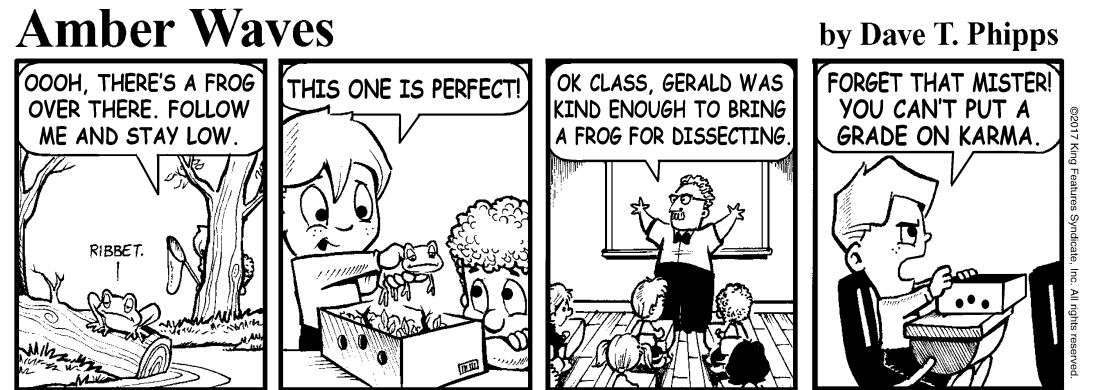
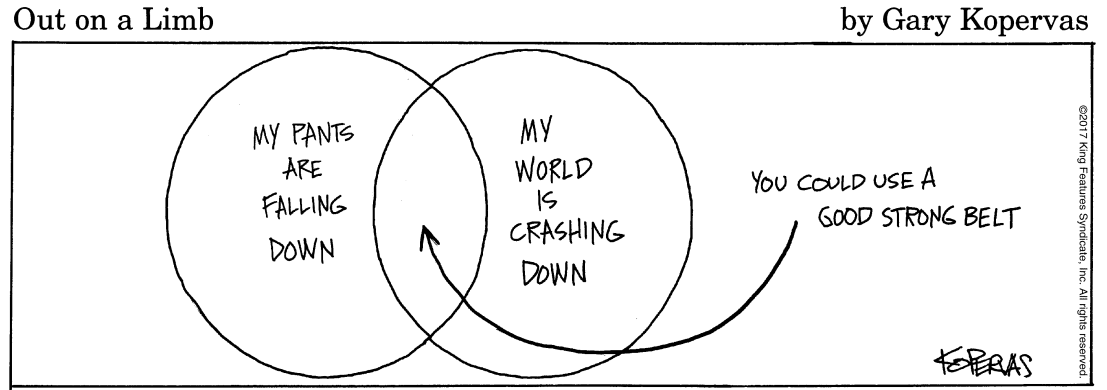
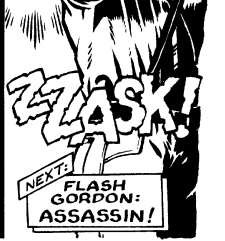
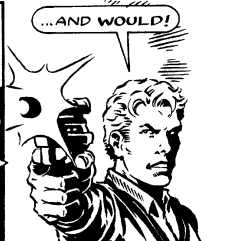
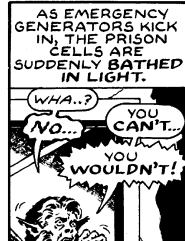
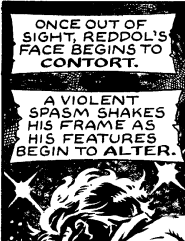
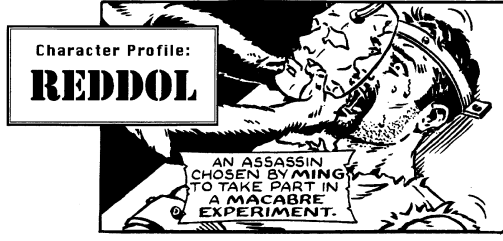
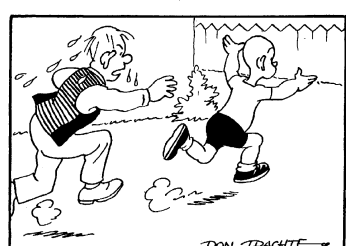
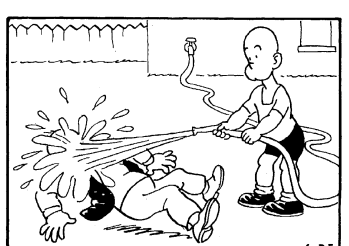
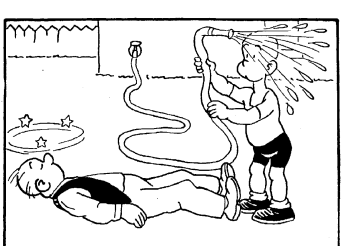
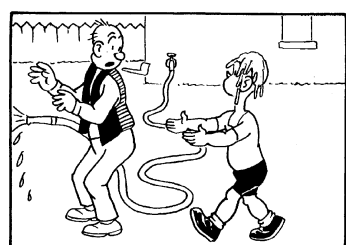
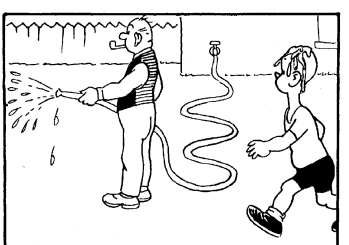
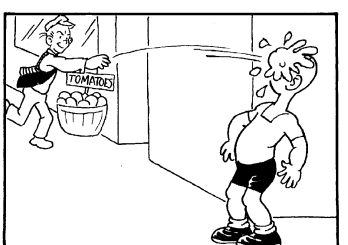
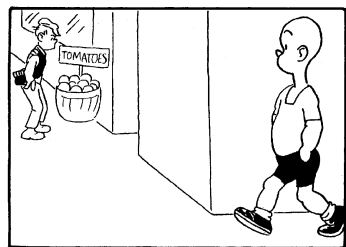
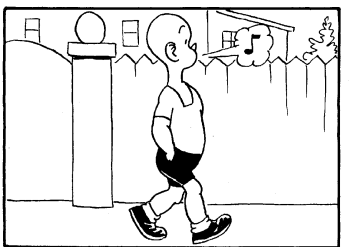
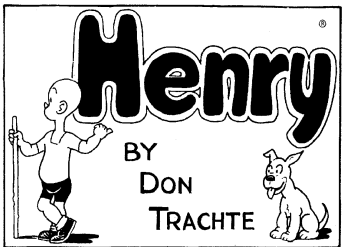
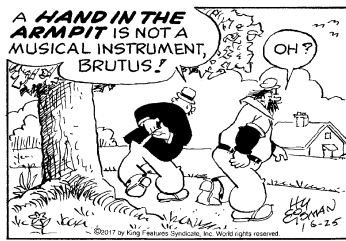
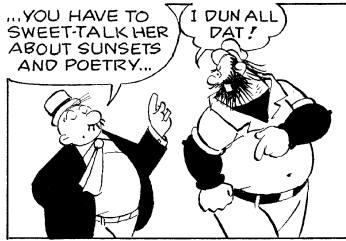
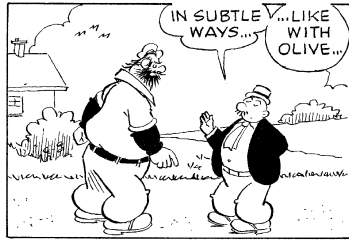
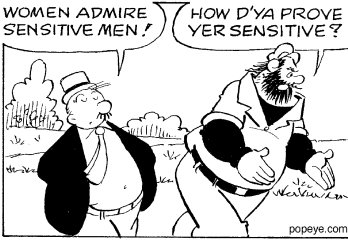
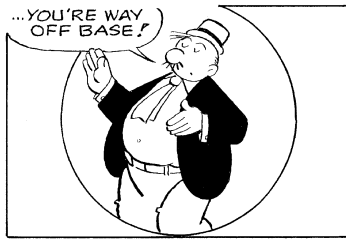
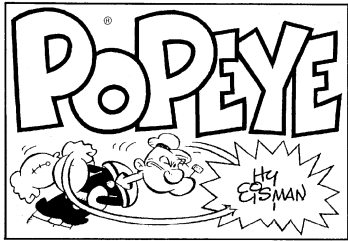


