantly. Discolouration during pregnancy often occurs on the face, so is also known as melasma, or the 'mask of pregnancy'.

Inflammation

Pigmentation can occur after the skin has been damaged or inflamed, leaving behind dark marks or discolouration.

When the skin becomes inflamed or injured, it triggers the body's natural wound-healing response. Part of this response involves the activation of melanocytes, which begin producing more melanin to protect the area.

Pigmentation due to inflammation or injury can result from a wide variety of sources, including: acne, eczema, skin infections, burns, cuts, insects bites, and stings.





Medication

Certain medications can lead to pigmentation changes, either by stimulating melanin production, causing deposits of drug pigments, or increasing skin sensitivity to sunlight.

An estimated 10-20% of hyperpigmentation cases result from medications, and it is more common in women.

A close-up photograph of a woman's face, focusing on her right eye and cheek. She has dark, curly hair and is looking slightly to the side. There are visible white spots (pigmentation) on her cheek. The image serves as a background for the text boxes.

Cosmetics

Some cosmetics and skincare products can lead to pigmentation, especially if they irritate the skin or cause an allergic reaction.

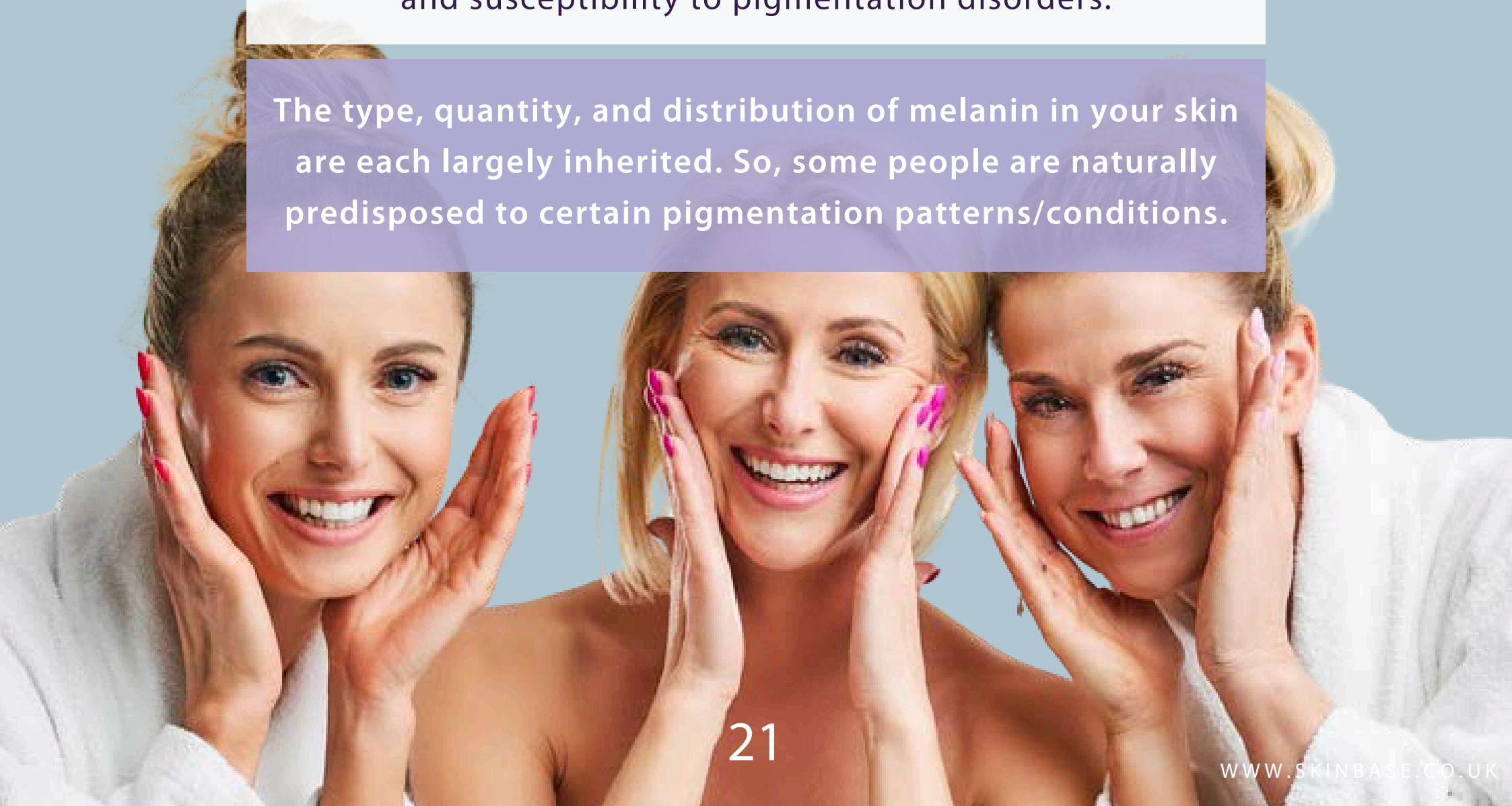
Fragrances, essential oils, and preservatives are common triggers. Using harsh products too often can also damage the skin barrier and increase the risk.

