

# Beautiful Skin

by Gayle Simpson



As a teenager I tried every natural home remedy under the sun, along with some nasty chemicals and antibiotics, to clear up my skin, but it remained oily and spattered with pimples and blackheads. Nothing seemed to work. Happily, today I can say that I have found the secret to beautiful skin. But be warned, it is not what you think. When people ask me about my beauty routine, I get a little nervous ... I hope they're not undercover beauticians out to catch slackers ... because my minimalistic routine has nothing to do with my skin. Seriously.

## The Secret of Great Skin

Your skin is an organ of your body, and its health reflects your inner health. As an elimination organ, the more toxic your body, the worse your skin will look. The health of your skin reflects your state of nourishment, health and vibrancy.

And this is not something one can fake with cosmetics and treatments. Good health shines from the inside out, anything else is just illusion. Great skin is effortless, literally, when you look after yourself right.

## My Top 10 Rules for Beautiful Skin

### 1. eat healthy

- Fresh, home-made, chemical free, un-packaged, untreated, unpolluted (organic) foods are your first strategy. Remove packaged foods and additives from your diet. Go back to basics, make your food from scratch, grow veges and eat fresh meals, without relying on canned, packaged or frozen foods too often. Avoid junk foods, baked goods and takeaways. And don't believe advertising or the packaging claims, read labels and decide for yourself whether the ingredients are healthy!

- Don't be afraid of oil or fat! Your skin has a large amount of fat (lipids) holding it together, stopping it from sagging, and keeping it youthful. Fat/oil-free diets are not good for your body, or for your skin. In fact, healthy fats and oils are very good for your skin! Choose only good quality cold-pressed vegetable oils such as olive, sesame and flaxseed. Saturated fats from coconuts, palm and dairy products are also good. ➔

Avoid or reduce all other fats in the diet such as animal fats, canola and soy oils or other vegetable oils unless labelled as 'cold pressed'. Also avoid heated or hydrogenated oils such as margarine (even those made with olive or rice bran), commercial peanut butter and coconut cream (also hydrogenated) and deep-fried foods.

● Get tested for allergies or sensitivities (preferably by a natural therapist) and for at least six months, avoid entirely those things which you react to. If the testing method used was accurate, you will be very pleased with the results!

My 'teenage acne' problem completely cleared up when I stopped eating wheat. I now realise that my body was using my skin as an outlet for eliminating allergic substances from my diet, and yours may be too.

## 2. exercise

After diet, I believe exercise makes the most noticeable difference to skin health, particularly if you exercise enough to break into a good sweat. Sweating clears out the pores and brings a great deal of blood to the skin, bringing oxygen and nutrients to ensure your baby skin cells are well-nourished, to create lovely fresh new skin. Sweating in saunas or hot pools will also be beneficial, although exercise-induced sweating has a far more beneficial effect on the skin, because it has so many healthy effects on the body as a whole. So try to break into a good sweat at least three times a week, daily if possible; and ensure aerobic exercise (brisk walking, dancing, jogging, cycling, swimming, tennis etc.) is a regular part of your schedule.

## 3. rest and sleep

Get as much good-quality sleep and rest as you possibly can. You deserve it and you need it. Looking after yourself makes you feel good, and it shows in your skin. A poorly-rested body cannot be beautiful.

## 4. eliminate well

Your skin is an elimination organ. And if your other elimination organs (liver, lungs, colon and kidneys) are overburdened, the skin will be used for excreting toxins too. This will show up as rashes and blemishes, or generally unhealthy looking skin.

### **How to decrease the elimination burden**

- Cut out chemicals – alcohol, cigarettes, drugs of all kinds, caffeine, food additives, environmental chemicals.
- See a naturopath or iridologist to find out which organs need detoxing and follow their

advice. This may include fasting, colon cleanses or herbal remedies and teas for organ cleansing.

- Help your skin eliminate with skin brushing, massaging and steaming. All of these lessen the load on your skin and help it to eliminate faster and more efficiently.

## 5. healthy water

Washing and bathing expose your skin to water many times a day, so it's important to ensure that the water you use is as pure as possible. Your skin is also a highly absorbent organ, which quickly takes in almost anything it comes into contact with, sending it straight to the liver via the blood. Chemicals such as chlorine and fluoride added to our water supplies cannot have a good effect on the body or skin. Use untreated water (rain, bore, spring, river, ocean) for bathing, or install a whole house water filtration system.

## 6. fresh air and sunshine

Fresh air contains negative ions (the good ones), and has less environmental contaminants than indoor air. Stagnant air is no good for the skin, so get outdoors whenever possible. Exercising outdoors is far better than exercising inside, and air-conditioning is also best avoided, as it dries out the air and your skin.

Sunshine has so many positive effects on body, mind and spirit that it would need its own article. Of course there is such a thing as too much sun, but I believe sun-deficiency is a far bigger problem in our culture. Allow your skin to soak up the sun uninhibited, but sensibly (when sun is not at its peak but with no sunscreens or windows) for at least 30-60 minutes a day. It's so enjoyable, why deny yourself of it? If you're sceptical or believe that sun is harmful, try Googling "sunshine health benefits".

Cigarette smoke, air pollution, car exhaust fumes, paint fumes and other environmental chemicals all have a damaging effect on the skin. Avoid them wherever possible.

