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4 Things That Cause Dark Circles

A raccoon-like eye can come from a host of factors, say our expert dermatologists. But no need to fret—there's a range of solutions.

By Megan Deem



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Genetics

"People with olive and darker skin tones tend to get a little discoloration under the eyes," says dermatologist [Annie Chiu, MD](#), of Redondo Beach, CA, who stresses the importance of wearing sunscreen regularly. Fortunately, a laser can even out pigmentation, according to New York City dermatologist [Anne Chapas, MD](#).

Age

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As we get older, the fat pads under our eyes start to lose support and can bulge or shift downward, creating a shadow. Most dermatologists fix this by filling the trough with a hyaluronic-acid filler such as Restylane, which Dr. Chiu says lasts about nine months to a year.

Visible Blood Vessels

"The skin under the eye gets thinner over time, so you can see the vessels underneath, which have a reddish-purple hue," says Dr. Chiu. An eye cream containing retinol (try Dr. Dennis Gross Skincare Ferulic + Retinol Eye Cream, \$68; DGskincare.com) can help stimulate collagen production and thicken skin, so vessels don't show as much. Laser treatments, which can spur collagen growth and also remove excess blood vessels, are another option.

Allergies

When eyes get puffy, the swelling can cast a shadow that makes the surrounding area look dark. "The best solution, especially when allergy season is in full swing, is to take an antihistamine, such as Claritin, or something similar, every day for a couple of weeks," says Boston dermatologist [Ranella Hirsch, MD](#). "That will help a lot."

Published 10/12/2015



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