



Lovin' the Skin You're In

Beautiful, healthy skin begins with an inside job

We're all familiar with the saying that "beauty is only skin deep," but having beautiful skin is so important that around 100 billion dollars are spent on skin care products globally. That's not even counting the 571 billion spent on cosmetics. Skin care is important for both women and men. About 65% of women use skin care products daily and 37% of men use them daily as well. And considering the skin is the largest and most visible organ and an indicator of overall health this makes a lot of sense.

Given this information, it's interesting how few people understand that to tackle chronic skin problems you need look more than skin deep. The health of the skin is completely dependent on the health of other organs and body systems such as the digestive system, liver, gallbladder, circulatory system, kidneys, and the endocrine glands (especially the pituitary, pineal gland, thyroid, and reproductive glands).

This means that topical treatments alone aren't enough to correct a skin condition. They will only mask or push the problem elsewhere. You should always look deeper when working to create healthy skin. In this month's *Sunshine Sharing* we'll discuss how you can improve the health and beauty of your skin by supporting your body's detoxification systems, endocrine glands, and overall health, as well as natural topical treatments.

The Importance of Healthy Skin

We don't usually think of the skin as an organ in the same way we would the liver or kidneys, but the skin is an organ. In fact, it is the largest organ in the body. As an organ, it performs several vital functions. Your skin along with the membranes in your respiratory system and GI tract form your first line of immune defense, protecting you from both infection and toxins. So, unhealthy skin makes it easier for infectious organisms to enter your body.

The skin also plays a critical role in regulating body temperature. The skin pores can open or close to conserve or release body heat, which also helps maintain health.

Finally, you skin is an important eliminative organ. In fact, it is the body's largest eliminative organ, acting primarily as a back-up system for the colon and kidneys. It has the capacity to eliminate both water-soluble substances (via the sweat glands) and fat soluble substances (via the sebaceous or oil glands). Thus, keeping the skin healthy is not just for beauty's sake. It's also important for overall health.

Inside Out Skin Care

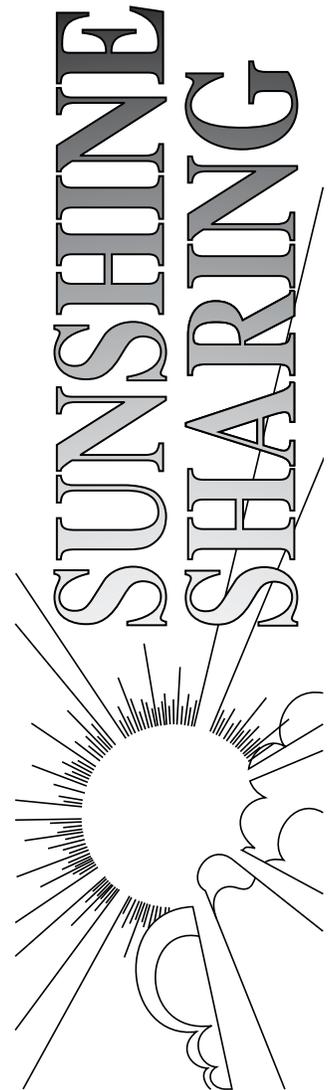
To help keep your skin healthy, we'll start with things you can do internally to promote healthy skin. Then, we'll look at things you can do topically as well.

Detoxification

Because the skin is the largest eliminative organ, skin problems are a sign of a toxic internal environment. This is especially true for skin eruptive diseases such as acne, dermatitis (rashes), and eczema. The skin becomes irritated because it is being used to eliminate too many toxic substances, which cause the skin pores and surfaces to become inflamed. So, one of the primary ways to maintain healthy skin is to maintain healthy elimination as well.

A traditional way to heal skin problems is to use blood purifying herbs. Blood purifiers act upon the liver, kidneys, lymph and blood to help clean up stagnant, toxic conditions in the body. This reduces the irritation to the skin and promotes healing.

Continued on page 2



Your guide to better health the natural way.

Vol. 34 No. 6

Important Notice

The information in *Sunshine Sharing* is for educational purposes only and should not be used to diagnose and treat diseases. If you have a health problem, we recommend you consult a competent health practitioner before embarking on any course of treatment.

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Steven Horne Creations, LLC

P.O. Box 1858, Cedar City, UT 84721

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Managing Editor/Writer: Steven Horne
Editor: David Horne
Associate Editors: Carolyn Hughes, Katie Horne

Continued from page one

Burdock, yellow dock, red clover, dandelion, and sarsaparilla are all great examples of blood purifiers that will help clear up your skin. So a great place to start is a *Detoxifying Formula* that contains them. A particularly good detoxifying formula for the skin is an *Ayurvedic Skin Healing Formula*. Generally, you need two or three capsules of one of these formulas two or three times daily, along with plenty of water.

