

under eye patches

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Under-Eye Patches

Crescent-shaped gel or fabric pads soaked in serum, worn under the eyes for fifteen to thirty minutes. They are the most photogenic product in this catalogue and one of the most temporary, and both facts are worth taking at face value.

What they are

Two substrate families:

- **Hydrogel** — a water-swollen polymer network, usually gelatin, agar, carrageenan or a synthetic polymer, holding a high proportion of serum. Cool on contact, cling well, do not evaporate quickly.
- **Fabric / cellulose** — a nonwoven or bio-cellulose sheet saturated with serum, like a small [Sheet Mask](#).

Both work the same way: **occlusion plus contact time**. Covering the skin with a wet impermeable layer forces hydration into the stratum corneum and holds the serum against it far longer than a cream would stay put.

What they actually do

The immediate effect is real and it is genuinely useful — briefly.

- **Hydration plumps.** Water in the stratum corneum swells it, and swollen skin reflects light more evenly, so fine crepiness softens visibly. This lasts hours, not days.
- **Cold constricts.** A chilled patch reduces local vasodilation and puffiness. This is why refrigerating them is not a gimmick and is most of the perceived benefit.
- **Caffeine constricts** superficial vessels for a few hours.
- **Occlusion drives whatever active is in the serum** — niacinamide, peptides, vitamin C — further than the same serum applied openly.

What they do not do is change pigmentation, structure, or a tear-trough shadow. Anyone using them for a photograph, a wedding morning or a bad night is using them exactly right; anyone expecting cumulative change is not.

Practical points

- **Refrigerate.** Cold is doing real work.
- **Fifteen to twenty minutes.** Leaving them until dry reverses the benefit — a drying substrate pulls water back out.
- **Position on the orbital bone,** not in the tear trough and not touching the lash line. They slide as they warm.
- **Pat in the residue** rather than wiping it off.
- **Single use.** A used patch is a wet, warm, nutrient-rich object; there is no saving it for tomorrow.

The waste

Two patches per use, individually or jar-packed, plus the outer wrapper. A daily habit generates a substantial amount of non-recyclable mixed material for a several-hour effect. It is a fair thing to weigh against the benefit rather than ignore.

Where it sits in the rules

Cosmetic in the US — FDA primary category (14) — with the eye-area constraints that apply to everything in that zone: only colour additives approved for eye-area use, and the MoCRA small-business exemption from registration and listing **does not apply** to products that regularly contact the eye's mucous membrane.

Jar-packed patches raise the same hygiene problem as any jar, worse because the product is a wet substrate stack that fingers or tweezers reach into repeatedly. Preservation is the serious half of the safety file here.

Shelf life

Individually sealed: the full unopened life, typically two to three years. Jar-packed and opened: use within a few months, keep the seal tight, discard if the top patches have dried or the liquid has gone cloudy. As with all eye-area products, stop at the first sign of eye irritation or infection and throw the pack away.

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- [Skincare](#) — the shelf this sits on, and the rest of it.
- [Cosmetics](#) — what the label is legally allowed to say, and the full catalogue.
- The rest of *Moisturising* — [Facial Moisturiser](#) · [Day Cream](#) · [Night Cream](#) · [Eye Cream](#) · [Neck and Décolleté Cream](#) · [Occlusive Balm](#) · [Barrier Cream](#).
- [Sheet Mask](#) — the full-face version of the same idea.
- Regulatory statements here follow the FDA and EU sources listed on [Cosmetics](#), read 16 August 2026.