

In this column for the benefit of our patrons we are trying to include simple tips from medical experts of various systems of medicine. This time Ayurvedic tips from Dr. Shailendra Tripathi.



Skin Care

Ayurveda, the science of life also deals with concept of beauty. Proper and nutritious diet, peace of mind and daily routine are the governing bodies of three *dosas* i.e. *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*. According to Ayurveda vitiated *vata* and *pitta* get settled in to skin and cause darkness and black spots. We are born with a soft and silky skin but as we grow, it grows right along with us and comes in the contact of various climatic and seasonal changes along with our physiology. All that is required of us is a little maintenance to keep our skin healthy. Overexposure to the sun, poor diet, pollutants and stress are the main factors which leave their imprints on skin. If our overall well-being is not optimal, our skin is the first to show it.

For keeping our skin soft, spot less and young, attention should be paid

to four basic requirements: nourishment, rehydration, detoxification and stress free attitude.

Nourishment

Eat plenty of sweet, juicy fruits and add multiple grains in your diet (quinoa, millet, barley, amaranth, rye and wheat) to provide a variety of minerals. Variety of cooked vegetables with spices should be taken daily. Green, leafy vegetables provide fiber and nutrients such as iron and calcium, which help to nourish the blood and skin tissue. Take light, easily digestible proteins such as milk, *lassi*, paneer, cheese, as well as *mung dal*.

Mixture of skin-friendly spices like turmeric (3 parts), coriander (6 parts), fennel (6 parts), fenugreek (1 part) and black pepper (1 part) may be included in your daily diet after seasoning

these spices in *ghee* and then adding them in steamed vegetables. Turmeric is the greatest friend of the skin because it is purifying and is a potent antioxidant. Cumin and fenugreek purify the blood and fat tissue and black pepper cleanse sweat (the waste product of fat tissue). All of these have a direct link to the health and appearance of the skin.

Any type of food, if not digested properly and assimilated into body is harmful hence in addition to taking nutritious food we should do morning and evening walk or any other exercise.

Rehydration

For maintaining moisture and elasticity of skin internal rehydration is must. Drinking water, eating sweet, juicy fruits and including high-quality fats such as *ghee* or olive oil in your diet is

suggested. For external rehydration daily massage with skin massage oil enhances absorption and increases glow and luster.

Take handful of rose petals and place them in a muslin cloth, tie with a string and dip the cloth into warm milk and pat the entire body to deeply moisturize your skin.

Detoxification

Cleaning your colon is prime requisite of detoxification. To avoid constipation take daily walks, eat more fibrous foods, and drink plenty of water.

Stress free attitude

Stress on your mind is immediately reflected on the face. Stressed people have trouble sleeping and lack of sleep causes stress, so it is important to take care of both factors at the same time. Sleep well, do meditation and easy breathing exercises. Maintain positive thinking and amicable atmosphere.

In addition to above basic observations there are many home remedies which are helpful in uplifting and maintaining complexion and keeping skin glow and spot free. Some of them are given below:

Face Packs

1. Paste prepared from equal part of *Lal Chandan* (*Pterocarpus santalinus* Linn. f.), *Kuth* (*Saussurea lappa* C. B. Clarke), *Lodh* (*Symplocos racemosa* Roxb. bark), Coriander and *Bach* (*Acorus calamus* Linn.) are useful for teenage to check pimples and darkness on face.

2. Mustard, *Bach*, *Lodh* and rock salt paste (equal parts) is also good for checking pimples and acne.
3. A paste prepared from the powder of spines taken out from the bark of *Semul* [*Salmalia malabarica* (DC.) Schott & Endl.] in milk is very effective for acne and pimples. Results of this paste could be seen after 3 days application. Skin becomes soft and silky.
4. Paste of *Masoor dal*, *Manjit* (*Rubia cordifolia* Linn.), apical bud of *Bar* (*Ficus benghalensis* Linn.) and honey mixed in equal parts and applied as face pack are useful for blackish blue patches (*jhai*).
5. Application of only *jaiphal* after mixing it in milk could remove blackish blue patches on face as well as blackened skin of any part of the body. *Aak* (*Calotropis procera* Ait.) latex, turmeric powder, if used in paste form can clean blackened skin persisted for a long time.
6. The paste prepared from equal parts of yellow matured leaves of *Bar*, leaves of *Chameli* (*Jasminum officinale* Linn.), *Lal chandan*,



Salmalia malabarica

Kuth and *Lodh* is also effective in bringing glow on the face.

7. The ancient well-known recipe used by many women to brighten the complexion as well as lighten dark spots due to pimples is also recommended and it is very effective. To prepare this paste take 1 tbs of lemon juice, 2 tbs of gram flour (ground chick pea), milk – enough to make a thick paste. 1/2 tsp turmeric powder can also be added. The flour particles act as a fine exfoliator, lemon as a brightener, milk as a softener, and the turmeric is used for its antiseptic properties and for toning medium to dark skin. A substitute for the gram flour can be regular wheat flour, but the end results may vary.
8. Ripe Banana peel rubbed on face and hands is good for removing darkness and general cleaning.

This is to be noted that a thick paste is to be applied on the face and let it remain for 10-15 minutes or until semi-dry. Slightly massage and rinse off with lukewarm water and finish off with a cold splash.

In addition to these home made face packs, some Ayurvedic formulations and oils are also available in market which can be taken for skin problems under practitioners' supervision.

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