If your bowels move less than once a day, you might also consider doing a colon cleansing program, such as *Ivy Bridge's Cleansing Program* or the *Chinese Balanced Cleansing Program*.

It also helps to clean up your diet. Avoiding excessive refined foods, especially processed vegetable oils and simple carbohydrates, reduces skin irritation. It also helps to avoid refined foods containing chemical additives in favor of natural, whole foods.

Feed Your Skin

Like any other organ, the skin also needs nutrients from healthy foods, particularly the antioxidants found in fresh fruits and vegetables. Many skin problems are caused by oxidative damage from sunlight, including redness, age spots, and more. To protect itself against this damage, your skin needs both water-soluble vitamins like vitamin C and the fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, and E.

If your hair frays, your fingernails break easily, and/or your skin lacks luster, you need minerals and protein to improve the health of your skin, hair, and fingernails. A particularly valuable formula for this is *Watkin's Hair, Skin, and Nails Formula*, which contains horsetail, dulse, rosemary, and sage. This formula supplies a mineral called silica, which helps make the skin, hair, and nails more supple and strong, as well as other trace minerals needed for these tissues.

Collagen is a protein that also helps to create healthy skin, hair, and fingernails. A lack of collagen makes skin thinner and more fragile, while adequate collagen helps the skin be more elastic, plumper, and smoother. Collagen levels deplete with age, so, also consider taking a collagen supplement, especially as you get older.

Fats are also important for keeping the skin moist and supple. If your skin is dry, make sure you get both the fat soluble vitamins and omega-3 essential fatty acids.

Support Your Glands

Hormones have a major impact on skin health. So, if you want healthy skin, take care of your glandular system.

For starters, the thyroid is critical to the combustion of fats, which keep the skin moist and supple. Low thyroid contributes to dry, irritated skin. It can also contribute to hair loss. If your body tends to run on the cold side and you tend to gain weight easily or feel tired, you may need to feed your thyroid with a *Hypothyroid Formula* containing seaweeds like kelp, dulse, and Irish moss. These seaweeds help skin health taken internally, but can also be helpful if applied topically in baths or masks.

Reproductive hormones are often involved in skin conditions, particularly acne. Teenagers are often prone to acne because of the hormonal changes taking place in their bodies. Balancing these hormones helps to keep these problems under control. Herbs that

can help with this include chaste tree, blessed thistle, sarsaparilla, and red clover.

Topical Aids for Skin Health

While it's important to work from the inside out, there are things you can do topically to support skin health. These include keeping the skin clean, reducing skin irritation, and selecting personal care products carefully.



Cleansing the Skin

Skin pores can become clogged if the skin is not cleansed properly. Use natural soaps on the skin that don't contain harsh chemicals. If the skin is oily, it can be helpful to apply clay to the skin as a facial mask or to use it in a bath. Clay absorbs irritants from the skin, especially fat-soluble toxins (like heavy metals). Clay baths, masks, or poultices can be helpful for acne, rashes, itchy skin, and skin eruptive diseases like measles and chickenpox. They can also be helpful for shingles.

Inducing sweating will also help to cleanse the skin by opening up the sweat glands to eliminate water-soluble irritants. Taking sudorific herbs as warm teas or in capsules with warm water will increase blood flow to the skin, which helps cleanse and heal the skin. Examples of sudorific herbs include ginger, yarrow and peppermint, capsicum, and elder flower.

After taking these herbs, draw a bath as hot as can be comfortably tolerated. To enhance the effect you can add one to two cups of Epsom salt along with 10-15 drops of a relaxing essential oil, such as lavender, lemon balm, or chamomile. Soak for 15 to 20 minutes, adding hot water as needed to keep the bath warm.

Soothing Skin Irritation

All tissues respond to damage through the process of inflammation, and the skin is no exception. Redness, swelling, puffiness, and irritation are all signs the skin is inflamed. You can soothe skin irritation using y essential oils, diluted in a fixed oil, such as a high quality olive or coconut oil. Even better, however, is a blend of oils high in GLA, an essential fatty acid that reduces inflammation. These include evening primrose oil, borage oil, and black currant oil.

For redness use essential oils like chamomile, lavender, or neroli diluted in the fixed oil. If the skin is dry add oils such as chamomile, jasmine, sandalwood, ylang ylang, or neroli. If the skin is oily, consider clary sage, lemon, rosemary, tea tree, or thyme.