It's important to choose gentle, non-irritating products and always wear SPF to protect the skin.

Genetics

Genetics plays a fundamental role in determining an individual's baseline skin tone, melanin production, and susceptibility to pigmentation disorders.

The type, quantity, and distribution of melanin in your skin are each largely inherited. So, some people are naturally predisposed to certain pigmentation patterns/conditions.





Hyperpigmentation Treatments

Say goodbye to stubborn dark spots and an uneven skin tone with our targeted pigmentation solutions.



SkinBase MD for Pigmentation

SkinBase Microdermabrasion is a highly effective treatment for targeting hyperpigmentation and uneven skin tone.

This gentle, non-invasive procedure uses a fine stream of crystals to exfoliate the skin's surface, removing dead skin cells & debris, while encouraging new cell turnover.

By resurfacing the skin, Microdermabrasion helps to fade dark spots, sun damage, and post-inflammatory marks over time, revealing a smoother, more radiant complexion.

Find out more about Microdermabrasion for Pigmentation over in the SkinBase Skin Conditions Hub.

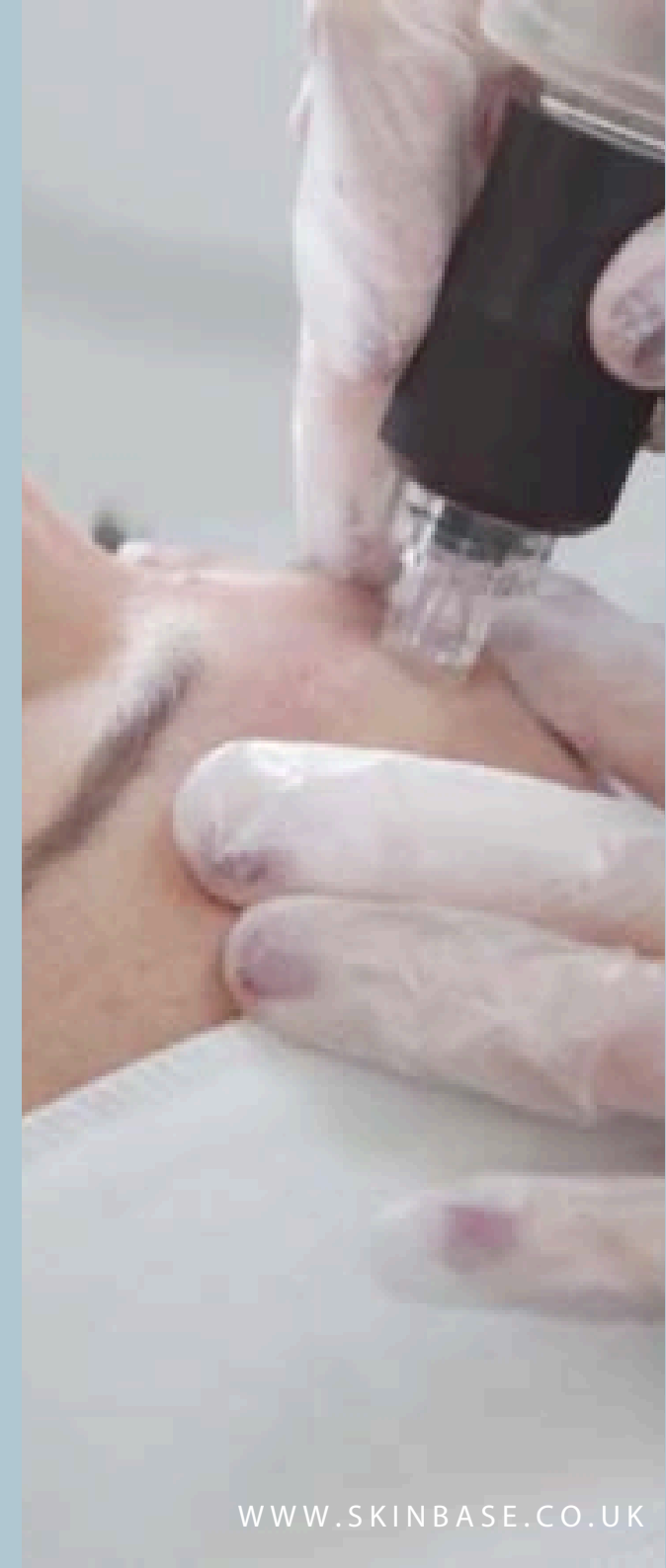
SkinBase Hydro for Pigmentation

With a multi-step process of a Hydro Peel and a Brightening Serum, it is an effective way to treat hyperpigmentation.

The Hydro peel contains a mix of BHA and AHAs, which gently exfoliate away the top layer of the skin, allowing superficial pigmentation to be shed and readying the skin for the serum.

The skin is then infused with beneficial ingredients, including Vitamin C, Kojic Acid & Glycine Soja Oil, which help to restore a more even tone, treat pigmentation and brighten your skin.

Find out more about SkinBase Hydro for Pigmentation over in the SkinBase Skin Conditions Hub.





