

InnerGlow Skin Care

Markham Village Naturopathic Clinic

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What Can You Do To Maximize Skin Health and a Radiant “Glow”

In a culture obsessed by youth, we listen to a lot of negative messages about growing older. We want to set the record straight: *Aging in years does not have to mean a decline in health, energy, or looks!*

It is exciting to see the growing body of scientific evidence proving the effectiveness of the naturopathic principles to increase our wellbeing healthy life span. Many of the visible signs of aging are caused by external factors that you can at least partially control. These actions may be the **easiest and least expensive things you can do to prevent damage to your skin**, gain a more youthful appearance, and build a strong foundation for your pro-active natural skin care.

- ***Take a top-quality multivitamin, an omega-3 supplement, and consider extra vitamin D.*** Preserve the stability of your cell membranes and the ability of your cells to divide at a healthy rate by providing antioxidant-rich vitamins and the anti-inflammatory effects of omega-3's. Finding a quality multivitamin and omega-3 supplement will not only do wonders for your energy and beauty now, but will pay off in the future.
- ***Eat a balanced diet rich in antioxidants and low in refined carbohydrates, unhealthy fats, and processed foods.*** Feed your cells nutrient-rich fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, healthy oils, and unrefined grains. The messages your cells receive from a bag of chips are very different from those of a plate of greens drizzled with olive oil and lime juice.
- ***Exercise in a way that replenishes rather than drains you.*** The benefits of exercise to aging have been well documented, and everyone knows they're supposed to exercise. The key is to find something you look forward to rather than something you avoid or even dread. Even the tiniest spark of motivation can help you get started, and keep getting started, so exercising becomes a habit you cannot live without!
- ***Explore ways to decrease chronic stress.*** There's no doubt that chronic stress is one of the biggest health problems we face today. It contributes to inflammation and increases everyday “wear and tear” on our bodies. Make an honest effort to set aside time each day to lower your stress levels. You might try meditation, yoga, massage, or simply eliminating some dreaded responsibility on your to-do list.
- ***Moderate sun exposure.*** Wear a good quality natural sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 and no more than 30 (there is an excellent listing of good quality sunscreens on the *Skin Deep* website).
- ***Drink plenty of water.*** Aim for about two litres of quality drinking water per day. Water is very important to help carry nutrients throughout the body and to flush out toxins. Water is the best liquid for us, followed by herbal teas, fruit juices and mineral waters; we should avoid caffeinated beverages, sugary drinks and soda pops.
- ***Avoid or minimize damage from hot water and chlorine.*** Although taking baths and showers may seem like it's health-promoting and relaxing, your skin may disagree –

especially if you have chlorinated water, which is almost certainly the case (unless your water comes from a well). Chlorine causes oxidative damage. The hotter the water, the more potential for damage – because the rate of chemical reactions increases with temperature. *Hot water may cause your skin to age faster.* Adjust your water temperature to be a bit cooler, limit your showers to one per day, and decrease your soak time in the bath.

- **Use gentle, plant-based, fragrance-free and safe skin care products – organic whenever possible.** Your skin absorbs it all. Don't compromise your health and the health of your skin by using potential poisons. Avoid synthetic or petroleum-based ingredients.
- **Be very sure to remove your makeup each evening.** It's a really bad idea to flop into bed, leaving makeup – not to mention environmental grime – on your face while you sleep. Take a couple minutes to remove it, and you'll find your face looking and feeling younger. Cleanse twice daily with fragrance-free moisturizing cleansers, not soaps
- **Get enough sleep (quality and quantity).**
- **Sleep on your back.** Gravity creates a downward drag on your skin all day. Give your skin a break at night. By sleeping on your back, you reduce gravitational pull on your face. If you press your face to your pillow, you will likely experience increased puffiness in the morning.
- **NO SMOKING!** for healthy skin. The smoke and chemical irritation, besides causing a variety of serious medical conditions, causes rapid aging of the skin, especially around the mouth and eyes. Smokers notoriously have many more age lines around those areas than non-smokers of the same age. Smoking causes a significant increase in free radical production, damaging the cells in the dermis as well as to the cells in our inner organs and tissue linings.
- **Limit exfoliation to twice per week and use a gentle exfoliator.** Exfoliation refreshes your skin's surfaces and brightens your appearance as it removes dead cells from the surface of your skin. But if you exfoliate too often or too aggressively, you risk damaging living cells.
- **Never pull or rub your skin.** Apply your skin care products gently, and lightly tap for a few moments to help your skin absorb them. Rubbing stretches your skin and can promote sagging and wrinkles. (Note: This principle includes leaning your face on your hand while sitting at a desk, which also stretches your skin.)

Simply put, the more positive information our cells receive from our daily choices — whether from foods rich in micronutrients, exercise, adequate sleep, or managing chronic stress — the more healthful messages they relay to our genes and the better we feel and the more we radiate beauty from the inside out.