SIDE SHOW



TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Treatment Not Fading Dark Patches on Face

DEAR DR. ROACH: A few years ago, despite regular use of sunscreen, I noticed a couple of small, dark patches on my face. I began using a product that contained 2 percent hydroquinone, which the package says is a "targeted skin lightener." The problem is, those dark patches haven't changed at all, except that they are a lot bigger. My questions are: Is this product really effective? Would my skin discoloration be even worse if I hadn't used it? Does the product perhaps make the problem worse? Finally, what is your recommendation for treating skin discolorations? -- N.C.

ANSWER: Hydroquinone inhibits an enzyme necessary for making melanin, so if the darkening of the skin on your face is due to melanin (and most are), then hydroquinone ought to work. If it's not, it's possible

that of the more than 50 conditions that can cause dark coloration of the skin listed in my textbook, you have one not due to melanin production.

It's also possible that the 2 percent strength of hydroquinone isn't strong enough for you. Concentrations over 2 percent (up to 4 percent) are available only by prescription. Also, sunlight can reverse the effect of hydroquinone, so you need to stay out of the sun. I'd recommend both sun-protective clothing (e.g., a hat) AND a sunscreen of level 35 or higher. Not only will sunlight reverse the lightening effect, but your skin is more sensitive to the harmful and potentially cancer-causing effects of the sun after using hydroquinone.

Hydroquinone can be very irritating to some people. A rare complication is ochronosis, a blue-black discoloration of the skin. The safety of hydroquinone is argued: It has been banned in Europe, although ochronosis happens primarily in Africa, where large portions of the body often are treated and the purity of the product is, at best, questionable.