SkinBase IPL for Pigmentation

SkinBase IPL is a popular, effective treatment for breaking down pigmentation and providing an even skin tone.

IPL works by delivering controlled pulses of light into the skin, which are then readily absorbed by areas of excess melanin. As the light energy is converted into heat, it safely breaks down the pigmented cells, which then rise to the surface and flake away naturally over the following days.

With a course of treatments, IPL can significantly fade pigmentation, leaving your skin visibly brighter & healthier.

Find out more about Intense Pulsed Light for Pigmentation over in the SkinBase Skin Conditions Hub.



Lifestyle Tips for Pigmentation Sufferers

While professional treatments can make a big difference, your daily lifestyle plays a crucial role in managing pigmentation.

Factors like skincare habits, diet, stress levels, and even smoking can influence how your skin heals, how melanin is produced, and whether dark spots return. Supporting your skin from the inside out can significantly enhance treatment results and help maintain a more radiant complexion over time.

A close-up photograph of a woman's face, focusing on her eye and cheek. Her hand is raised, with fingers gently touching her cheek. The background is a soft, out-of-focus beige color.

Pigmentation Skincare

A simple pigmentation skincare routine can help to keep your skin healthy, minimise discolouration and prevent future pigmentation occurring.



Consistent Routine

Consistency is key when it comes to tackling pigmentation.

Cleansing, treating, hydrating, and protecting your skin daily helps to fade existing pigmentation and prevent new discolouration or blemishes from forming. While results won't appear overnight, following a regular routine also gives actives the time they need to work effectively.

