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Basic Hair Care Tips

The Right Tools for the Trade

There is a tool for every job that can make life easier for you, whether it is a microwave to heat up food or the telephone to keep you in touch with the rest of the world. In the world of hair care however, there are so many products that sometimes, it is a hit or miss as to whether or not you have the right tools for your beauty regiment. And since each person and their hair is different, what works for you will not work for someone else. So if you are a little lost in this world of hair care, listed below are some of the basics that can get you through:

Brushes and Combs

With a head of wet hair, you should never, ever use a brush of any kind, especially if you have tangles. The brushes will grab at your hair, tearing or breaking it, causing split ends and other damage. Only a wide toothed comb will suffice. Your hair brush is an important part of your beauty routine. There are a variety of different brushes that achieve different hair styles, depending on their use.

- Bristled round brushes are often used for those with curly or wavy hair that they wish to blow dry straight.
- A paddle brush is great for every day styling and is best suited to people with long hair.
- A vented brush is great if you are in a hurry to dry your hair. They have a vented head that allows the heated air from your blow dryer to pass through the brush to dry the hair.

Hair Dryers, Curling Irons, and Straightening Tools

Hair dryers have the power to fry your hair if you are not diligent about using the tool properly. The air flow should be constantly moving, rather than centering on one location. When that happens, damaged hair is the result. Hair dryers have attachments like diffusers that will distribute the heat in a wider area to avoid damage. There are also hair dryers that use negative ion technology to cut the drying time in half and with less damage.

Curling irons and straightening tools also have the power to damage your hair. Choose these tools

wisely by selecting ones that have various levels of temperature control as well as automatic shutoff mechanisms in case you forget to unplug them. For an optimal performing curling iron or straightening tool, go with those that are made with ceramic technology. Ceramic is less likely to burn your hair and it will even provide some conditioning as it heats your hair into shape.

Shampoos

Your scalp should dictate what type of shampoo you use. If you have dandruff, you would need something specific to that condition. Oily or dry hair also dictates what type of shampoo to use. You need to shampoo every time you wash your hair to get rid of the dirt and other pollutants that you might pick up in the course of your day. Be careful and try to avoid any shampoos that have any type of alcohol in the ingredients. Alcohol can dry out your hair.

Conditioners

There is some debate as to whether or not you even need conditioner. For the most part, you do, unless you have super fine hair that looks lifeless when you use a conditioner. Hair care products, brushing, drying, curling and straightening your hair can be

damaging, not to mention colors or perms. A conditioner can replenish and protect your hair from these damaging elements. To avoid oily or dull looking hair on the crown of your head, only apply conditioner to the length of your hair and avoid the scalp.

Hairsprays and Other Styling Products

A few decades ago, hairsprays had the power to eat through a hole in the ozone layer. These days, they are more environmentally friendly without harsh chemicals. The hairspray of today can protect against humid conditions and even the sun's harmful UV rays. There are a variety of formulas depending on what styles you hope to achieve.

Mousses, gel and shine serums are great for those people who have problems achieve a smooth finish without compromising any bounce and body in their hair. If you have fine hair, mousses are light and work best for the hair. With thicker heads of hair, gels work the best. Shine serums are for those people who have dull looking hair, even when it is clean. Shine serums can also sometimes perform double-duty as a frizz controller.

When in doubt, talk with your stylist about what products would best suit your hair. Ask questions each time they use a different product in your hair to achieve a certain look. They can guide you through that confusing maze of hair care tools.

Dry and Damaged Hair

The average human head has 150,000 hairs, and, conformists that they are, when one's dry, they're all dry. But unlike a dry flower garden or polished rice, the solution is not simply to add water. Water, in fact, may be responsible for the hair's parched condition, particularly if we're talking about water of the salty, chlorinated, or sudsy variety. The market is flooded with products for dry, overheated, and damaged hair, from shampoos, conditioners, to protectant masks. It can be a daunting task to know which product is right for you. Home remedies might be your best bet for having a more manageable mane.

Swimming and over-shampooing are two common causes of arid, fly-away locks. Other culprits can include colorings, permanents, electric curlers, excessive blow-drying, and too much exposure to wind and sun. Keep your styling products and accessories to a minimum to keep from drying out your locks completely.

Whatever the culprit, your poor, abused hair needs help—badly. You can almost hear all 150,000 of

them down on their little split ends, pleading, "Save me! Save me!" Here's a quick course on how to rescue dried-out hair.

Shampoo with Care

"It's in vogue these days to shampoo every day, but shampooing doesn't only wash away dirt, it washes out the hair's protective oils," says Thomas Goodman, Jr., M.D. If you've dried your hair out from too much lather, give your hair a needed break—try washing less often. And use only a mild shampoo, one labeled "for dry or damaged hair."

