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Forget foundation - and other tips from the celebrity of dermatology

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Dr. Katie Rodan is the rock star of cosmetic dermatology.

She made a fortune selling Proactiv acne treatment through TV infomercials to more than 10 million customers.



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"I worried at first what my peers would think," Rodan says of the flashy approach. But she did it anyway after being snubbed by a big cosmetics company.

That doesn't mean she operates completely outside the establishment. Her latest venture, skin-care line Rodan & Fields, was bought by Estee Lauder in 2003.

We caught up with Rodan at the tony St. Regis hotel in Aspen at Cosmetic Boot Camp 2006, a meeting of cosmetic dermatologists. The famous doctor was wearing white jeans, big sunglasses and lots of bling.

Dr. Katie Rodan

Age: 51

Credentials: Co-founder of the popular acne regimen Proactiv Solution and co-founder of Rodan & Fields. Rodan is adjunct clinical assistant professor of dermatology at Stanford University's School of Medicine.

Turned down by Neutrogena: The idea behind Proactiv, preventing acne with daily applications of medicated products, was revolutionary to the general public a decade ago. Then, spot treating acne was the popular approach.

"The CEO of Neutrogena said he couldn't sell it because he thought consumers who have been spot treating won't understand why they need a whole system to prevent acne. He told us we would need an infomercial to explain the product."

Great idea, thought Rodan and fellow dermatologist Kathy Fields. A

30-minute infomercial for Proactiv first aired in 1994. The line now has 10 million customers, and it's hawked by Jessica Simpson.

•**Product she's most excited about:** "People don't realize that you can reverse sun damage," Rodan says. Rodan & Fields' Reverse line is a four-step system that uses over-the-counter strength hydroquinone to lighten brown spots and uneven pigmentation.

•**Favorite products**

(other than her own):

Aquaphor moisturizer. Rodan plasters herself with it at night when her skin feels dry. (At area drugstores or \$15 at www.drugstore.com.)

Go Smile tooth whitening ampules. "If you lighten your teeth, your skin will look better," she says. (Advanced Formula system \$89 at Sephora or Touch-Up refills \$39 at Sephora.)

The Lip Balm by La Mer. She's crazy about La Mer's lip product, but recommends the line's pricey moisturizer for use only on very dry skin. (\$45 at www.cremedelamer.com or department stores that carry La Mer.)

•**Beauty tips:** "Women need to think about foundation liberation," Rodan says. "Women don't know it's possible. If you can get your skin in great shape so that it's really even in color and looks healthy — which I think is entirely possible — you don't need foundation."

Foundation lodges into every pore and line, accentuating wrinkles, she says. Not to mention the barrier she believes it places between you and the world. "When you see a woman with a lot of makeup on, you don't want to hug her."

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