Skipping steps or frequently changing products can disrupt progress and irritate the skin, so sticking to a balanced, targeted routine is essential for long-term improvement.



Cleanser

Cleansing is a vital first step in caring for pigmented skin.

Cleansing twice daily, morning and night, helps maintain a balanced, healthy complexion, by removing any dirt, excess oil, makeup, or environmental pollutants that can contribute to inflammation and uneven skin tone.

Top Tip: Using an AHA cleanser adds exfoliating power to your routine, promoting a brighter, smoother complexion.



Product Spotlight: SkinBase Skin Renew AHA Cleansing Foam

This gentle foaming cleanser is ideal for a pigmentation skincare routine, with a combination of exfoliants, hydrating agents and soothing ingredients.

Fruit-Derived AHAs:

Gently exfoliate & promote cellular turnover.

Vitamin B5:

Deeply hydrates & strengthens the skin barrier.

Sepitonic M3

Supports skin repair, defence & skin vitality.

Bisabolol:

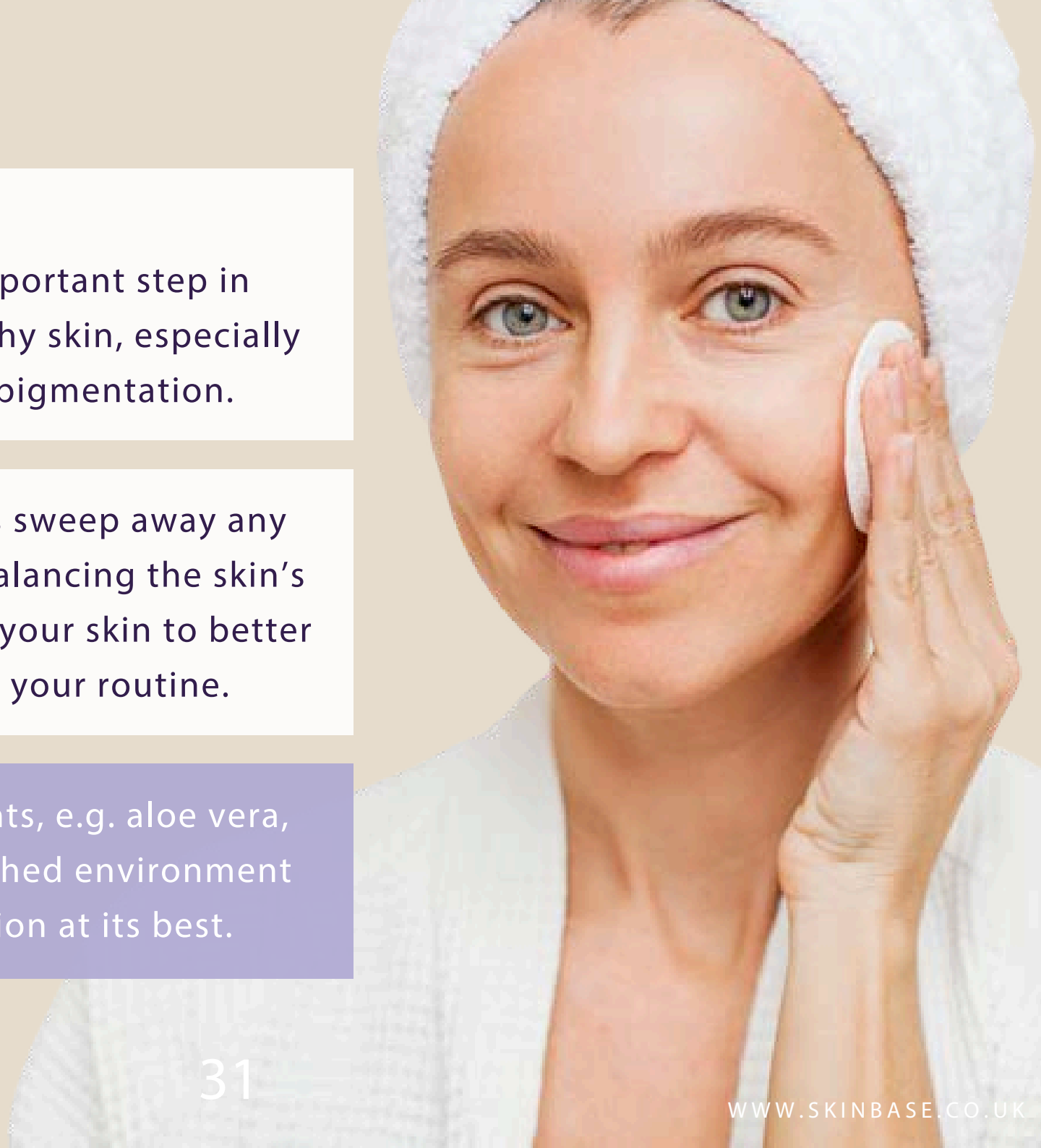
Soothes & reduces inflammation to prevent PIH.

