

HFMA Bulletin

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Changing consumer behaviours and the rise of nutraceuticals

As consumers are focusing more and more on their outward appearance as one of the most important indicators of health and well-being, the wellness industry must evaluate the science behind beauty supplements to ensure we're providing consumers with products that are as efficacious as they are popular.

Consumers are evolving. They no longer view wrinkles as the primary sign of ageing; they also have concerns around dry skin, dark spots, hyperpigmentation, etc. As they recognize that all of these can be indicators of ageing, consumers are looking at supplements to help them achieve younger looking skin.

The skin is the largest organ of the body, consisting of three layers: the epidermis (outer layer); dermis (inner layer); and hypodermis (under layer). We should help our consumers understand the different lifestyle choices they can make to help delay or 'combat' the skin-ageing process, such as ensuring they use appropriate sunblock to protect the epidermis. The epidermis acts as a barrier to the environment and is most susceptible to the effects of free radicals, so a good antioxidant supplement such as vitamin C or E can help by mitigating the effects of these free radicals.

The other layers of skin are connected to a vast vascular network helping to maintain healthy tissues, aid in wound healing and mediate immune reactions. Due to this direct connection with the bloodstream, the skin is frequently the first place where nutrient deficiencies can be identified, because a lack

of nutrients can cause common skin ailments such as dryness and wrinkles.

By helping consumers understand the link between nutrient deficiencies and skin health, we can encourage them to combine an active lifestyle and a healthy well-balanced diet with supplementation to help them in their anti-ageing quest.

As well as the more traditional approaches of antioxidant supplements such as vitamins A, C and E, nutraceuticals – nutritional supplements which support the function and structure of skin – have evolved to contain additional ingredients such as collagen, which gives skin its strength and elasticity, and keratin, which provides skin with its rigidity.

Consumers are not solely focused on what a supplement contains; of equal importance is how it tastes. This has seen the rise of the beauty gummy, offering the total experience of indulging taste buds as well as providing the nutritional benefits of supplements.

Looking towards emerging beauty trends, we notice that consumers are educating themselves on what their skin health needs are, which can lead them towards more traditional supplement options. However, we also need to consider that they are becoming more selective in choosing beauty products and are looking for quality, natural and proven ingredients and technologies. With the nutraceuticals industry set to reach an estimated \$7.64 billion by 2025, it's clear that beauty supplements are here to stay.

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