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PURE AND  
**SIMPLE**

INTERNATIONAL ORANGE MARIN  
(LARKSPUR, CA)



## Three of a Kind

When it comes to effectively treating a wide range of skin conditions, niacin- and niacinamide-based products and services are a safe bet.

“Niacin has long been used... to help correct skin challenges and restore skin to optimum health.”

**NOURISHING THE SKIN IN A VARIETY OF WAYS,** vitamins A, C, D, and E are all well-known among skincare experts and spa aficionados. Less familiar to them, perhaps, are the benefits of the missing letter in the sequence—B. However, vitamin B is one of the most essential vitamins in promoting healthy skin and hair. While the eight water-soluble B vitamins all offer benefits to the skin and body, B3 (niacin) is fast becoming known as an anti-aging powerhouse. Niacin, the third B vitamin to be discovered (hence its position as vitamin B3), helps promote healthy skin formation and energizes the skin. “Niacin has long been used in professional esthetics to help correct skin challenges and restore skin to optimum health,” says Rhonda Allison, founder

and CEO of Rhonda Allison Cosmeceuticals. “Part of the reason it may be so popular today is simply due to the fact that consumers have become more ingredient-savvy than ever, and they are taking charge of what they’re putting on their skin. As a result, they’ve become privy to an ingredient estheticians have long known to produce amazing results. Consumer awareness and intrigue around the health benefits of the vitamin B group as a whole have drastically increased over the years, and this may have also led to the increased interest in niacin as a skincare ingredient.”

Vitamin B3 is made up of niacin (also known as nicotinic acid) and niacinamide (nicotinamide), the active form of niacin. While both are

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## [ skin deep ]

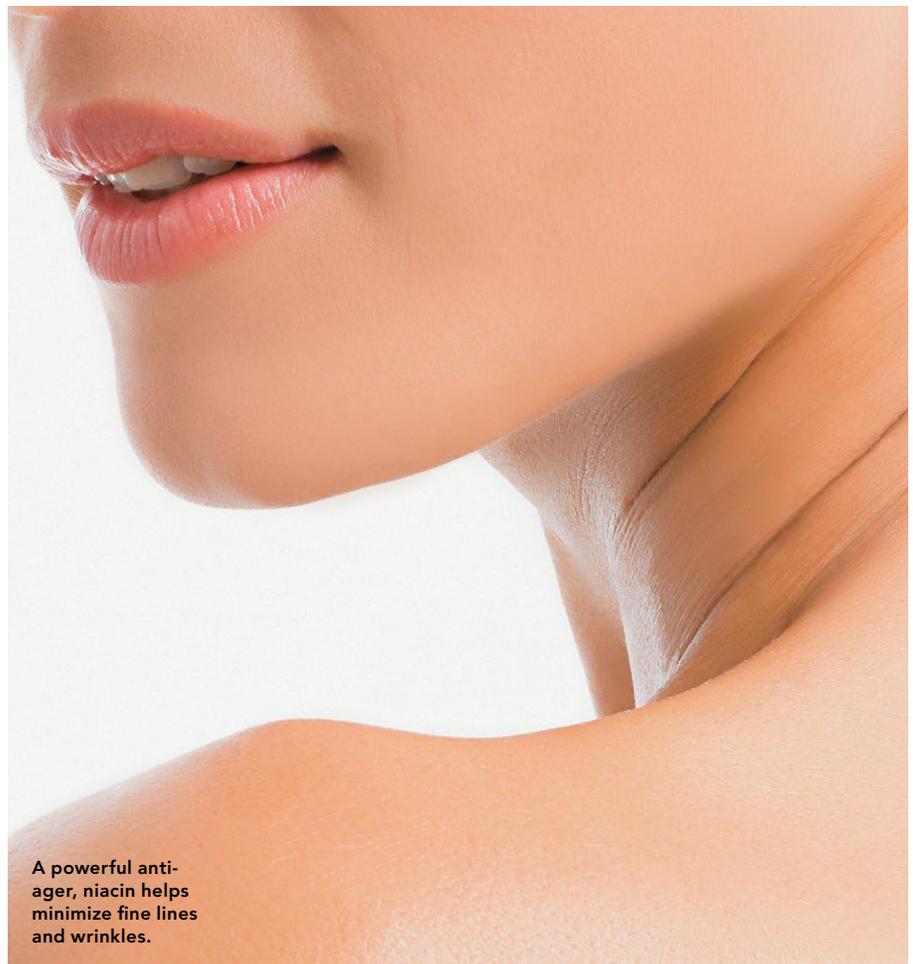
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water-soluble, the difference between the two is mostly in the way they react chemically. High doses of niacin can sometimes cause skin flushing (commonly known as the “niacin flush”). Niacinamide (niacin is converted to the chemical niacinamide in the body), on the other hand, does not typically irritate the skin or cause that flushed appearance. However, both provide an array of benefits to numerous systems within the body, including the digestive, nervous, and circulatory systems—as well as the skin. Because of their amazing ability to repair sun damage, stimulate circulation, strengthen the skin, and promote cell turnover, niacin and niacinamide are frequently found in dietary supplements and skincare formulations.