Toner

Toning is a simple but important step in maintaining balanced, healthy skin, especially for those prone to hyperpigmentation.

After cleansing, toner helps sweep away any remaining residue while rebalancing the skin's pH levels. This also prepares your skin to better absorb the next steps in your routine.

Top Tip: Soothing ingredients, e.g. aloe vera, help to create a calm, nourished environment where the skin can function at its best.





Product Spotlight: SkinBase Soothing Toner

This gentle, hydrating toner creates the perfect foundation for a brightening routine, thanks to its calming, moisture-boosting formula.

Vitamin B5 & Allantoin

Reduces irritation that can trigger pigmentation.

Aloe Vera:

Soothes skin & calms inflammation to prevent PIH.

Hydroviton Plus:

Boosts moisture retention & helps to maintain a balanced, even-toned complexion.

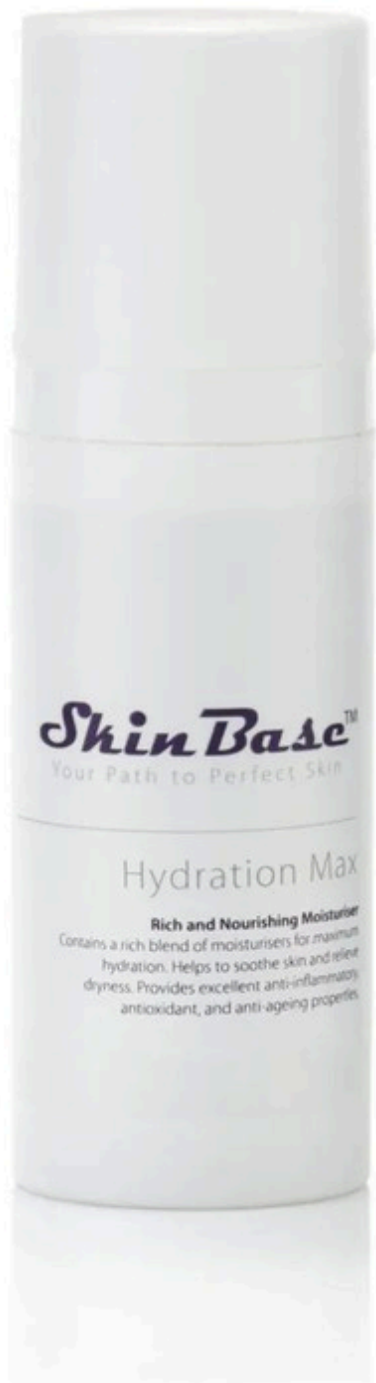


Moisturiser

Moisturising is a vital part of caring for pigmentation-prone skin, helping to maintain a strong, balanced skin barrier.

When your skin is properly hydrated, it's better equipped to repair itself, regulate melanin production, and resist environmental stressors that can trigger discolouration.

For those dealing with uneven tone, keeping the skin calm and nourished lays the foundation for a brighter complexion.