Astringent herbs can also help with oily or excessively moist skin. They close pores and firm up the skin at the same time. Witch hazel is a popular astringent used on the skin, but uva ursi and white oak bark are also helpful.

Seaweeds can also be used topically as masks to sooth irritated skin in the same way clay masks are used. They moisten and sooth the skin and can be combined with essential oils, too. Seaweeds can also be used in baths or soaks.

Select Personal Care Products Carefully

Carefully consider the products you use on your skin and hair. Many cosmetic products contain a lot of irritating chemicals,

which can be absorbed adding to the body's toxic load. Look for skin care products made with natural ingredients, or try making some of your own.

Solving Specific Skin Problems

With these general principles in mind, let's look at specific skin problems and additional things you can do to resolve them.



Acne and Pimples

Acne plugs up the oil secreting glands of the skin and often involves problems with eating unhealthy fats or having problems with fat metabolism. If you have acne, eliminate all processed vegetable oils and fried foods from the diet. It may also help to take vitamin A and D to prevent the fats in your body from oxidizing. In fact, some people have cleared up their acne using high doses of vitamin A.

You may need to take a lipase enzymes or herbs that promote bile flow like turmeric, dandelion, milk thistle, or burdock. Try taking a *Detoxifying Formula* to cleanse the blood as suggested earlier and add extra burdock as it helps improve fat metabolism in the liver and the skin. If hormones are involved take chaste tree, too.

To cleanse the skin pores and fight infections in the skin, wash the skin with a natural soap, then apply an *Enzyme Spray* to clear the pores. Follow this with an application of a *Nanoparticle Silver Gel* to destroy harmful microbes. You can also use essential oils like sandalwood, lemongrass, tea tree, and rosemary to kill microbes. They can be added to the silver gel or used in a clay mask.

Dermatitis

Dermatitis is a Latin term that means inflammation of the skin. It is more commonly called a rash or hives. Acute dermatitis may be caused by poison ivy or exposure to irritating chemicals. It can also be an allergic reaction to foods or chemicals taken internally.

If the source of irritation is removed, acute dermatitis will usually resolve itself in a few days. You can accelerate the healing process if you take a *Detoxifying Formula* internally and do a clay or seaweed bath to draw out the irritants.

If the rash is allergy related, natural substances that reduce histamine will be helpful. These include vitamin C, quercetin, turmeric, and nettles, or an *Antihistamine Formula* that contains them. You can take them internally or apply them topically.

Eczema

Chronic dermatitis is called eczema. Eczema is not caused by exposure to external irritants although they may make it worse. It typically involves problems with the gastrointestinal tract and liver, which must be healed to permanently resolve it.

Children are particularly prone to eczema. Almost 30% of all newborn babies develop this condition, which affects about one in eight young children. It often occurs on the scalp or the cheeks, but can spread over other parts of the body, making children itchy and miserable. About 75% of those with childhood eczema outgrow the condition by their mid-teens, although they may remain prone to dry skin and occasional flare ups.

In eczema, the skin is repeatedly irritated and inflamed, causing the upper layer of the skin (epidermis) to thicken as skin cells multiply rapidly. This creates a scaly effect on the surface of the skin. Oil glands become obstructed and the skin becomes dry.

The scaly skin inhibits elimination through the skin, causing toxins to become trapped under the skin, which causes itching. As the person scratches, it breaks the upper dermal layer so the skin develops a broken or cracked appearance.

Eczema often involves food allergies. So, if you have eczema, try eliminating common allergy-causing foods, such as dairy products, grains (especially wheat and corn), orange juice and eggs. It's also wise to eliminate caffeine, soda and refined sugars.

If the skin is dry, make sure you consume good fats, including an omega-3 essential fatty acid supplement, and vitamins A and D. You can also apply a natural lotion or oil topically to moisten and soothe the dry skin and ease itching. You can make this yourself by blending a couple of drops of essential oils like bergamot, helichrysum, or rose in a tablespoon of a high quality olive oil or coconut oil.

There may also be a stress factor in eczema. The adrenals produce cortisol to control inflammation, and corticosteroid drugs that mimic this hormone, are sometimes used in eczema. So, try working on stress management if you have eczema. It may be helpful to take an *Adrenal Glandular* or *Adaptogenic Formula* if you are under a lot of stress.

It can also be helpful to use an herb with a cortisol-like anti-inflammatory effect. Licorice and turmeric may be helpful for dry eczema, yucca for weeping eczema. It's also important to use a *Detoxifying Formula* and make sure you keep your digestive system and liver healthy.

