



Skin care

Your skin deserves the best treatment you can give it.

As babies, we usually have perfect skin: Smooth, close-textured, moist, and with enough oil to protect but not cause problems. As we get older, hormonal changes, heredity factors, and the ageing process all begin to change the texture of our skin. We need to know how to care for our individual skin type in order to keep it looking as good as possible, and for as long as possible.

Skin is a complex structure that serves us well. It acts as an efficient envelope, a temperature regulator, a toxin excreter, and a sensory connector between the nervous system and outside stimuli. Our skin is made up of three layers: the epidermis, the dermis, and subcutaneous tissue.

Epidermis

This is the outer, visible layer. It is made up of flattened, dead and dying cells that overlap to form an elastic, water-resistant surface. New cells from beneath are constantly replacing these cells, the layer being renewed every month. All the layers are gradually replaced over a period of seven years.

Dermis

This layer produces the new cells that make their way up to the epidermis. The dermis contains oil glands, blood vessels, hair follicles, and nerves and is connected to the epidermis by collagen fibres.

Subcutaneous tissue

This is a fatty layer that provides a protective pad for underlying bone and organs, and also contains sweat glands.

Along with your hair, your skin usually shows the condition of your health. Stress, lack of sleep, poor diet, and illness are some of the conditions that can show in the skin. To keep your skin in the best possible

condition, there are a few simple steps you can take. The rest is up to nature!

- * Eat lots of fruit and vegetables.
- * Drink six to eight glasses of water daily.
- * Get six to eight hours sleep a night.
- * Do some form of exercise daily, whatever you enjoy.
- * Use the purest skin preparations that you can make or buy.
- * Keep out of the sun during the hottest part of the day, use a good sunblock whenever you are outside in the summer, and wear a hat.
- * Cultivate a positive attitude. Stress is about the worst thing for skin, giving it that lined, drawn look.



Natural, unscented, vegetable glycerine soaps are best for sensitive skin.

Following are recipes and treatments for every type of skin. If you do not have the essential oils listed in a particular recipe, consult the “Which essential oils to use when and where” table on page 250 and choose another oil with similar properties.

The recipes are suitable for both men and women. Men suffer from skin problems just as often as women do, but it is usually assumed that men “just have skin.” In the recipes where fragrance lingers on the skin, I have suggested different oils for men, as the perfume of some of the essential oils might be perceived as too feminine.



Ensure that neck cream is blended over the whole surface of the neck and upper chest.

“The first feminine feature that goes, with advancing age, is the neck.”

GLORIA SWANSON

Water, olive oil, and kaolin clay, mixed to a paste, ready for the addition of lavender essential oil to make Lavender Barrier Cream.



The neck

The skin on the neck is usually drier than on our faces, and it is often very neglected, resulting in a crepey, dry texture. Also, if the hair is short, the back of the neck is very exposed to the sun, so it's particularly important to keep the whole area supple, not just the throat.

The special neck blend should be used night and morning, but don't forget sunblock during the day.

SPECIAL NECK BLEND

This oil blend is gentle and rich. If used regularly, it can help to keep wrinkles at bay and to soften and smooth those that have already appeared.

- 2 x 250 iu vitamin E capsules
- 2 teaspoons jojoba oil
- 1 teaspoon avocado oil
- 1 teaspoon wheat germ oil
- 1/2 teaspoon evening primrose oil
- 5 drops carrot seed essential oil
- 5 drops lavender essential oil
- 5 drops palmarosa essential oil
- 5 drops rosewood essential oil

To make and use

Pierce the vitamin E capsules and mix with all ingredients in a bottle and shake to blend.

If possible leave for four days to synergize.

Label and store in a dark, cool place. Do not refrigerate.

Shake well before use.

Spray or splash a little water on the throat.

Sprinkle a few drops of the oil onto the palm of your hand and massage gently into the throat in an upward direction until it has been absorbed.



Hands

These hard-working parts of our bodies need all the love and care we can give them.

It is very common to spend a great deal of time and money on our hair and faces, and to neglect our poor hands. They are exposed to the weather just as our faces are, and they also have to contend with gardening, washing clothes, and dishes, and all the other jobs which are so hard on skin.

Essential oils are particularly good for hands as they work very quickly and are readily absorbed without leaving a greasy feeling. The following oil is a luxurious treat for the tools we use most often and usually appreciate the least.

LEMON AND LAVENDER HAND SOFTENER

This is a cream for dry, rough, work-worn hands.

- 3 cubes (about 1 1/4 oz/36 g) beeswax
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) almond oil
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) olive oil
- 2 1/2 tablespoons (40 ml) glycerine
- 2 drops lemon essential oil
- 2 drops lavender essential oil

To make and use

Melt the beeswax into the sweet almond and olive oils gently in a double boiler.

Stir in the glycerine until completely blended.

Remove from heat.

Drip the essential oils into the slightly cooled mixture.

Stir mixture very well then pot.

Label and store in a cool, dark place.

Massage it into the hands before doing dirty jobs.

If your hands are really rough, use this rich cream during the evening while talking or watching television, or massage a goodly amount on before bedtime, and cover the hands with cotton gloves to protect the bedding.



The back of the hands are exposed to more sunlight than any other part of the body. Apply hand cream at least three times a day.