Product Spotlight: SkinBase Hydration Max Moisturiser

This nourishing moisturiser is ideal, delivering deep hydration & calming care while supporting skin tone correction.

Vitamin C:

Brightens skin & reduces appearance of dark spots.

Niacinamide:

Improves skin tone & supports healthy complexion.

Vitamin E:

Repairs and defends against pigmentation triggers.

Bisabolol:

Soothes irritation & calms the skin, preventing PIH.

Sun Protection

Daily sun protection is one of the most important steps in managing pigmentation. Wearing a broad-spectrum SPF every day, even when it's cloudy, helps prevent new pigmentation from forming and protects your skin.

UV exposure is a major trigger for dark spots and stubborn pigmentation, often undoing any progress made through targeted skincare and treatments.

Making SPF a non-negotiable part of your morning routine is a simple but powerful way to maintain an even complexion.





Product Spotlight: SkinBase Daily Protect SPF

This SPF is perfect for pigmentation-prone skin. It offers essential broad-spectrum sun protection, while nourishing the skin and supporting its natural defences.

UV Filters:

UVA/UVB protection to prevent sun damage.

Vitamin E:

Defends against triggers of pigmentation.

Vitamin C:

Brightens skin tone & enhances effectiveness of SPF.

Syricalm:

Reduces inflammation, which can contribute to PIH.

Targeted Ingredients

When it comes to treating pigmentation, choosing the right ingredients can make all the difference.

Certain actives are known for their ability to brighten the skin, reduce discolouration, and support a more even complexion over time.

Read on to take a deep dive into the best ingredients for treating hyperpigmentation.



Vitamin C for Pigmentation

Vitamin C is one of the most popular ingredients for brightening the skin and fading pigmentation.

As a powerful antioxidant, it protects the skin from free radical damage caused by UV rays and pollution, both of which can worsen discolouration.

Vitamin C works by inhibiting the enzyme tyrosinase, which is responsible for melanin production, helping to gradually reduce the appearance of dark spots.

Regular use of Vitamin C can result in a more luminous, even complexion and improved skin texture.

Niacinamide for Pigmentation

Niacinamide, also known as Vitamin B3, is a gentle yet highly effective ingredient for reducing pigmentation.

It helps to calm inflammation, strengthen the skin barrier, and regulate oil production, making it an ideal ingredient for pigmentation-prone skin.

Niacinamide works by reducing the transfer of melanin to skin cells, helping to gradually minimise discolouration and support a more even skin tone.

With consistent use, niacinamide can visibly brighten the complexion, smooth texture, and fade dark spots.



Kojic Acid for Pigmentation

Kojic acid is a natural skin-lightening ingredient derived from fungi and fermented rice.

Kojic acid works by inhibiting tyrosinase, just like vitamin C, helping to gradually fade pigmentation and prevent new dark spots from forming.

Using kojic acid may increase your skin's sensitivity to the sun, so it's crucial to use sunscreen daily to prevent further pigmentation from appearing.

Regular use helps to brighten skin and improve overall tone, especially in areas of stubborn discolouration.

Vitamin A (Retinol) for Pigmentation

Vitamin A derivatives, such as retinol, are highly effective in reducing pigmentation and improving skin clarity.

Retinol encourages the cell turnover process to operate more efficiently, shedding pigmented skin cells away & revealing the new, healthy skin cells.

Retinol is also thought to mitigate tyrosinase production, preventing future pigmentation and contributing to the healthier appearance of the skin.

Over time, retinol use can significantly fade dark spots and improve the overall brightness of the skin.





Pigmentation & Diet

What you put on your plate plays a big role in how your skin looks & heals, especially when it comes to pigmentation. By fuelling your body with the right foods, you're giving your skin the best chance to stay clear, even-toned, and glowing.

Eating a diet full of skin-loving nutrients like vitamin C, vitamin E, zinc, and beta-carotene, helps protect your skin from damage and supports its natural repair process.

