

Pregnancy Skin Care Dos and Don'ts

The body goes through many changes during pregnancy and the skin is no exception. Skin changes occur in about 90% of pregnant women in one form or another; and Mom-to-be's will have some pressing skin care questions on ingredients and treatments.

There are many opinions between doctors and different studies with varying information, so it's imperative that your clients consult with their physician prior to the use of skin care products and receiving treatments.

Here are three of the most commonly asked questions by professional skin therapists when it comes to treating pregnant clients.

1. Can I use Salicylic Acid? This Beta Hydroxy Acid (BHA) is an excellent exfoliant and can be used to treat acne. In high concentrations it is considered a risk during pregnancy and should be avoided, especially in professional resurfacing. Small percentages used in skin care (for example less than 2% in a wash off) are considered safe.

2. What about the use of aromatherapy? It's recommended to avoid using essential oils during the first trimester. This topic is controversial between practitioners and there are varying opinions to safety, however, it depends on the type of oil and dilution. Usually approved non-toxic blends around 1-2% dilution are considered safe for body massage and skin products. Hydro-essentials, which are water-soluble fractions of the essential oil, are safe as they do not penetrate the blood stream. Your client should consult her doctor before any essential oil use.

3. Can I use technology in my treatment room? The use of electrical modalities is not recommended, which includes Galvanic, High Frequency, Microcurrent, Ultrasonic and Laser. Microdermabrasion has mixed expert reviews, with most stating to use with caution. We would not use microdermabrasion over aggravated acne or dilated capillaries. Be mindful when using it on hyperpigmented skin as causing more inflammation can make this condition worse.

This handy ingredient checklist (below) can help you decipher the dos and don'ts when treating pregnant clients. When in doubt, have your client discuss their skin care options with their OBGYN and/or general physician if they are currently pregnant, nursing or considering pregnancy in the near future. Always work with caution if the client is in her first trimester and/or has had complications with her pregnancy or previous pregnancies. If she opts to avoid certain important is that we help the new mother achieve her skin care goals safely and effectively.

Avoid 	Approved 
Hydroquinone	Oligopeptide-34 and 51, Vitamin C, Niacinamide
Retinoids	Peptides and antioxidants
Salicylic Acid	Glycolic Acid, Lactic Acid and Benzoyl Peroxide (5% or less)
Essential Oils (during 1 st trimester)	Hydro-essentials or approved non-toxic Essential Oil blends (less than 2%)