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The Importance of Skin

The skin is our largest organ in our body. We absorb many substances through our skin. These substances can then quickly reach our bloodstream and need to be metabolized or detoxified by our liver. By avoiding toxic products and regularly cleansing our systems, we are able to keep our bodies clean. The fewer impurities that circulate through our body, the fewer toxins will come out of our pores, thus causing fewer skin conditions.

We detoxify through several "emunctories": the liver, kidneys, skin, lymphatics, breath, and menstrual blood. Beauty is more than skin deep, which is why Naturopathic medicine treats skin from the inside and outside addressing all detoxification systems.

In this issue we explain some methods for improving skin elimination of toxins, and how to give your skin a healthy glow. We point out how to choose healthy skin products by looking at the ingredients. We have included some tips for screening products at the store before you buy, as well as recipes to make your own, perhaps as Christmas presents for family and friends. On the second page we list a number of good detoxifying skin herbs and how they work.

Dry Skin Brushing

Dry skin brushing stimulates the lymphatic system to expel toxins through the skin. Nearly one third of all body impurities are eliminated through our skin. If the skin pores remain clogged, the body will not eliminate the waste as efficiently and this will increase the load on other detoxifying organs. By dry brushing, the blood circulation is increased to the internal organs and the skin, helping to promote oxygenation and healing.

Instructions:

You will need a natural bristle brush, rough cloth or loofah, approximately the size of your hand. Start with the soles of your feet, brushing in a circular motion, moving up your body. From your feet to legs, hands to arms, back to abdomen, chest to neck. Brush with enough pressure that your skin begins to feel pleasantly warm, but very gently so the lymphatic vessels are not collapsed. This is not an exfoliation!

Basic Salve

- 20 g** grated beeswax
- 100 ml** infused oil (lavender, marigold, comfrey)
- 10 g** grated cocoa butter

To make infused oil - pack 1 cup of desired herbal petals or leaves into glass jar, cover with olive oil, and warm in crock-pot in water for 3-5 days. Strain and reserve oil for use. Melt the beeswax and cocoa butter into a heavy pot, be careful not to burn. Add the infused oil and stir with a wire whisk. Remove from heat. Test the consistency of the ointment by putting a little of the mixture onto a metal spoon and into the freezer for a minute. If you feel the ointment is too waxy simply add more of the infused oil, if it is too runny add more grated beeswax. Optional: add 2-4 drops of your favourite essential oil to the salve whisking in, just before transferring to jars. Pour into sterile ointment jars.

Hot and Cold Showers

By alternating hot and cold water in the shower you are improving blood circulation, increasing oxygen to the cells, enhancing your immunity, strengthening your nervous system, as well as flushing toxins into the bloodstream. Alternate between hot and cold water at least three times while you are showering. Begin with hot as you shampoo, rinse with cold – just cold enough to feel shocked but not uncomfortable - follow by conditioning your hair while in hot and rinsing again with cold, wash your body in hot and rinse in cold. Always finish your contrasting shower with cold water to give the metabolism a little boost.

Clinic News

Naturopathic Flu Clinic

Change of Season Soup and flu-preventing homeopathics are now available at the office. Drop by to pick up ingredients for you and your family/friends. Protect yourself now!

Holiday Hours

The office will be closed from Thursday, December 24th until Monday, January 4th.

Dr. Grant will be available:

Tuesday, Dec. 29th

Wednesday, Dec. 30th

Dr. Peters will be available:

Tuesday, Dec. 29th

Messages will be checked regularly in case of emergency.

Holiday Sale

20% off of Klean Kanteens for December
Stock up for stockings!





