

Natural Facial Treatments

Lynn Parentini

Everyone knows the benefits of incorporating fresh vegetables in their diet, but have you ever thought of bringing them into your skin care routine? Ask your esthetician if any of these natural treatments will complement your current recommended home-care routine.

Refreshing Cucumbers

Images of women basking with cucumber slices over their eyes are practically synonymous with spas. Many people have pooh-poohed it as a cliché, but there's real power in those slices. Cucumber extract is good for acne, contains high levels of antioxidants, modulates transepidermal water loss,

24 ounces of warm water; Lemon or lime (optional, for scent); 3 sprigs of fresh mint (optional, for scent);

Wash cucumbers and pat dry. Slice cucumber (with peel on) paper-thin. Add slices to sterilized container with warm water. Cover and shake container. Let steep for 10 minutes. Make fresh daily.

The same ingredients can be used to make a pure cucumber juice concentrate by running them through a juicer. The resulting concentrate should be kept in a sterilized container and can be added to many treatments, including clays and dry exfoliants. This should also be made fresh daily.

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."

- W. A. Ward

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Ask your esthetician about using these treatments.

and fortifies the skin lipid barrier, all of which mean healthier skin.

CUCUMBER WATER

Use this water as a toner, or for eye and facial compresses.

Ingredients:

2 organic English cucumbers (seedless);

Botanical Oils

The use of oils to condition the skin is as ubiquitous as using water to cleanse it. Historically, oils were used as cleansers, slathered on and then scraped off with an implement called a strigil. Today, botanical oils are used for their

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moisturizing and healing benefits.

Flaxseed oil contains some of the highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids, and calms skin that is raw and irritated due to conditions like eczema or psoriasis. It helps repair skin cells and hydrates even the driest skin.

FLAXSEED GEL MASK

Flaxseeds, when boiled and cooled, make gel. This gel can be used alone as a compress, or other ingredients can be added to it for a customized treatment.

Ingredients:

One-third cup whole flaxseeds; 2 cups filtered water or cucumber juice; 4 ounces of aloe vera gel (optional); One-half teaspoon of honey (optional); One-half teaspoon of sunflower seed oil (optional)

Bring water to a boil. Stir in flaxseeds and immediately reduce heat. Stir and simmer until the gel forms (about 10 minutes). Strain the mixture through a cheesecloth and then transfer to a sterilized container. Apply to face and décolleté with a fan brush for five to ten minutes. Remove with warm towel. Flaxseed gel can be stored in the refrigerator for up to one week.

PURE AVOCADO FACIAL MASK

Avocados are known for their "good fats" but they are also full of vitamins and anti-bacterial properties. Flaxseed helps fight inflammation. When combined together, this calming mask will leave the skin looking hydrated and refreshed.

Ingredients:

1 ripe avocado (peeled, pitted, and cubed); 2 tablespoons sunflower seed oil or rice bran oil; 2-3 drops lemon or lime juice (optional); 2 ounces flaxseed gel (optional); 1 tablespoon honey (optional)

In a blender or food processor, process the avocado until smooth. Add other ingredients to mixture slowly. Once mixture is combined, apply to face and décolleté with wooden spatula. Leave on skin for 10-15 minutes, remove with warm towel.

Probiotics--the live cultures in yogurt--exhibit antifungal, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial benefits when used on skin. They have been shown to reduce acne lesions by half over an eight-week period. Probiotics increase ceramide production, which boosts skin protection against the bacteria that causes acne.

CREAMY YOGURT FACIAL TREATMENT

Use this recipe on skin with acne.

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons Greek yogurt; 1 tablespoon sunflower seed oil or rice bran oil; 1 tablespoon honey (optional); Crushed mint leaves (optional; remove before treatment)

Combine the ingredients together in a bowl. Apply mixture with a fan brush to face and décolleté for five to ten minutes. Remove with warm towel.

Lynn Parentini is a respected author, educator, esthetician, massage therapist, and author of The Joy of Healthy Skin (Prentice Hall, 1995).



Consider incorporating plants into your skin care.

Healthy Probiotics

Nature's Nutritional Wonder

Cruciferous Vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables are powerful foods that can help prevent many forms of cancer, reduce existing cancer tumors, and aid in the prevention of heart disease. Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, arugula, kale, and Brussels sprouts all contain isothiocyanates--a group of chemicals that break down carcinogens in the body, helping to metabolize toxins. Studies show that people who eat two to three servings of cruciferous vegetables each week lower their risk of breast cancer, colon cancer, and lung cancer. A National Cancer Institute study found that eating three helpings of crucifers a week dropped prostate cancer risk by 50 percent. The powerful chemicals in these veggies also reduce homocysteine levels, a known precursor to heart disease.

Cruciferous vegetables are low in calories and high in fiber and the chromium found in these foods helps regulate blood sugar and insulin function, key factors in keeping diabetes at bay. Even with all the benefits that crucifers provide, many people refuse to

eat them because of their strong taste. But a little creativity can go a long way in making these wonderful foods palatable: try cream of broccoli soup, cauliflower au gratin, stuffed cabbage, or the recipe below--the possibilities are endless.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS FOR THE MEAT-AND-POTATOES EATER

1 pound fresh Brussels sprouts, washed, stems trimmed, and outer leaves removed

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

3 tablespoons cider vinegar

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Salt and pepper, to taste

Thinly slice Brussels sprouts, either in a food processor fitted with a slicing blade, or by hand. Heat a heavy, nonstick skillet. Add olive oil and butter, swirling the pan so that the butter melts. Saute sliced Brussels sprouts for 5 minutes. Add cider vinegar and grated Parmesan, stirring briefly to incorporate. Add salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Serves four--who will all be healthier for it!



Cruciferous veggies help ward off disease.

Don't Get Sick!

Prevention is Key

Leslie Roste

Regardless of whether the threat is a simple cold or the flu, there are several things you can do to protect yourself from unnecessary downtime.

PROPER HAND WASHING

This gets top billing because of its true effectiveness in preventing illness. The most important aspects of hand washing are the length of time (at least 30 seconds) and the amount of friction you use, not the water temperature.

FLUIDS AND MORE FLUIDS

Staying well hydrated clearly benefits our skin, the largest organ of our immune system. The advice to stay adequately hydrated is even more important in the cold, dry months of winter.

EAT YOUR VITAMINS

A balanced diet, which includes all food groups, gives your immune system the resources it needs when it faces a challenge like the flu.

EIGHT HOURS OF SLEEP

Research continues to prove how vital this is to every part of our well-being. It affects everything from our ability to resist illness to managing weight.

HANDS AND FACE

It is important to keep your hands away from your face, particularly the eyes, mouth, and nose, which are favorite points of entry for viruses. Start paying attention to how frequently you touch your face. Break the habit, and you could reduce your risk of colds and flu this season by more than 50 percent.

Leslie Roste has degrees in nursing and microbiology and is employed by King Research in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

*"Acknowledging
the good that
you already have
in your life is the
foundation for
all abundance."*

-Eckhart Tolle

A Note from Lilly: Hello my Leading Ladies! Can you believe August has come and gone? If you are a Murphysborolian like me, you know September is a fun and exciting time full of Apple Festival thrills. I am so excited to be right in the heart of all festival action this year. Thank you all so much for your continued support and trust. This journey has been so amazing and I cannot wait to see what comes next. Continue to invest in yourself and make time for your self-care.

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MEMBER

