BELLAGENCY
MODEL & TALENT



ANN MARIE JOSEPH

Height: 5'9" Bust: 36" D Waist: 30" Hip: 39" Dress: 8-10 US Shoe: 9.5 US Hair: Brown Eyes: Brown

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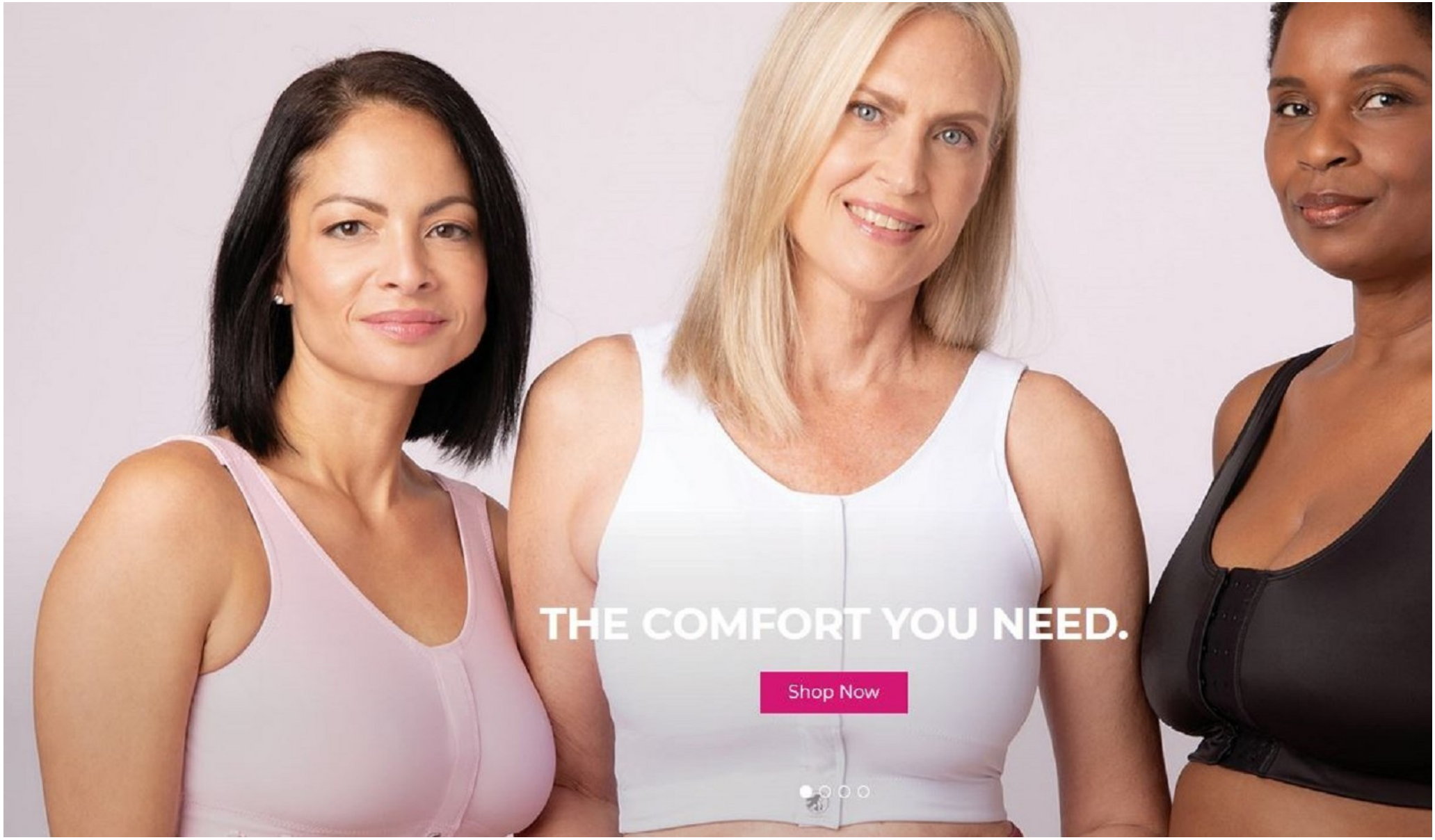

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80

Chin up: Dark skin will stay smoother for longer, but it still needs some TLC.

BLACK

(Your ancestors are from Africa—the western, central, southern, or eastern regions—or parts of the Caribbean.)

THE CHALLENGE | uneven skin tone

You can expect to stay wrinkle-free for at least a decade longer than your Caucasian friends. The biggest factor contributing to your line immunity may be the color of your skin. A dark complexion is a sign of skin that has more melanin, the protective pigment that blocks UV rays from damaging collagen and elastin. In very dark skin, melanosomes—pigment-containing clusters—are larger and better dispersed. Another advantage: Your stratum corneum, the skin's outer layer, tends to be thicker, with larger, more plentiful, more active fibroblasts (cells that churn out collagen).