In the form of an oral supplement, niacin helps rid the body of toxins and stimulates circulation. According to Janae Muzzy, vice president of research and development at Epicuren Discovery, it is often used internally to reduce cholesterol and triglyceride levels and is touted for its many other benefits, including dilating blood vessels, improving circulation and delivering oxygen around the body, improving memory function, and stabilizing blood sugar levels. In skincare, niacin or niacinamide is used for its ability to promote the formation of healthy skin cells. It also helps increase blood flow and oxygenation, reduce the appearance of wrinkles, treat sun-damaged and dull-looking skin, and tone the skin. “Niacin is a fascinating vitamin that actually works in tandem with cellular biology—interacting with cells and skin structures,” says Allison.

### Full Benefits

As people age, cellular turnover slows at the epidermal level, resulting in a thinner epidermis and dermis, which can lead to signs of aging, such as a dull complexion, dehydration, and fine lines and wrinkles. According to Elisabeth Nehme, international brand ambassador and master educator at [ comfort zone ], because niacin and niacinamide are anti-inflammatory, hydrating, and favor synthesis of the epidermal ceramides, they contribute to reversing some of the most drastic signs of aging skin. They are also beneficial in preventing signs of aging and keeping skin healthy and radiant, and they have the ability to successfully and effectively



A powerful anti-ager, niacin helps minimize fine lines and wrinkles.

treat multiple skin concerns and conditions. What’s more, they are suitable and tolerated by most skin types. “Niacinamide is essential for the growth and maintenance of healthy skin,” says Janel Luu, CEO of Le Mieux Cosmetics. “It helps boost microcirculation, soothe inflammation, improve acne conditions, and protect cells against oxidative and environmental damage.”

While niacin and niacinamide reduce dryness; increase skin’s resistance to environmental pollutants; reduce pigmentation; and brighten age spots, sun spots, and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, they also enhance barrier function, according to Alexis Mayne, vice president of research and development and compliance at Sanitas. “Niacinamide stimulates co-factors for the synthesis of fatty acids, lipids, and ceramides that maintain epidermal barrier function,” she says. “It increases the production of proteins such as keratin, involucrin, and filaggrin, which are important factors in the formation and maintenance of the cornified envelope in the stratum corneum. Barrier compromise is common in aging skin and can contribute to heightened sensitivity and irritation by allowing external insults easier entry into the skin.”

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Here is a list of the skin conditions and concerns that niacin- and niacinamide-based products help treat:

• **Acne, Rosacea, and General Skin Irritation:**

Because niacin and niacinamide help improve the epidermal barrier function, they are often included in skincare products and treatments to reduce inflammation of the skin in clients with acne and rosacea. **Renew Skincare Centre & Spa** (Canton, MA), for example, offers the Glycolic 60% (\$115, 60 minutes) facial treatment, which uses a formula from GloTherapeutics that contains active ingredients of bilberry fruit extract, citric acid, glycolic acid, phytic acid, and raspberry fruit extract, as well as niacinamide in its composition. It helps rejuvenate damaged skin by stimulating fresher, healthy cell growth; improves the appearance of aging and photodamaged skin, as well as acne; and helps smooth texture, soften fine lines, and even skintone.

• **Cellulite:**

Niacin and niacinamide help increase circulation in the body, which make them effective ingredients in cellulite-fighting treatments. Guests at **Spa Shiki** at The Lodge of Four Seasons (Lake Ozark, MO) can opt to add a booster (\$25) to any massage or wrap. The booster, which is applied to pockets of cellulite and adipose tissue in the buttocks, hips, thighs, and back of arms before any massage or wrap treatment, contains niacin and organic seaweed to stimulate and heat the skin, creating redness that will fade within one to two hours.