## 7. use healthy skin products

Everything you apply to your skin or hair will be absorbed and can have powerful effects on your health and your skin. The best rule is, if you can't eat it, don't apply it. Be extremely careful when choosing body products – scrutinise the labels well, look up the ingredients on the internet or in books such as *Don't Go To The Cosmetic Counter Without Me* by Paula Begoun, and don't buy anything that does not have a full ingredients listing. Non-organic body products normally contain all types of harmful chemicals, from sodium lauryl sulphate (an engine degreaser) – a foaming agent used in shampoo, body wash, face washes etc. to propylene glycol (the main ingredient of radiator antifreeze) – used in most skin care products). Even products which say they will make your skin healthy often contain ingredients which actually damage the deeper layers of your skin and immature skin cells.

## 8. cautious cleansing

Hot water and soaps or detergents strip the natural oils from your skin, drying it out and increasing the effects of aging. Removing the oils from your skin also has the effect of seriously reducing your body's vitamin D levels, a vitamin essential for health and happiness. Instead wash with cool or tepid water, avoiding all soaps or cleansers except where absolutely necessary. Even when showering, ensure the



water is cooler rather than hot, and using a mild cleanser or soap, only wash the truly dirty, smelly, greasy areas.

## 9. the oil treatment

The best cleanser for the skin is oil. It's true, the Romans were right! Smothering your body with oil, rubbing it in and rubbing it off with a cloth, followed by a splash of water will do wonders for your skin. It cleans so well that my friend in the theatre swears by it for removing that heavy thick greasy theatrical make-up. Sesame oil is best, although you can try mixtures of oils such as sesame, coconut, almond, carrot, avocado or olive. No, cleansing your skin with oil will not cause oiliness. To the contrary, your skin will soak it up, as it is a wonderful natural moisturiser, and can often have the effect of balancing out over-oily skin. Skin cleansed with oil rather than soap is the softest, most healthy, youngest-looking skin I have ever seen. I never use moisturisers at all, a little massage with oil every night before bed and after a shower or face wash is all I have used for the past decade.

## 10. smile!

Your happiness creates positive changes in your cells which cannot help but make you radiate happiness and good health all over. Plus we all know that smiling uses fewer muscles than frowning, producing less wrinkles too! And a smiling face is beautiful.

## Skin Treatments

### 1. skin brushing

Buy a natural fibre brush and keep it specifically for this purpose. Don't ever get it wet, and if it does get wet, dry it in the sun. As often as possible, once a day on waking is best, dry brush your skin all over in little circles. This increases circulation, exfoliates dead skin cells, helps elimination and causes glowing skin!

### 2. massage

Massaging your skin helps to keep it firm and healthy. It also improves circulation for added health benefits. Facial massage is a wonderful treatment you can do at home every day. Pressing acupressure points on the face is also said to help keep your skin beautiful. Always use cold-pressed organic oils, as listed above in number 9.

### 3. steaming

Steaming the body to open pores and encourage sweating is very healthy for the skin as long as it is done properly.

- The temperature should not be too hot or it can damage and dry the skin. 40°-50°C is the recommended temperature, even if it takes longer to get a sweat up.

- It is best to massage the skin in oil before steaming to protect it. Long massage with warm oils (Ayurvedic Massage) prior to steaming is said to aid elimination through the skin, using the oils as a vehicle for carrying deeply held toxins to the surface.

- Steam only to the point of breaking a sweat or just beyond, any further artificial sweating (sweating not caused naturally through exercise) can also damage and dry the skin.

- Cool bathing afterwards, followed by another layer of moisturising oil is also recommended. ✎

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## safe gifts that save lives water filter

Water is a basic human need. In the next 24 hours, diseases caused by unclean water and poor sanitation will claim the lives of 5000 children, but most cases could be prevented or treated by a modest water filter.

### gardener's pack \$40

A gardener's pack is the essential ingredient to growing a life without poverty. Simple tools such as a shovel, hoe, watering can and the gift of seeds make planting and harvesting easier, for communities in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

### bags of vegetable seeds

These reliable, locally purchased vegetable seeds will help communities in East Timor to grow more and eat more. They can also sell surplus crops or start a seed bank.

### help the animals this holiday

SAFE is New Zealand's second largest animal charity and is looking for compassionate New Zealanders to help collect donations during the **National Street Appeal for Animals** on 18 and 19 December 2009.

Donate a couple of hours of your time and help SAFE reach its goal of 1200 collectors raising over \$300,000 for animals! **All volunteers enter a cruelty-free prize draw!** To register as a collector or to send a gift, visit: [www.safe.org.nz](http://www.safe.org.nz) or ph: (03) 379 9711.

## open all hours

For those sensitive or allergic to gluten, an online shop, [www.glutenfreegrocer.co.nz](http://www.glutenfreegrocer.co.nz) was launched in the middle of the year bringing back the yesteryear nostalgia of ordering by phone and delivering by push bike.

## the APPLE of mac's eye – Isaac's Cider

Just as the apple fell down and hit Isaac Newton square on the head, Mac's was hit with an equally splendid flash of inspiration – a refreshing new cider just in time for summer, offering an alternative option for those looking for a change.

With five per cent alcohol and using New Zealand grown apples sourced from the finest orchards, it is as naturally uplifting as a clear summer's day. Mac's has created a light, modern drop, which tastes crisp, fresh and delicious – just like an apple. **Mac's Isaac's Cider** is sure to become the apple of your eye this summer.

**Available from all liquor stockists nationwide.**

**Six pack, RRP: \$14.99**