LAVENDER BARRIER CREAM

- 4 teaspoons purified water
- 2 1/2 tablespoons (40 ml) olive oil
- 2 teaspoons kaolin clay
- 10 drops lavender essential oil

To make and use

Mix the ingredients together thoroughly in a small bowl.

Pot up in a clean glass jar.

Label and store in a cool, dark place.

Massage cream well into hands before doing dirty jobs.

HEALING HAND CREAM

If you do not have the time or energy to make a cream from scratch, this blend is for you.

Buy aloe cream, not aloe ointment, from a health-food store, making sure you get one containing the largest amount possible of aloe.

The combination of the aloe cream and essential oils will heal and soften sore, dry, or cracked skin.

- 1 3/4 oz (50 g) jar aloe vera cream
- 1/2 teaspoon benzoin tincture or 5 drops benzoin essential oil
- 10 drops sandalwood essential oil
- 10 drops palmarosa or lavender essential oil
- 10 drops lavender essential oil

To make and use

Decant the aloe vera cream into a small bowl.

In another bowl, mix all the oils and tincture together.

Add the combined oils slowly to the cream, a drop at a time, mixing constantly.

When the oils are thoroughly incorporated, spoon the cream back into the jar.

Label and store in a cool, dark place.

Use it after washing your hands and at bedtime.

TIP: THE SKIN ON THE HAND CONTAINS VERY LITTLE OIL. USE SUITABLE GLOVES FOR GARDENING, HOUSEWORK, ETC., AND USE A RICH HAND CREAM WHENEVER POSSIBLE.





Buff and file your nails once a week before applying moisturizer.

HAND AND NAIL OIL

The combination of the aloe cream and essential oils will heal and soften sore, dry, or cracked skin.

- 5 x 250iu vitamin E capsules
- 4 teaspoons sweet almond oil
- 2 teaspoons avocado oil
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon jojoba oil
- 20 drops evening primrose oil
- 5 drops benzoin essential oil
- 10 drops sandalwood essential oil
- 10 drops lemon essential oil

To make and use

Prick the vitamin E capsules and squeeze the contents into a 2 fl oz (60 ml) bottle.

Add all the other oils and shake to blend. If possible, leave for four days to synergize. Label and store in a cool, dark place.

Pour four to six drops into the palm of your hand.

Massage oil into the skin and around the nail bed until absorbed. Repeat.

HAND LOTION

This lotion keeps well without refrigeration except in very hot weather.

- 1 teaspoon distilled witch hazel
- 4 teaspoons vegetable glycerine
- 5 teaspoons cologne (see "Colognes," pages 320–1)

To make and use

Mix all the ingredients together in a small bowl.

Pour into a small bottle or clean glass jar. Label and store in a cool, dark place.

Apply a few drops and massage in well.

HAND-CARE TIPS



- Manicure your nails every week.
- Wear gloves when doing the dishes, hand-washing clothes, and gardening.
- Keep a cut lemon close to the kitchen sink. Lemon juice removes stains, whitens the skin, and cleans the nails.
- Use a hand cream after doing dishes, gardening, or any DIY work about the house.
- Use a sunblock cream on your hands in summer.

LUSCIOUS LOTION BAR

Lotion bars look like a bar of soap but melt into your skin. They are great for moisturising work-worn hands, feet, or anywhere that the skin is very dry.

If you are giving these bars as a gift, they can be wrapped in either cellophane or greaseproof paper.

- 4 oz (120 g) cocoa butter
- 1 oz (30 g) shea butter
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) almond oil
- 1 teaspoon calendula infused oil
- 30 drops phenoxitol
- 30 drops essential oils of your choice

To make

Place the cocoa butter, shea butter, and the almond and calendula oils in a double boiler and heat until just melted.

Remove from the heat and stir well to mix.

Allow to cool until the outside of the pan is just above hand heat.

Add the phenoxitol and essential oils and stir really thoroughly to incorporate.

Pour into small soap or chocolate molds and freeze for a few minutes until hard, then tap from the molds.

These bars are best kept in a covered container in the refrigerator, unless your storage area is very cool.

Hair

Take a good look at hair next time you are in a crowd of people and you will see that the average person has perfectly ordinary hair. Some people have thick hair, others have dull hair. Despite the fact that they regularly use shampoo and conditioners, only one in a thousand will have hair that looks like the hair on the television commercials.

Now take a look at the people in old photographs and paintings—was their hair worse than ours is? Chances are that their hair was considerably stronger and in better condition.

Hair type is mostly inherited. Learn how to make the best of what nature and your parents blessed you with, and stop attempting to achieve the impossible.

In this section I have included many treatments, which will add natural body and shine to dry hair, control grease and dandruff, and gently and fragrantly care for all hair types.



Lather shampoo especially around the hairline to make sure the whole head is cleansed.

Commercial shampoos aren't magic potions

Commercial shampoos and conditioners are comparatively new. When I was a child we used a block of soap and rainwater to shampoo, with vinegar rinse to finish the job. I have photographs of myself and my mother with shining dark hair that owed nothing to a bottle of bought shampoo. Most people had a reasonable head of hair unless they were sick or had been handed a poor deal by their genes!

I have spent time in India and noticed that even the poorest men and women have sleek, shining hair that has never been washed with bottled shampoo. I once became friendly with a very poor Indian woman who only used mashed, cooked lentils to shampoo her hair. She shared the

Commercial shampoos are often full of detergent so it's best to make your own from natural ingredients that suit your hair type.