Psoriasis

Psoriasis is a chronic and potentially disfiguring disease. It manifests as a buildup of excess skin tissue that looks red and thick and is covered with silvery scales. It may appear first on the elbows and knees but can spread to other parts of the limbs and even the torso. Certain forms even affect the hands, scalp, or joints. Psoriasis has symptoms similar to eczema. The skin is often itchy and dry, and in many cases it may crack or blister.



Psoriasis differs from eczema in that it involves rapid skin growth probably due to an autoimmune reaction. Research suggests that psoriasis is triggered when certain T-cells reproduce too rapidly, starting an inflammatory reaction that causes skin cells to multiply seven to twelve times faster than normal.

From a natural standpoint, working with psoriasis is very similar to working with eczema. For starters, diet is important as poor diet and food allergies are probably involved. Fasting and mild food diets (eating only fruits and vegetables for a period of time) have reduced symptoms, suggesting food sensitivities or allergies may be an underlying cause. So, experiment with eliminating common allergens such as gluten, corn, soy and peanuts.

Continued on page 4

This issue of *Sunshine Sharing* is provided by:

AskMara.com & Energy Wellness Products

Mara Gerke

9898 N 200 E, Decatur, IN 46733

Phone: 800-728-2425

Website: <http://www.askmara.com/>

Email: askmara@gmail.com



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Continued from page 3

With psoriasis, it's even more important to work on the health of the gastrointestinal tract. An imbalance in gut flora (intestinal dysbiosis) and leaky gut syndrome (where the intestinal membranes have become too porous) are typically involved.

If you have gas, bloating, acid indigestion, or other signs of intestinal dysbiosis, take supplements like enteric coated peppermint oil, oregano, goldenseal, or berberine to reduce levels of harmful microbes. Also avoid the sugars and simple carbohydrates that feed yeast and harmful bacteria. Then take probiotics and/or eat fermented vegetables to build a healthier gut flora.

It may also help to take remedies that tone up the leaky gut. A few good remedies are uña d'gato (cat's claw), black walnut, pau d'arco, licorice and chamomile. Detoxifying the liver is also important. So, as with other skin conditions, a *Detoxifying Formula* will also be helpful.

Poor protein metabolism may also be involved. Try taking *Digestive Enzymes* and/or a *Betaine HCl* supplement to improve digestion.

Since skin cells are multiplying rapidly in psoriasis, a *Standardized Acetogenin Formula* may be helpful. Acetogenins, found in herbs like paw paw and graviola, target rapidly growing cells and interfere with their metabolic processes, which will slow down the rapid skin growth found in psoriasis. Try taking one capsule twice daily.

Also, mix the contents of the capsule of the acetogenin formula with some jojoba oil, olive oil, or coconut oil and apply it topically. This will also help keep the skin moist, which is important with psoriasis.

Nutrients that have been reported helpful for psoriasis include large doses of vitamin A (50,000 to 75,000 IU per day), vitamin E (400 to 800 IU per day), B-complex vitamins (vitamin B6 in particular), vitamin C, zinc and chromium.

As with eczema, there may also be a stress factor in psoriasis, so use stress reducing therapies and supplements like the *Adrenal Glandular* or an *Adaptogenic Formula* may be helpful. Practicing stress management is also important.

Rosacea

Rosacea is a chronic inflammatory skin condition. It is very similar to facial acne, except that it typically appears after the age of thirty. Rosacea is usually restricted to the face, but occasionally spreads to other parts of the body. It is more commonly experienced by people with deficient amounts of hydrochloric acid and poor digestion, so follow the same suggestions for working on the digestive system discussed under psoriasis.



You can also apply topical remedies to soothe skin irritation and take nutrients to improve capillary integrity like bilberry, blueberries, and vitamin C. Red raspberry or feverfew can help when applied topically as a facial mask.

Vitiligo

Vitiligo is a skin condition where there are patches of skin that lose their pigmentation. For some reason the cells that produce skin pigment have been damaged or destroyed. This problem can be difficult to treat, but many of the basic therapies for skin health may be helpful. It has been suggested it might be a virus in the skin destroying the pigment. The *Chinese Wind-Heat Evil Formula*, which helps low grade viral infections, may be helpful for some people. Nutrients like vitamin D3, zinc, and vitamin C may also be helpful.

Additional Help and Information

For more information about natural ways to have healthy and beautiful skin, contact the person who gave you this newsletter. You can also consult the following resources:

Strategies for Health by Steven Horne

The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy by Salvatore Battaglia

The Truth About Beauty: Transform Your Looks and Your Life From the Inside Out by Kat James

Herbs for Natural Beauty by Rosemary Gladstar