

Achieve Optimal Skin Health

by Dr. Claudia Aguirre

Skin health is not merely the absence of disease, it's a lifestyle. Whether it's getting enough sleep, exercising or maintaining a healthy skin regimen, it's important to make healthy living a part of your life. Having a healthy skin regimen will ensure your cleanest, brightest and smoothest skin ever.

Cleanse

Soaps are alkaline and can change the skin's natural acidic pH, resulting in irritation and dehydration. To prevent the irritancy of alkaline soaps, alternative cleansing agents called syndets (from synthetic detergent) were developed, proving to be the best for cleansing the delicate facial skin. There are also some plant extracts, like Quillaja Saponaria that naturally foam and thoroughly remove impurities and excess oils. Look for formulations that are pH-balanced and gentle enough to remove eye make-up. For the first step in healthy, refreshed skin, start with a soap-free product formulated to gently cleanse without disturbing the skin's natural moisture balance.

Exfoliate

Exfoliation is a process of helping your skin shed its dulling outermost layer. There are so many products and procedures out there, it may be daunting to think about the choices, and even more daunting for your skin to withstand. An alternative to the peels and scrubs is a milder version of an exfoliant that microfoliates dulling debris, leaving the skin noticeably smoother and brighter. Natural exfoliating agents like pineapple and rice enzymes are great when coupled with an alpha hydroxy acid like salicylic acid that accelerates cell renewal without the unwanted irritation often experienced after harsh exfoliation. Rice was used for many centuries by the Japanese to smooth and brighten skin. Only recently has the science caught up with this tradition to reveal that rice bran is a rich source of phytic acid and gamma oryzanol, which promote cell sloughing while helping to control pigmentation. This multifunctional ingredient provides enhanced antioxidant protection, inhibits melanin production, all while exfoliating dead cells. For a smooth, healthy and even complexion, use a mild exfoliant once daily.

Moisturize

Wash, scrub, layer on makeup, sleep. No wonder people are reporting more and more sensitivity. What we do throughout our day may result in the loss of the vital lipids of the epidermal barrier. Without proper shielding and replenishing, this barrier loses functionality, resulting in dehydration, wrinkles, and hyper-reactivity. Choose an appropriate moisturizer that actively combats surface dehydration while repairing damaged cells. For an oilier skin, try a lightweight moisturizer that provides effective oil-free hydration while improving skin texture. Opt for one that does not dry up or leave a greasy after-feel. For drier skin, use a richer formulation with antioxidant power that quenches dehydrated skin without adding excess oils to the skin. It's important to choose a non-comedogenic formulation since the texture is richer in this case. The multivitamin and antioxidants

in a richer formulation may be more suitable for nighttime, but can also be used daily with the added protection of a broad-spectrum sunscreen.

For a daily regimen that results in optimal skin health, remember to cleanse, brighten and moisturize. Balancing a healthy lifestyle with this regimen will visibly improve your skin's quality and tone.