Which Toner Format Is Right for You? Dermatologists Weigh In on Pads, Masks and Liquids

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How a sheet mask compares

Sheet masks turn the delivery method into part of the treatment. The paper layer holds ingredients against skin and slows evaporation while they absorb, which matters more as skin becomes slower to hold onto moisture.

Debbie Palmer, DO, a New York-based dermatologist, told Women's Health, "When you put a mask on your skin, you can increase the water content." Palmer noted it is not entirely clear whether a sheet mask outperforms a well-formulated serum, which is a useful reality check if you already own a good one.

Dendy Engelman, MD, a New York City dermatologist, told Women's Health that sheet masks "use the material to trap active ingredients on the skin, forcing it to lock in the moisture and receive all the benefits." She added that "sheet masks have a higher concentration of actives than a topical product, and depending on the material, the sheet can help deliver products deeper into the skin." Ingredients worth looking for include hyaluronic acid, ceramides and antioxidants. As Engelman told Women's Health, "Skin loses water and moisture as we age, so this ingredient will help restore hydration."