How to Brighten a Dull Complexion by Carol Belanger

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Did you ever notice that some people just have a glowing complexion? It is not their makeup that gives them that glow it is the canvas on which they started. A great complexion that has a natural glow starts with proper skin care and a healthy diet.

The condition of your skin can be a good indicator of your overall health. For instance a poor diet and bad habits such as smoking and too much alcohol can lead to a dull complexion, baggy eyes and even a yellowish tint. Additionally an improper skin care routine or no skin care program at all can lead to premature wrinkles, sagging skin and patches of dry skin.

First and foremost understanding your skin type is the first step for proper skin care. By understanding your skin type, i.e. dry, combination, oily, sensitive, you can begin to select the right ingredients that are the most beneficial to your skin.

Cleansers - Get a facial cleanser specific to your skin type. Your skin care cleanser should thoroughly cleanse but not over dry the face. If after washing your face your skin is overtly dry and tight, you should consider a different skin care cleanser. Usually a dry skin type should select creamy cleansers, oily complexions should consider a foaming face wash, for sensitive skin and combination skin types consider a cleanser that has a low pH of 7 or less.

Toners - are used to restore ph balance and remove the last bits of cleanser left behind. I am a firm believer in toners. If purchasing a toner be sure to select the one that is right for your skin type and has the most natural ingredients. Homemade toners are easy to make. Green tea toners are superb and are high in antioxidants. Other herbs that can be for toners are elderflower and sandalwood for dry skin, fennel or lemon balm for oily skin, and chamomile for combination skin. Apply with cotton ball or pad and do not rinse.

Herb toner recipe: 2 Tablespoons dried or 1 Tablespoon fresh herb depending on your skin type (see note above), 2/3 cup distilled or purified water.

Green tea toner: 2 teaspoons green tea leaves and 1 cup water.

Naturally the above recipes will have to be sifted to remove the leaves. Refrigerate and it should last up to a week.

Moisturizers - should be used to hydrate and protect the skin. A daytime moisturizer should have an SPF of at least 15, and your nighttime moisturizer should be rich in emollients. Not matter what skin type you have a moisturizer is a must; dry skin needs lubrication and hydration and oily skin needs hydration.

Cleanse, tone and moisturize are the basics of a good skin care routine in order to brighten a dull complexion. Additionally there are other treatments that can be used that promote circulation, slough off dead skin cells and bring a natural glow to your face.

Exfoliation - is a method of removing the dead skin cells on the upper layer of your skin and increasing circulation to promote new skin cells. Once used only in exclusive spas at a costly amount, exfoliation is a simple technique that you can do at home. There are a couple of homemade options for an exfoliation treatment, just add one of the following ingredients to your cleanser: cornmeal, sugar, oatmeal, etc. Sugar is great if you have sensitive skin. These ingredients

are inexpensive and eco-friendly and will surely brighten a dull complexion and leave your skin feeling smooth and silky.

Microderamabrasion - is a form of advance exfoliation. The actual surface layer of the skin is removed and new skin cells are exposed. The type of procedure will lessen the appearance of scars and dark spots on the skin. There are a variety of microdermabrasion products on the market that range from creams, kits, and cloths.

AHAs and BHAs known as Alpha and Beta hydroxyl acids - are very popular in anti-aging products. They work very much like a microdermabrasion treatment as they slough off the top layers of the skin thus promoting new skin cell growth. Another added benefit is that they stimulate the production of collagen and elasticity in the skin. When selecting an Alpha or Beta hydroxyl acid be sure to select the right one for your skin type.

Proper cleansing and one the procedures listed above will help promote a healthy glow; however, it is imperative that you eat healthy too. Your complexion can tell a lot about your life style and eating habits. Additionally, your diet and skin care products should contain anti-oxidants such as Vitamin A, E, C, and beta carotene to name a few.

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