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## Ethnic-skin tone 'focus' of expert

By [Amy Royster](#)

Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

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**Dr. Jeanine Downie**

**Practice:** Image Dermatology in Montclair, N.J..

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**Specialty:** Ethnic skin

**Name dropping:** Cosmetics giant Bobbi Brown is a patient.

**Skin tone:** Downie washes her face with MD Forte's glycolic face wash in the mornings to help with excema and melasma. Keeping her skin tone even is "a focus of mine because I don't like wearing a lot of foundation."

"Skin tone is the main cosmetic concern of many ethnic patients," Downie says. "Dark spots can be more troubling to patients than acne."

**Products she loves:** Downie recommends Previce MD anti-aging treatment (available through dermatologists) to reduce the appearance of wrinkles and even out skin tone. Previce's half-prescription-strength version sold at department stores by Elizabeth Arden "is good if you can't get to a dermatologist," she says.

Other products she recommends to treat uneven skin tone include: SkinMedica TNS Recovery Complex, MD Forte Skin Rejuvenation Lotion, Aveeno Ultra Calming, Avene Diacneal and Avene Retrinal HAF.

Downie also likes Aveeno Skin Relief body wash, Johnson & Johnson baby oil and Cetaphil or Aveeno moisturizers.

Of course, she loves cosmetic products by her famous patient, especially Bobbi Brown undereye concealer. "Bobbi told me I had dark circles and that it was distracting," Downie said. "I've been wearing her concealer ever since."

**Sunscreen:** Downie is the self-described "sunscreen queen." When she appears as an expert on national



morning shows like the *Today* show she stresses the importance of wearing sunscreen every day "regardless of race." It's the most important thing you can do to reduce signs of aging on your face, she says.

She worries that many of her patients with darker skin "have a false sense of security when it comes to wearing sunscreen because of the higher level of melanin in their skin."

"Ethnic patients think because they have more melanin they don't need SPF. That's absolutely not true," Downie says.

Sunscreens by MD Forte and Ocean Potion get her approval, as well as Neutrogena's Age Shield Sunblock with Helioplex and Aveeno Positively Radiant SPF 30.

**Hair loss:** Downie says balding is more of a problem among minorities. "Women of color tend to overprocess their hair."

She recommends that women avoid perming hair more frequently than every six weeks. Blow drying, she says, can produce "bubbles" in the hair shaft that weaken hair to the point of breakage. And tight twists or dreadlocks can cause great stress on the hair. So how to keep up appearances without risking baldness?

"You can't have a good hair day every day or you're going to risk losing your hair," Downie says.

To keep hair healthy, avoid using glues; wearing braids, locks and twists that are too tight; and self-perming.

**What she's had done:** Downie gives herself a 70 percent glycolic peel once a month to keep her complexion even.

She also gets Botox injections between her brows, in her eyebrows and forehead, and a pinch under the eyes every three months. "It's absolutely false that skin of color patients are not interested in Botox," she says.

Downie also had visible veins on her nose blasted with a laser four years ago.

**The whole package:** Downie exercises five times a week for at least 30 minutes. Her tip: "Pick a steep hill and run up it backwards. It helps you keep your agility and allows you to focus and clear your head. It's excellent for my butt."

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