• **Dry Skin:**

Niacin and niacinamide are great for clients who suffer from dry skin, because they help increase skin hydration and prevent transepidermal water loss.

• **Exfoliation:**

Products containing niacin and niacinamide exfoliate the skin, helping to smooth it and improve ingredient absorption. At **New Skinsations** (Jefferson City, MO), for example, clients can experience the exfoliating benefits of niacin in the Micropeel for Sensitive Skin (\$70, 60 minutes), which includes a formulation containing niacin, lactic acid, and usnic acid to gently exfoliate and hydrate skin, decongest pores, and improve visible signs of photo damage.

• **Fine Lines and Wrinkles:**

Niacin and niacinamide help promote collagen synthesis and plump fine lines and wrinkles. Clients can prevent and reduce these signs of aging and more with the Age-Defying Facial (\$170, 50 minutes) at **The Spa at Stoweflake** at Stoweflake Mountain Resort & Spa (Stowe, VT). It contains a blend of plant-derived stem cells and niacin.

• **Hyperpigmentation:**

Hyperpigmentation and dark circles can be treated with niacin and niacinamide, as they inhibit the transfer of melanosomes, which transport melanin from pigment-producing melanocytes up to the keratinocytes of the upper layer of the epidermis, according to Luu. **The Spa at Entrada** at The Inn at Entrada (St. George, UT), for example, offers the Nia-Stem Facial (\$100, 50 minutes; \$120, 80 minutes), which is an anti-aging, reparative facial treatment that blends plant-derived stem cells with niacin to detoxify the skin cells, fight free-radical damage, and stimulate DNA repair while increasing cell turnover, boosting hydration, and improving the skin's overall health.

• **Sun Damage:**

According to Luu, niacin and niacinamide are included in many sunscreen formulations, because they function as antioxidants that help repair damage caused by exposure to ultraviolet rays.

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“Niacin and niacinamide help increase circulation in the body, which make them effective ingredients in cellulite-fighting treatments.”

Vitamin B3 is helpful in treating cellulite.



[ skin deep ]

Niacin is key to maintaining healthy nails.

“Niacinamide is dose-dependent and produces different effects on the skin when a different percentage is used.”

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### Chemical Reaction

For most skin types and conditions, niacin and niacinamide are considered safe when applied topically. It's important to note though that niacin can create a flushing effect on skin, so be sure to consult with clients prior to performing any related treatments on clients. “If niacinamide is used in the product, the side effects are virtually nonexistent,” says Irena James, cofounder of CelleClé Skincare and vice president of product development at YG Laboratories. “However, if niacin is used as a main constituent, some clients could react with the typical niacin-flush, redness, and tingling sensation that usually lasts about two to 30 minutes. This reaction is more likely to occur when B3 is ingested rather than applied on the skin topically, but some extremely sensitive clients may react this way even to topically applied niacin. This can be a desirable reaction in cellulite treatments, indicating an increase in circulation and adenosine triphosphate molecule synthesis, which speeds up treatment results.”

Because of the potential for an adverse reaction, clients with sensitive skin or those who are pregnant or lactating should consult with a primary healthcare provider before using any niacin- or niacinamide-based product or treatment. Also, because niacin is a very active ingredient, it should be slowly introduced, especially when used on rosacea- and acne-prone skin. And even though topical use differs greatly from taking it internally, clients with a history of heart disease, gout, blood pressure issues, or alcohol or liver disease should avoid using products with niacin. “It's always best to do a patch test before using any new product to see if there are any negative skin reactions, such as stubborn redness or unexpected peeling,” says Luu.

### Dose of Knowledge

When choosing products for use in treatments or to sell in your retail area, it is imperative that you choose trusted brands with proven results. It's also important to know which form of vitamin B3 is used in the specific product (niacin or niacinamide), and at what percentage. “Niacinamide is dose-dependent and produces different effects on the skin when a different percentage is used,” says James. “For example, 0.5 percent will increase the skin's energy levels, but it won't do much for reducing the skin's pigment. Knowing what percentage of niacinamide is used in the product and communicating the product's benefits accurately will ensure that the client has realistic expectations of the product's performance.”

