

# allure

THE BEAUTY EXPERT

LONG, SEXY  
LASHES

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## Power Wash

The latest cleansers aim to smooth lines and protect skin from pollution. Do they work—or is it all just suds? By Rory Evans

**S**canning the labels of new cleansers making big skin-boosting promises, we find ourselves inexplicably thinking of the *X-Files* movie that came out this year—the one subtitled *I Want to Believe*. Since we have to wash the day's grime off our faces anyway, wouldn't it be swell if we could also fight wrinkles or protect our skin from environmental abuse at the same time? Who wouldn't want their cleanser to do that? Let's go out and buy some! And that's right about when our inner Dana Scully shouts, "Hello, have you forgotten that you rinse it all off with water? That cleanser *literally* goes right down the drain?"

This might have been true in the past, but the latest generation of washes may win over even the biggest skeptics. Some new ingredients have rinse-resistant staying power; others offer the more subtle bonus of increasing the effectiveness of your other creams and serums. And while any benefits will be gradual, there's no question that "it certainly can't hurt to use them," says Joseph Cincotta, a cosmetic scientist. "Every little bit helps." So, which of the new washes are worth believing in? The truth is right here.

## The Truth About Toners

**D**ermatologists have long said that toner is unnecessary. In fact, because many astringents contain alcohol, they can make skin uncomfortably dry. But recently, this neglected middle child of skin care has evolved.

The newest toners are packed with antioxidants, peptides, and moisturizers, and are focused more on hydrating skin and countering signs of aging than on stripping it of oil. They are appropriate for all skin types and all areas of the face, while the previous toners, designed for oily and acne-prone skin, were intended mostly for the T-zone, says Amy B. Lewis, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the Yale School of Medicine. She says antioxidants (such as green tea and vitamin C) in toners like Care by Stella McCartney

Toning Floral Water can help combat free radicals; hyaluronic acid or glycerin, in Estée Lauder Soft Clean Silky Hydration Lotion and **Sothys Flower Water**, will moisturize; and peptides, in Dermalogica Age Smart Antioxidant HydraMist, are known to stimulate collagen production.

Are these new products more beneficial than the originals? If you have sensitive or oily skin and tend to break out from heavy creams, these toners could be an appealing alternative to moisturizer, says David E. Bank, associate professor of clinical dermatology at Columbia University. For everyone else, "using a moisturizer that includes these hydrating or anti-aging ingredients would be more effective, because creams penetrate deeper into the skin and remain active for longer," Bank says.

—KAYLEIGH DONAHUE