It's unlikely that hydroquinone has made the problem worse, but I can't answer if things would be worse if you hadn't used it. As far as my recommendation goes, think twice

before lightening the skin at all, and consider other options, including covering makeup or laser surgery. If you decide to continue hydroquinone, I would first visit a dermatologist to diagnose the type of dark coloration, give you your personal options and then use prescription-grade hydroquinone, if appropriate.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I had tinnitus. I read a lot and found a research study at the Mayo Clinic that tests the effectiveness of magnesium 500 mg daily for moderate to severe tinnitus.

I took a 500-mg tablet of magnesium (over the counter) and got relief fairly rapidly from the tinnitus. I stayed on the magnesium for about a year. Occasionally, it returned, and I went back on that supplement. -- Anon.

ANSWER: The results of the study you found are not yet available, but I think there has been enough published on the possible effectiveness and safety of magnesium supplementation that it is reasonable to give it a try. Magnesium deficiency is common, especially in people taking diuretics ("water pills") for high blood pressure. The major side effect of magnesium supplementation is diarrhea, which is unlikely at a low dose.

SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You clever Ewes and Rams love nothing more than to rise to a challenge. So, by all means, if you feel sure about your facts, step right up and defend your side of the issue.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You've done some great work recently. Now it's time to reward yourself with something wonderful, perhaps a day at a spa or a night out with someone very special.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You love to talk, but don't forget to make time to do a little more listening, otherwise you could miss out on an important message someone might be trying to send you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Your aspect indicates some uncertainty

about one of your goals. Use this period of shifting attitudes to reassess what you really want and what you're ready to do to get it.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Your social life is picking up, and you'll soon be mingling with old friends and making new ones. But 'twixt the fun times, stay on top of changing workplace conditions.

VIRGO (August 23 September 22) A trusted friend offers understanding as you vent some long-pent-up feelings. Now, move on from there and start making the changes you've put off all this time.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You might well feel uneasy as you face a difficult situation involving someone close to you. But you know you're doing the right thing, so stick with your decision.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You're a good friend to others. Now is the time to allow them to be good friends to you. Rely

on their trusted advice to help you get through an uncertain period.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Family and friends are always important, but especially so at this time. Despite your hectic workplace schedule, make a real effort to include them in your life.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) That project you've been working on is almost ready for presentation. But you still need some information from a colleague before you can consider it done.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Don't let those negative attitudes that have sprung up around you drain your energies. Shrug them off, and move ahead with the confidence that you can get the job done.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Aspects favor some dedicated fun time for the hardworking Piscean. A nice, refreshing plunge into the social swim can recharge your physical and emotional batteries.

King Crossword

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49				50				51		

- ACROSS**
- 1 One of the Three Bears
 - 5 Unhappy Stare
 - 12 Exhibit "A," e.g.
 - 14 Figure-skating leap
 - 15 Give a home a makeover
 - 16 Actress Sorvino
 - 17 18-wheeler
 - 18 Toxin
 - 20 Support for a painting
 - 23 Plant with fronds
 - 24 Small salamanders
 - 25 Went back on a promise
 - 28 Put (down)
 - 29 Partners
 - 30 Churchill's gesture
 - 32 Changed the title
 - 34 Tempo
 - 35 Matterhorn's range
 - 36 Bamboo-eating critter
 - 37 Nervous system disorder
 - 40 Relatives
 - 41 Frau's mister
 - 42 Hertz deal
 - 47 Too doings
 - 48 Geometric
- DOWN**
- 1 Apiece
 - 2 "Hail, Caesar!"
 - 3 Bowling target
 - 4 Worships
 - 5 Unseen problem
 - 6 Performance
 - 7 Intensified
 - 8 Casino
 - 9 Center of
 - 10 Nil
 - 11 Verve
 - 13 Satan's specialty
 - 19 Raw minerals
 - 20 Moray, for one
 - 21 In the distance
 - 22 Eyelid woe
 - 23 Big parties
 - 25 "O'er the we watched ..."
 - 26 Divisible by two
 - 27 Out of play
 - 29 Masculine
 - 31 Greek vowel
 - 33 Not wide
 - 34 One of the bunch?
 - 36 Pocket bread
 - 37 Fellow
 - 38 War, to Gen. Sherman
 - 39 Approximately
 - 40 Make a sweater
 - 43 Before
 - 44 Hollywood trickery, for short
 - 45 The whole enchilada
 - 46 In medias
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King Crossword Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

P	A	P	A	S	A	D	G	A	Z	E
E	V	I	D	E	N	C	E	A	X	E
R	E	N	O	V	A	T	E	M	I	R
			R	I	G	P	O	I	S	O
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E	F	T	S	R	E	N	E	G	E	D
L	A	Y	M	A	T	E	S	V	E	E
	R	E	N	A	M	E	D	B	E	A
			A	L	P	S	P	A	N	D
C	H	O	R	E	A	K	I	N		
H	E	R	R	E	N	T	A	C	A	R
A	L	S	O		T	R	I	A	N	G
P	L	O	W		S	E	T	A	I	L

