

The Natural Way

With Spring on the horizon, Sophie Chamings explains how now is a great time to detox and cleanse our bodies, resulting in increased energy levels and a healthy and radiant complexion

The skin is the body's largest organ, helping the lungs and digestive system eliminate toxins, pollutants, free radicals and certain food stuffs. Skin reflects lifestyle and internal health and wellbeing and when it is not renewing itself properly and accessing enough nutrients and oxygen, it can look dull and lifeless and skin issues can occur.

CHEMICALS IN SKINCARE

Skincare products are designed to be absorbed by the skin and those of you that use chemical

based skincare products are feeding your skin with pollutants and toxins. These hinder the skin's natural renewal process and cause the skin to look dull and lifeless or skin issues to occur. Keep to natural skin care; it's much more effective anyway!

MINI FACIALS

Using a clay based face mask created for your skin type, give yourself a mini facial once a week. Remove dead skin cells with a gentle exfoliator followed by applying a clay based mask created for your skin type. Finish

by giving yourself a facial massage with your favourite facial oil (almond oil is a cheaper alternative), using small circular motions with your fingertips. This will leave your skin clean, fresh and glowing. (If you would like to combine skin cleansing and nourishment with a pure and pampering experience, contact me to book one of my luxury facials where we can look at your individual skin and what it needs.)

STRESS

We are all guilty of letting work and other areas of our life get on





top of us, resulting in high stress levels and anxiety. Our bodies change when stress hormones are released which in turn affects the lipid balance in the skin (the 'good fat balance'). Skin can very quickly look dull and lifeless and skin problems can occur. Take up yoga or meditation or have long, luxurious baths; read a book or simply take some time out. Once you start feeling more relaxed, your skin will look more radiant.

DIET

'We are what we eat!' and this is most definitely reflected in our skin. I believe that diet is the main factor that determines our body and skin health. There are many worthwhile theories that link both, but the one that makes the most sense to me is the acid/alkaline belief, which theorises that we eat far too many acidic foods resulting in illnesses and poor health. Our westernised diets consist of a lot of animal protein, cooked fats, dairy products, simple sugars, refined carbohydrates and processed

foods, resulting in far too much acidity inside our bodies. These foods can also make the digestive system sluggish and hinder its efficiency.

Ideally, our bodies need to be slightly alkaline. This can be achieved by consuming raw plant fats e.g. avocados, olive oil, nuts etc., raw vegetables and lots of fruit. Drink plenty of pure water, cut out alcohol and eat little and often to make it easier for your body to process the food. You will probably lose weight, which is good as while your fat cells are breaking down, they are also getting rid of toxins.

Fish oils are great for the skin too as they are rich in Omega 6. Dark orange and dark green fruits and vegetables are all great for the skin as they are high in Vitamin A which helps to keep mucous membrane cells healthy and bacteria free, and nuts (e.g. hazelnuts and almonds) and soya are full of vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant essential for skin protection and repair.

DRY SKIN BRUSHING

I love this technique as it really does work and it will make you take a bit of time for yourself. It also helps with cellulite by breaking down fat cells. Make sure your brush is quite firm and only brush when your body is dry, using long sweeping motions towards your heart. Daily brushing stimulates the lymphatic system which speeds up the removal of toxins

HERBS

The following herbs are just a few which are good for cleansing and de-toxing the body and can be consumed as herbal teas, which will also add to your water consumption:

- Burdock
- Dandelion Root
- Milk Thistle
- Cleavers

However, before adding any of these to your detoxification process, consult a doctor or nutritionist. ■

Sophie Chamings is a Cheltenham based natural skincare specialist and make-up artist. Sign up for her natural health and beauty tips at www.sophiechamings.co.uk tel: 07734 994783