10 Ways to Give your Skin a Healthy Glow

- 1 **Fibre.** Getting adequate fibre is important for binding up toxins that we ingest, to lessen our livers detoxification burden. Have 2 tsp psyllium or 1 Tbsp ground flaxseed per day.
- 2 **Water.** Having enough water daily is important for hydration as well as for the elimination of impurities through your bowels and your kidneys.
- 3 **Avoid sugar.** Sugar feeds the bacteria in your pores, which leads to acne and other inflammation in the skin.
- 4 **Get active.** An excellent way to get oxygenated blood to your organs, including your skin and liver. Sweating opens the pores, releasing toxins as well.
- 5 **Sun.** A safe amount of sun clears up oily skin as well as providing you with free vitamin D.
- 6 Do a **castor oil pack** on your liver daily or at least a few times per week. This stimulates your immune system and gives your skin a wonderfully healthy glow.
- 7 **Vitamin C.** Vitamin C is important for its role in the production of collagen and tissue repair. Collagen is what gives our skin elasticity and resilience.
- 8 **Zinc.** Zinc is important for nourishing and repairing skin elasticity as well as connective tissue.
- 9 **Detoxification.** Detoxing once a year is a good way to remove the impurities from your system; therefore rejuvenating your liver and your skin.
- 10 **Essential Fatty Acids.** Are important for hydrating your skin and the cell membranes to give you a healthy glow!



Skin Cleansing Herbs

These herbs, taken as a tea or tincture, can be used to gently detoxify the liver and cleanse the skin.

Silybum

Also called Milk Thistle. Regenerates and rejuvenates the liver. It assists in liver detoxification, which will aid in clearing up the skin.

Arctium

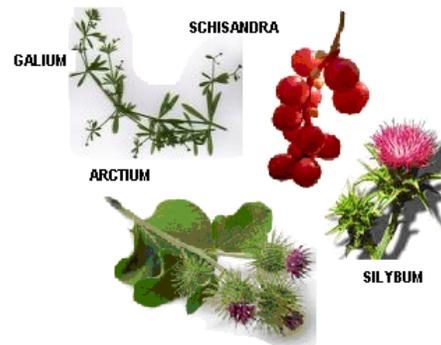
Also called Burdock. Specific for skin conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis.

Schisandra

Enhances phase I and II detoxification in the liver; therefore, this herb assists in clearing up the skin. It is also great for you immune system.

Galium

Also called Cleavers. This herb is a blood cleanser that helps the liver to detoxify the impurities from the blood. It is also great for acne, psoriasis and eczema.



Ingredients to Avoid in Skincare Products

Just because something is labeled 'natural' doesn't mean that it is healthy. There are certain additives to skin cleansers, moisturizers and other toiletries (for hair and teeth etc) that are toxic to our system. We want to empower you to read labels and choose the healthiest options for yourself and your family.

Most lotions, liquids soaps and shampoos contain **parabens**. Parabens are preservatives which, when heated to high temperatures, extend a product's shelf life. They can even be found in products labelled natural and organic. Parabens cause questionable estrogen activity in the body. It is believed that they alter hormonal function, increasing the risk of certain cancers and infertility.

Phthalates are a common industrial chemical used in a wide range of consumer products including cosmetic and skin care products. Phthalates are fixatives, plasticizers, and solvents that help fragrance last longer and nail polish to harden. It's believed that exposure to this chemical can affect the development of reproductive organs in male fetuses *in utero*. Unfortunately, phthalates are essentially unregulated in food, cosmetics, and consumer products.

Salmon with Roasted Vegetables

- 2 onions, diced
- 4 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 large zucchini
- 2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 can (14oz/398 ml) artichoke hearts
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp dried thyme
- ¾ tsp each sea salt and pepper
- 2 Tbsp white wine vinegar
- 4 salmon fillets (with skin) 1 inch thick

In a large skillet, heat half of the oil over medium heat; cook onions, garlic, carrots, zucchini, sweet potato, 1- ½ tsp of the thyme, and ½ tsp each of sea salt and pepper, stirring often, for about 10 minutes or until onions are transparent. Remove from heat.

Stir in artichoke hearts and vinegar. Transfer vegetables to large rimmed baking sheet. In a small bowl, combine remaining oil, thyme, salt and pepper; brush over top of fillets. Place, skin side down, between vegetables.

Bake in 425°F (220°C) oven, stirring often, for 10-15 minutes or until fish is opaque, flakes with fork and vegetables are tender-crisp.

Makes 4 servings.

Naturopathic Perspectives
Dr. Caralei Peters, ND
Dr. Laura Grant, ND
Sylvie Hebert, RMT

To book an appt, contact:
202-10 George Street
Hamilton, ON L8P 1C8
Tel: 905.528.1661
Fax: 905.528.1991