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WHAT ARE BETA-GLUCANS, ANYWAY?

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Hyaluronic acid, glycolic acid, salicylic acid, [lactic acid](#)—one thing these ingredients have in common is their popularity in the skin care sphere. They, among many others, have held the spotlight for years to help address skin care concerns ranging from moisture loss to acne. But we'd be amiss if we didn't talk about a lesser-known newcomer on the scene that's getting much-deserved attention: beta-glucan. To find out if beta-glucans in skin care are deserving of the increasing hype, we spoke with ethnic skin expert, SkinCeuticals ambassador, and Skincare.com consultant [Dr. William Kwan](#). Read on to learn everything you need to know about beta-glucans in skin care.

[WHAT ARE BETA-GLUCANS?](#)

If you don't know what beta-glucans are, even if you've heard that they're a must-have for your skin care routine, you aren't alone. Until they were suddenly on everyone's lips, beta-glucans weren't exactly a household name. Hence why we looked to an expert for the official answer on what they are. Beta-glucans, according to Dr. Kwan, are a type of soluble fiber that's derived from oats. If you want to get more scientific, the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) shares that beta-glucans can also be classified as naturally occurring polysaccharides, which can be found in the bran of cereal grains, the cell wall of baker's yeast, certain types of fungi, and many different kinds of mushrooms.

Some people have gone as far as saying that beta-glucan is the "new hyaluronic acid." Naturally, we asked Dr. Kwan what he thought of that title. While Dr. Kwan names beta-glucan a reasonable, non-

irritating addition to skin care products, he wouldn't call it a replacement for hyaluronic acid.

"Hyaluronic acid is one of the building blocks of all organisms and is irreplaceable as [a humectant that preserves moisture](#)," he says. Long story short: Adding beta-glucan to your routine doesn't mean you should stop using hyaluronic acid—there's room for both ingredients in your regimen. **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BETA-GLUCANS IN SKIN CARE?**

Now that you have a better idea of what beta-glucans are, you surely want to know why they've rapidly risen in popularity. Beta-glucans have long been used for various health purposes, with the NCBI naming immune-modulating properties as examples. It's only more recently that beta-glucans have been recognized for the benefits they can provide your skin, which according to Dr. Kwan includes helping to heal wounds, diminishing the appearance of wrinkles, and reducing skin irritation. Additionally, according to the NCBI, beta-glucans have been successfully used to address burns by helping to reduce pain and improve healing.

WHO SHOULD USE BETA-GLUCANS?

Often, certain ingredients won't work for specific skin types. Thankfully, that isn't the case with beta-glucan. No matter your skin type, you can get in on this trend. That's because, as Dr. Kwan confirms, all skin types can benefit from products formulated with beta-glucan.



How to Add Beta-Glucans to Your Routine

If you fit the description of someone who should use beta-glucans in their skin care routine—which to review, is everyone—you can rest easy knowing you won't have to do any major revamping to

work them into your current regimen. Look for potent serums and face creams with the ingredient, as both have become popular choices for products to formulate with beta-glucan. Then, start using your product pick, adding it to your routine wherever it best fits.

If your everyday routine is feeling overcrowded, you can also save products with beta-glucan for (special) occasions where your skin is in need of extra TLC. For example, the [SkinCeuticals Epidermal Repair](#) is ideal for use following dermatological procedures such as: [microdermabrasion](#), light to medium chemical peels, IPL treatments, and laser resurfacing. The formula combines [centella asiatica](#)—another trendy ingredient—and beta-glucan, and helps to repair compromised skin by facilitating the rapid restoration of its barrier function. At the same time, it helps to relieve and rehabilitate sensitive skin while greatly reducing the appearance of redness. To use, once daily, or as needed, massage a small amount evenly into the affected area.

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