Too much sugar, processed foods, and unhealthy fats can lead to inflammation, which may make pigmentation worse.

Think colourful fruits and vegetables, leafy greens, nuts, seeds, and oily fish, all packed with antioxidants that brighten your complexion and help reduce discolouration!



Pigmentation & Stress

Long term stress doesn't just affect your mood, it can also have a noticeable impact on your complexion.

When the body is under stress, it produces higher levels of cortisol, a hormone that can trigger inflammation and disrupt normal skin functions. This inflammation can worsen existing discolouration and increase the risk.

Managing stress through sleep, relaxation, exercise, or mindfulness can play an important role in maintaining a more even, balanced complexion.

Pigmentation & Smoking

Smoking can take a real toll on your skin, especially if you're dealing with pigmentation.

The chemicals in cigarette smoke reduce the amount of oxygen and nutrients that reach your skin, which can leave it looking dull and uneven.

Smoking also increases inflammation and oxidative stress, both of which can make dark spots more noticeable and slower to fade.

If you want to improve pigmentation, giving up smoking is one of the best things you can do to help your complexion heal and glow.

A close-up portrait of a young woman with curly brown hair, smiling broadly with her eyes closed. She has a joyful expression. The background is a solid light blue color.

In results.

Treatment
Results



SkinBaseTM
TRANSFORMATION OF THE YEAR
2023

IPL Rejuvenation x 6

I felt so self conscious and it was getting worse and worse.

The IPL sessions made an enormous difference. My skin is in better, younger shape now than it was 3 years ago! I now never leave the house without a strong SPF. I

honestly can't believe my skin is this good now considering how bad it was - in my view, it's one of the best investments I can make in myself.

The Jay's Nest

IPL Rejuvenation x 5 - Blissful Beauty by Clare



“Having gone through some ups and downs hormonally I noticed a large patch on my face. I felt very self conscious and struggled to cover it with makeup. After 5 sessions my pigmentation is completely gone! I’m so pleased.”

IPL Rejuvenation x 3

“It’s been getting me down for so long and affecting my confidence. I really didn’t expect it to work but within 1-2 sessions could see a drastic difference! My skin looked more even and uniformed and by the 3rd session the majority had gone! I will have more, I am so thrilled with the results, this has been life changing.”

The Jay’s Nest



IPL Rejuvenation x 4 - Blissful Beauty by Clare



"I absolutely love this treatment for my skin overall but especially for my pigmentation. I have a course of treatments with Clare regularly to keep my skin in tiptop condition."



Microdermabrasion x 5

"I had two areas of pigmentation on my upper lip that I hated. It made me very self conscious and I would always cover it with make up. My daughter even said it looked like I had a moustache. I can't believe the difference a few months has made. It's practically gone. It has given me a real boost in confidence, I'm not embarrassed by it and I'm happy to go out make up free."

Perry's Beauty

Microdermabrasion/Hydro x 6 - Solution Skin Clinic



"I came to Lisa for help with hyperpigmentation after I used bleaching products on my skin. After a few months of fortnightly treatments I'm so happy with the progression of my skin, and relieved it hasn't been permanently damaged."

Microdermabrasion x 6



2bSpoilt

Microdermabrasion x 6



DB Skin Therapy



Microdermabrasion x 6

“It makes me so happy having these treatments, it's like a miracle! My skin is so much more lighter and they no longer look like bruises. My mum is really happy too and lots of people have noticed, I'm well pleased, I can't believe it! It's just an amazing feeling not waking up stressing I look like I've got black eyes, really was depressing me can't wait to carry on the treatment!

Rebecca Willshee
Skin Specialist

Microdermabrasion x 12 - The Blissful Beauty Company



"I started to get pigmentation after the birth of my son. Sitting in the sun started to make the pigmentation spread and get darker. I wasn't sure if MD would help but I can't believe the difference in my skin. I look younger, my skin is glowing and my confidence is soaring. The results are just incredible."