

Simple Skin Foods for Anti-Aging

By Mary Elizabeth Wakefield, LAc, Dipl. Ac., MS, MM

With the onset of sunny summer, my last article was dedicated to the skin syndrome of hyperpigmentation, and the effects of photoaging. To protect your skin from possible deleterious effects of the intense heat of high summer, simple foods and herbs, such as calendula, comfrey, raspberry leaf, essential oils, raw almonds, flaxseed, and honey can be employed to cool, moisturize and provide support.

The following comprises a list of some skin recipes I have found effective.

Awesome Oats Cleanser

- 1 cup oats, finely ground
- 2 cups French white clay
- 1/4 cup raw almonds, coarsely ground
- 1/8 cup lavender flower, finely ground (powdered)
- 1/8 cup roses, finely ground (powdered)
- 1/8 cup flaxseeds, finely ground

You can also add seaweed, vitamins A and E, a few drops of lavender, and rose or lemon balm essential oil. The paste can also be mixed with raw honey. Combine all ingredients and store them in an attractive container with a scoop, such as a seashell; you can also store the mixture in a shaker-top bottle. Wet the face, mix two teaspoons of the cleanser with water to make a paste, gently massage into face, and wash off with warm water.

Herbal Facial Steams*

Herbal Facial Soup - Lovely Lavender-Rose Soup (for dry or normal skin, a more moisturizing steam; mucilaginous)

2 parts chamomile flowers
2 parts roses
1 part lavender flowers
3 parts comfrey
2 parts calendula

Sensational Sage Soup (for oily or normal skin, a more drying or astringent steam)

1 part sage
2 parts comfrey
2 parts calendula
1 part raspberry leaf
1/4 part rosemary

Mix all herbs together, and store in airtight glass bottles, or a sealed paper bag. Boil two quarts of water, add a handful of herbs, simmer, remove pot, and steam for five minutes or so.

Marvelous Masks

- Dry skin; for once a week use

Basic mask:

2 oz. green clay or French white clay
3 teaspoons cornflower

Mix together and keep in a jar. Add one tablespoon of **basic mask** to liquid ingredients below.

For normal skin:

1 tablespoon basic mask
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon water
2 drops geranium
1 drop white Bulgarian rose/rose otto

For dry skin:

- 1 tablespoon basic mask
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon evening primrose oil
- 2 drops carrot oil
- 2 teaspoons water
- 1 drop chamomile
- 1 drop rose

For oily skin:

- 1 tablespoon basic mask
- 1 tablespoon brewer's yeast
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 drop rosemary
- 1 drop lavender

For sun-damaged, dehydrated skin:

- 1 tablespoon basic mask
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon brewer's yeast
- 1 teaspoon jojoba oil
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 drop chamomile
- 2 drops carrot

For acne:

- 1 tablespoon basic mask
- 1 teaspoon water
- 1 drop chamomile
- 1 drop lavender
- 1 drop juniper

1 drop patchouli

- For daily use - dry skin: 1 egg yolk, plus 7 drops of extra virgin olive oil.
- For daily use - oily skin: 1 egg white, plus 7 drops of lemon juice; mix well, apply, let dry and keep remainder in refrigerator.
- For daily use - combination skin: 1 egg white; mix well, apply, let dry and rinse with warm water.
- For all skin types: harmonious honey mask.

Harmonious Honey Mask

Apply honey to dry face and neck area. Leave on at least 20 minutes. Massage honey into skin. Make sure your hair is out of reach of the sticky honey, and rinse with warm water. What you don't rinse off, you can lick off!

(Don't make the same mistake I did by going outside on a lovely spring day in the country: the bees found me very appetizing!)

Honey is a natural humectant, and both moisturizes and cleanses the skin. Bacteria can't live in honey. It brings fresh blood to the skin surface, removes impurities, smoothes and softens skin.

About Clays (for masks)

Clay is high in minerals and nourishes the skin. These mineral deposits are thousands of years old.

White French clay: good for dry skin - slightly drawing, and very gentle. It can be mixed with yogurt or avocado for a more nourishing facial. This clay is cleansing, improves lymphatic flow and increases blood circulation.

Green, red or yellow clay: good for oily to normal skin - more drying and high in minerals, such as magnesium, potassium and sodium; excellent for blemishes and acne; balances combination skin; energizes connective tissues; increases lymphatic flow; as well as circulation, which enables oxygen to speed up the elimination of waste materials. It has healing and antiseptic properties and is often used to treat poison oak, poison ivy, bee stings and other insect bites.

Conclusion

Enjoy the delightful fecundity of nature this summer, and take advantage of these wonderful recipes drawn from her bounty to maintain the health and beauty of your skin. Have a joyous and abundant season!

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