

Winter Skin Care Smoothly Surviving the Season

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The winter season brings with it cooler temperatures and drier air, which can lead to skin dehydration, formation of fine lines and loss of nutrients. Incorporating some specific face and body treatments into your weekly regimen can help to combat these skin concerns. These seasonal treatments can assist in rebalancing the skin, as well as helping to prevent premature aging.

Exposure to dry, cold air can cause a loss of moisture in the skin. If the skin is already dry and/or mature, it is important to ensure additional steps are taken to normalize the skin's oil and water levels. Even those with combination-oily skin can be prone to skin dryness and premature aging during colder months.

Dry skin can also lead to the formation of fine lines and wrinkles due to loss of moisture. On the face, this is first noticeable around the eyes and mouth. The hands and other areas of the body can be affected as well, and may feel dry, tight and appear scaly. A little tender, loving care, however, can combat dryness and keep the skin young.

Here are some tips and remedies to help combat winter's aging effects and keep the skin supple year-round.

Seasonal Spa Treatments For the Face

For those clients with skin that is already dry or mature, or for skin that has become more dehydrated, choose facials that meet the following criteria.

- Use a light, lotion-based cleanser that does not contain foaming or lathering agents. The foam and/or lather are created from chemical detergents that dry out the skin even more.
- Select a skin balancer/toner made with a low percentage of alcohol. Alcohol can strip the skin of moisture and increase dryness.
- Incorporate facial steaming using pure essential oils and herbs for dry skin. Herbs and oils such as chamomile, rosewood, lavender, rose and sandalwood are all good examples.
- Find a gentle exfoliant that isn't too rough or grainy. Dry skin can accumulate on the surface of the skin, leaving it looking dull. Removing dead skin cells can assist in new cell growth. Ingredients such as oatmeal, clays and rice powder are a few examples of natural and gentle exfoliants for the face.
- A hydrating mask is an excellent way to deep clean and rehydrate the skin. Masks made with natural grains, gentle clays, floral waters and pure oils are the best choice.
- A moisturizing massage -- using a light facial oil that won't clog pores -- is an excellent step to add to the facial. A good facial oil for dry/mature skin can include natural carrier oils such as almond, sesame, apricot kernel, jojoba and vitamin E, along with some pure essential oils. Ensure the oil you use has not been created with mineral oil.
- Incorporate the use of fresh, natural ingredients to the facial for additional moisture and nutrient renewal. Yogurt is an excellent skin softener and cleaner, oatmeal is a gentle exfoliant, banana and avocado can help to moisturize dry skin, and honey is a natural skin beautifier.

- Find a hydrating eye gel that is not too heavy or greasy is an important step to add to the facial.

Seasonal Spa Treatments For the Body

Here are some ideas for effective body treatments during the winter season, as well as year-round. These treatments will help to nourish, soften, moisturize and renew the body both internally and externally.

- Aromatherapy Body Wrap - This treatment involves the application of warmed aromatherapy oils to the body. The body is then wrapped in a heated blanket for 15-20 minutes. Once the wrap is removed, the body is massaged with the oils.

- Body Exfoliations - This treatment can be offered along with a moisturizing massage. Select a body exfoliation that contains natural carrier oils. A salt glow is a good choice for full-body exfoliation. This treatment will remove dead skin cells that accumulate from the dry skin.

- Body Masks - Full-body masks created with natural fruits, grains and yogurt are effective to renew the skin. Body masks containing natural enzymes from papaya and/or pineapple, seaweed, natural oils and herbs can help to moisturize and re-nourish the skin.

- Hydrotherapy - A full-body soak in water filled with mineral salts, seaweed, herbs and oils provides skin nourishment and all-over treatment for dry skin.

- Full-Body Massage - Massage using natural oils is the best way to hydrate the body. A rich body cream can also be used. Avoid body massage oils made with synthetic oils, such as mineral oil and artificial fragrances.

Home Remedy Recipe for Winter Skin Care

Exfoliant & Mask for the Face and Body

- 1 cup plain raw oatmeal
- 4 tbsp. plain natural yogurt
- 2 tbsp. of rice powder
- 1 tsp. of honey
- 1 tsp. of a natural carrier oil (almond, apricot kernel or jojoba)
- 1/4 of a banana (optional)
- 3-4 drops of essential oils (lavender, chamomile or rosewood)

Blend ingredients together until a spreadable, well-mixed paste is formed. Apply on the face with gentle massage strokes to help exfoliate the skin. Leave on for 10 minutes then wash off. Use 2-3 times per week. This mixture can be used on dry areas of the body. Store in a closed glass or plastic container in the refrigerator for up to five days. This recipe will help to gently remove dead skin cells, soften and clean the skin, and moisturize.

Spa Products - Professional and Retail

Using products that contain a high percentage of cosmetic chemicals during the winter season can cause an increased rate of moisture loss and premature aging. Select products that contain natural carrier oils, high-grade essential oils, natural grains and plant extracts for best results.

Salves are also excellent in the winter months. Those made with pure cocoa butter, beeswax, shea butter, natural oils and essential oils can be helpful for spot treatment application on areas such as the heels of the feet, knees, elbows and other dry or dehydrated areas. Avoid use on the face. Lip balm created with similar ingredients is also a good option to keep lips from drying out in cold weather.

And don't forget your sunscreen! UV rays are harmful, even in the colder months, and sun can still

take it's toll on skin during this time. Be sure to use a daily sunscreen with at least a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15. If you're outside for extended periods on sunny, cold days, reapply as directed and consider using an SPF of 30-plus. Your skin will thank you for it.

Sherina Jamal is founder of Ancient Secrets Inc. The focus of the company is to provide education and offer natural skin and body care products to the health and spa industry. Ancient Secrets offers the Lotus Skin Care Line and the Ancient Secrets Spa line. For more information, contact Jamal at ancientsecrets@hotmail.com, or call toll free 888/796-0589.