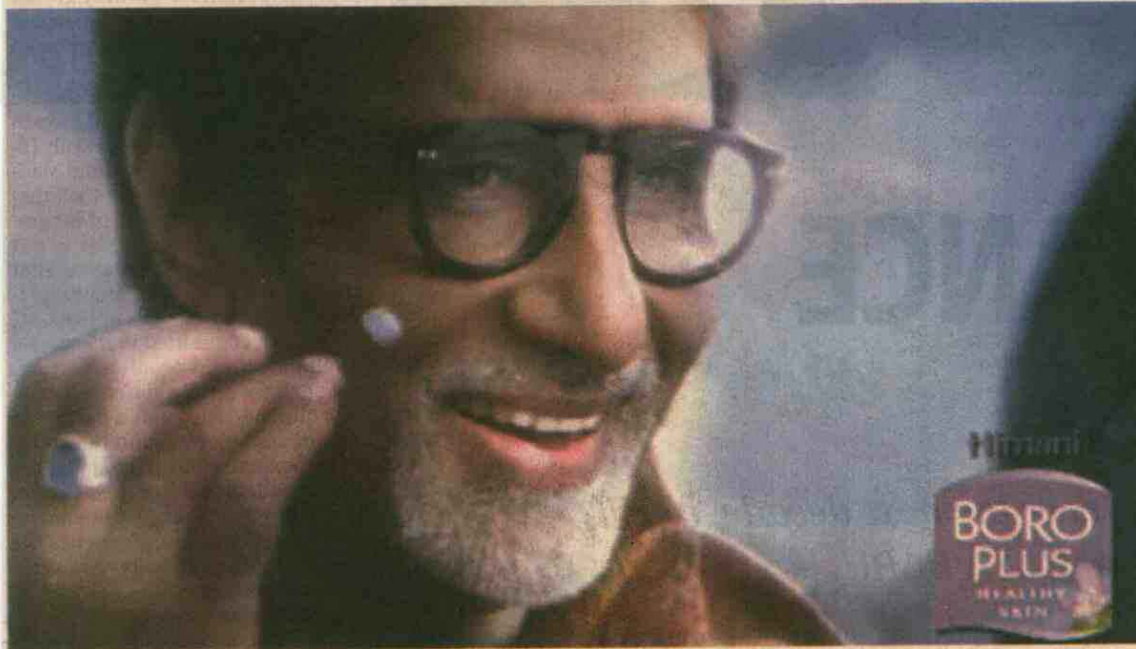


SKINCARE BRANDS WARM UP TO WINTER

Get ready to be pampered by a host of products that are eager to shore up their share in the ₹3,400-crore market



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Amitabh Bachhan puts 'safed tika' of Himani Boroplus Antiseptic Cream and is followed by people from across the country doing the same. The latest TVC of the Emami Group's premier skin care product ends with the tagline of 'safed tika, taki sardi ki nazaar na lage'. The message: The antiseptic cream and its variants protect your skin from the evil eye of winter.

The TVC is just one part of Emami's gameplan for the winter months, which have always been the most important period for personal and healthcare giants. The FMCG major is launching a slew of new skin care products that includes Malai Kesar cream, which is a variant of a soap with the same name. The products, which were test-marketed sometime back, will go in for a national rollout now.

Emami is not alone. This winter, get ready to be pampered by a host of new

skincare brands which are eager to shore up their presence in the ₹3,400-crore skincare market that is growing at 13 per cent.

International brands like Body Shop have introduced its Naturalift range with organic ingredients and would be re-launching a Vitamin C skin care range soon. "Customers are coming back to our stores for skin care products and there is increasing demand for hydrating and moisturizing products with effective results," says Smita Sahoo, product trainer, Body Shop.

The brand has seen increasing demand for premium products in the price range of ₹1200-₹1995. Sahoo says the company will launch

special winter skincare kits consisting of premium products and catering to specific skin care requirements.

Avene, a derma-cosmetic brand by Piramal Healthcare and France-based Pierre Fabre Group, too is eyeing the premium skincare segment this winter. "The elite group is not much price conscious. But based on the research and market understanding, the price point of ₹1000 is very comfortable," reasons Pierre Behnam,

head (India Operations) of Pierre Fabre. This season, Avene plans to announce skincare products dedicated to sensitive skin, and will be priced between ₹1300 and ₹2000.

Divita Kanoria, chief wellness officer of Tathaastu, a wellness & herbal skincare brand, says

that the brand has grown 60-70 per cent in the last one year with premium skincare products contributing close to half the growth. Kanoria is now planning to launch customised products.

According to Hari Nair, COO, Dr. Batra's Positive Health Products, "Last year, the economy was just coming out of recession, the cost of raw materials was higher and disposable income had dropped. Companies had stopped new product launches. "With economic improvements seen in the last couple of months, we are now looking at 15-18 per cent growth in the skin care market," Nair says. Dr Batra's will introduce a skincare kit comprising of a face wash, cleansing milk, toner and moisturizing lotion, with prices starting at ₹100.

Elder Health Care too, is getting ready to launch the Bihaku range of skin whitening products, licensed from Japan's Pola Cosmetics. "We intend to position the brand to tap the mass premium and premium market, emphasizing on the safety and efficacy of the products. Metros and class one towns will be majorly responsible for driving this business," says Anuj Saxena who has been responsible for growing Elder Health Care's revenues by more than 50 per cent year on year for the past four years. Elder is now targeting a turnover of ₹300 crore by FY 2013.

More than half the skincare market comprises skin lightening creams. And for Richa Singh, head marketing, Garnier India, it will be the affordable skincare products that promise to ring in sales this season. To capitalise on the winter season, Garnier has launched Nourishing Cold Cream priced at ₹130. Garnier also has a moisturizing lotion called Body Cocoon, priced at ₹95 and onwards."

Himalaya Drug Company's personal care division claims to have seen a growth of about 30 per cent this year with premium skincare portfolio (includes sunscreen, scrubs, skin creams, lotions) contributing up to 25 per cent of revenues in the consumer care portfolio. Saket Gore, business head (Consumer Products Division) of the company says he plans to roll out winter care products shortly in its fastest growing category.

The big daddies - Hindustan Unilever and Procter & Gamble - are also not far behind, though both are tightlipped on new launches. HUL's Ponds and Vaseline cater to winter care mainly, where the premium segment is dominated by Oil of Olay and L-Oreal. Vaseline recently launched a moisturising cream and lip care that were launched after months of test marketing in smaller cities.