But no amount of melanin can keep you looking 22 forever. And having more of it can cause hyperpigmentation, which occurs when pigment cells overreact to the sun and other forms of irritation, leaving you with brown spots and larger darkened patches (usually around your cheeks, temples, or chin). "Uneven skin tone is the main complaint my African American patients share with me when it comes to aging," says Heather Woolery-Lloyd, M.D., director of ethnic skin care at the University of Miami's Department of Dermatology and Cutaneous Surgery. An added challenge is that the most effective fixes—peels, lasers, and fade creams—can sometimes irritate very dark skin. So Woolery-Lloyd has patients use a hydroquinone product for only a few months to target stubborn darkness. Dot a cream like **Urban Skin Rx Even Tone Night Treatment** onto darker areas with a cotton swab, which will help you avoid lightening the surrounding skin, too.

Most important, wear broad-spectrum SPF 30 sunscreen daily to fend off future discoloration. (Research has shown that even the darkest skin has the equivalent of only about SPF 13.) Most dermatologists recommend a mineral sunscreen with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide, but it can leave a whitish cast on black complexions. **Hydropeptide Solar Defense Tinted Broad Spectrum SPF 30** adapts to your specific skin tone. It also guards against another skin shift you may notice with age: loss of luminosity. Young skin has a translucent quality because it reflects light uniformly; over time, sun damage can make that surface uneven and duller. (Gentle exfoliation will help too.) →



YOUR PRODUCTS

Hydroquinone
Urban Skin Rx Even Tone Night Treatment ($68, urbanskinrx.com)

Tinted sunscreen
Hydropeptide Solar Defense Tinted Broad Spectrum SPF 30 ($48, hydropeptide.com)

MAY 2017



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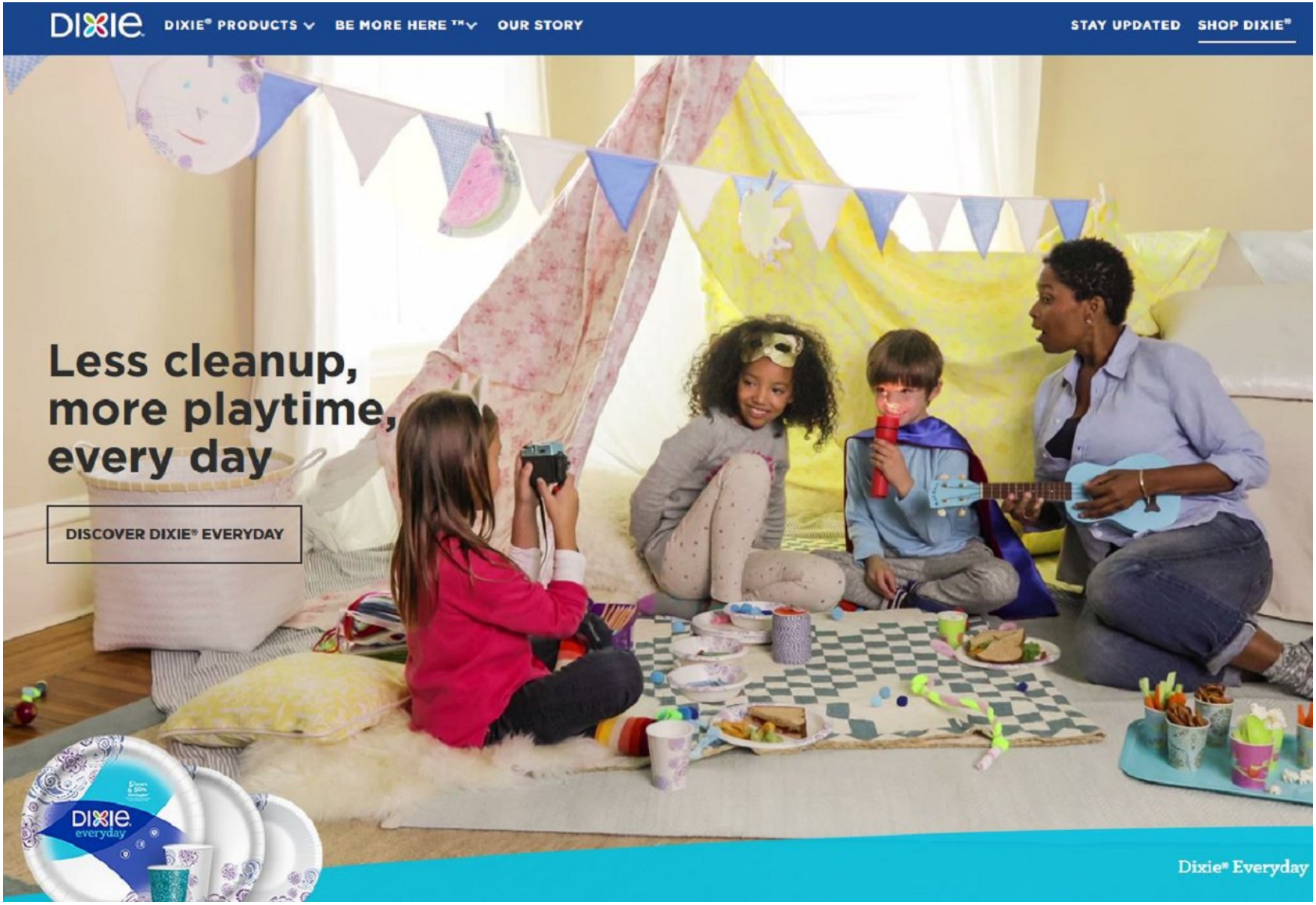

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