### Front and Center

In the retail area, Jaklin Idris, national director of education at Decléor, suggests soft-selling niacin- and niacinamide-based products as a link to wellness by recommending the products along with healthy diet tips and oral supplements. Selling such products that correspond to a spa service for at-home extended benefits is also another way to promote niacin- or niacinamide-based treatments and products. In addition, promoting the many benefits of niacin- and niacinamide-based products throughout the spa can boost interest in the ingredient and entice clients to try the product or treatment, especially because of the wide range of benefits. “Advertising niacinamide-containing products for anything from skin brightening to improving skin dryness to soothing irritation or sun-damage or pore-size correction will resonate with many result-oriented clients and generate revenue for the spa,” says James.

From preventing and reducing signs of aging to increasing circulation and reducing inflammation, the benefits of niacin and niacinamide are many, which is why they are growing in popularity among spa-goers looking for real, visible results. According to Nehme, they provide corrective action in aging skin by contributing in reversing some of the most drastic signs of aging. She says, “By reactivating circulation and optimizing oxygenation of the skin, we have a true ‘inside to the outside’ improvement in the skin, not just a topical fix.”—*Nicole Attavilla*

# FULL OF ENERGY

These niacin- and niacinamide-based products invigorate skin with a youthful boost.—*Darby Radcliff*



**1. B.Kamins Laboratories Nia-Stem Moisturizer Kx:**

Prevent multiple signs of aging and stimulate cell metabolism with this daily moisturizer containing niacin and plant stem cells. [www.bkamins.com](http://www.bkamins.com)

**2. CelleClé LumiBright C Corrective Complex:**

Fade discoloration and sun-induced aging with this serum fortified with a blend of niacin, orange stem cells, vital cell energizers, and vitamin C. [www.cellecleskincare.com](http://www.cellecleskincare.com)

**3. Epicuren Discovery Enzyme Concentrate Vitamin Protein Complex:**

Improve the appearance of skintone and elasticity with this highly concentrated liquid filled with niacin and protein nutrients. [www.epicuren.com](http://www.epicuren.com)

**4. Osmosis Pür Medical Skincare Niacinamide Powder Active:**

Stimulate circulation, collagen, and elastin with this complex filled with antioxidants, growth factors, and niacin. [www.osmosisskincare.com](http://www.osmosisskincare.com)

**5. PCA Skin Clearskin:**

Improve uneven skintone with this nourishing moisturizer containing bisabolol, cucumber fruit and lemongrass extracts, marigold flower oil, niacin, and vitamin A. [www.pcasoin.com](http://www.pcasoin.com)

**6. Peter Thomas Roth Clinical Skincare Laser-Free Regenerator:**

Treat dull, damaged, and wrinkled skin with this brightening gel-cream infused with dragon fruit, hexapeptide, and niacin. [www.peterthomasroth.com](http://www.peterthomasroth.com)

**7. Rapidlash B3 Perfect Niacinamide Topical Spray For Problematic Skin:**

Calm and clear blemished, irritated skin with this niacin formula, which hydrates while effectively exfoliating dead skin cells. [www.rapidlash.com](http://www.rapidlash.com)

**8. Rhonda Allison ChronoPeptide A:**

Featuring cloudberry seed oil, mangosteen fruit extract, niacin, and vitamin A, this brightening serum also helps improve acne and promote collagen synthesis. [www.rhondaallison.com](http://www.rhondaallison.com)

**9. Sanitas B3 Clarifying Complex:**

Smooth texture and relieve redness with this balancing treatment lotion formulated with niacin, sulfur, and zinc. [www.sanitas-skincare.com](http://www.sanitas-skincare.com)

**10. Sessa Skin Therapy Acne Control Lotion:**

Fight overproduction of sebum and regulate cell growth to prevent inflammation with this daily complex featuring green tea oil and niacin. [www.seshaskin.com](http://www.seshaskin.com)

**11. SkinCeuticals Metacell Renewal B3:**

This daily emulsion made with niacin, a firming tri-peptide concentrate, and pure glycerin helps to increase cell turnover to resurface skin and improve the appearance of wrinkles. [www.skinceuticals.com](http://www.skinceuticals.com)

**12. Sothys Paris Dark Circle Eraser:**

Conceal dark patches and diminish discoloration with this tinted powdery formula containing niacin and yeast extract. [www.sothys-usa.com](http://www.sothys-usa.com)

➤ For more niacin-related products, visit our blog at [www.americanspa.com](http://www.americanspa.com).