Use a Conditioner

When hair becomes dry, the outer layers, called cuticles, peel off from the central shaft. Conditioners glue the cuticles back to the shaft, add lubricant to the hair, and prevent static electricity (which creates frizz). Pick a conditioner that works well for you and use it after every shampoo, says Dr. Goodman.

Go Heavy on the Mayo

Mayonnaise makes an excellent conditioner. Leave the oily white goo in your hair for anywhere from 5 minutes to an hour before washing it out.

Snip Off Those Frayed Ends

Dry hair tends to suffer most at the ends. What is the answer? Snip 'em off. Get a trim every six weeks or so to keep those frayed ends under control.

Design Your Hair Without Heat

Heat is what makes the desert a desert; it also contributes to dried-out hair. Two of the most intense sources of heat are curling irons and electric curlers. It is suggested by top Hollywood hairstylists that you rediscover those (unheated) plastic cylinder rollers from years gone by. For straightening, wrap slightly moist hair under and around rollers (like a page boy hairdo) for about 10 minutes. For curling or adding wave, try using sponge rollers overnight or sleeping with moist braids.

Protect Your Hair from the Elements

Whipping wind can fray your hair just like a piece of fabric. Sun, too, takes a mighty toll. Solution: Wear a hat, both on breezy, balmy summer days, and gusty, frosty winter days.

Don't Swim Bare Headed

Chlorine is one of the most destructive things to hair. So make a rubber cap part of your regular

swim attire. For extra protection first rub a little olive oil into your hair.

Have a Beer

Beer is a wonderful setting lotion. It gives a crisp, healthy, shiny look, even to dry hair. The trick is to spray the brew onto your hair using a pump bottle after you've shampooed and towel-dried, but before you blow-dry or style. And don't worry about smelling like a lush—the odor of the beer quickly disappears.

Consider a Trip to the Beauty Parlor

Experts agree that a professional moisturizing treatment can work wonders for your dried-out head of hair. A real good steam treatment with oils and creams lasts about an hour, and afterward you can really tell the difference. If you can't afford a salon beauty treatment, get a store-bought intensive conditioning treatment to bring some moisture back into your locks.

Drink Plenty of Water and Eat Raw Fruits

What you put into your body is reflected on the outside especially in your hair.

Mash up some rotten bananas and avocados

This makes a nutrient-rich mixture that will leave your hair shiny and healthy looking.

Pump Up Thin, Fine Hair

Shampooing

Use a mild shampoo, so you'll need less conditioner. Lather the shampoo between your hands before using and avoid scrubbing your scalp. A gentle wash is more than enough for people who shower everyday. Your scalp produces natural oils and will increase production in response to the dry conditions created by harsh cleansers or hot water.

Conditioning

Limp hair gets easily bogged down with conditioners. When you wash your hair, use a very light conditioner on just the tips. Even if you use a "volumizing" conditioner, try to keep it away from the top 3-4 inches of hair closest to your scalp. Most conditioners are "pH balanced" because acidity makes the outside layer of each hair shaft contract and look shiny. This also causes the diameter of the hair shaft to become smaller and lay smoother. For people who need volume in their hair, this is not a desired effect.

Rinsing

Rinse your hair and scalp really well, using plenty of lukewarm (never hot!) water to get out every trace of shampoo and conditioner. A good rule of thumb is to continue rinsing for 10 seconds more after it feels like it is completely rinsed.

Wet Styling

You have three options – hairspray, mousse or gel. Use your favorite and apply to the top 3-4 inches of hair closest to your scalp. For hairspray, use a medium hold and spray lightly while lifting up sections to get full coverage. For gel, use an amount smaller than a dime and mix it with a couple of drops of water in your palm. For gel and mousse, apply to the roots with your fingertips as evenly as possible and then work down the hair shaft 3-4 inches.

Drying Your Hair

Blow out your hair upside down, never holding the hairdryer in one place for too long. Start at the roots and work your way out. When your roots are dry and the rest of your hair is still barely damp, flip your hair right side up and style. If you have never done wet styling before, be aware that your hair will dry more quickly because of the alcohols in the hairspray, mousse or gel you used.

Dry Styling

Use a hairdryer with a “coolshot” button. Finishing with cool air fixes your hair in place and minimizes fly-aways. Teasing or back-brushing will cause split ends over time and is not recommended for everyday styling, unless you plan to keep your hair short. Use a light-hold hairspray to finish. Spray lightly with the can about a foot away from your head, avoiding the roots where you have already applied product.

Touch-ups

Unless you are very careful with your morning application, your hair already has as much product in it as it can stand. Adding more could just make it turn gummy. If you are at home, get just your fingertips wet and work them through the top couple inches of hair near the scalp. Flip your hair over and blow it out upside down, finishing with cool air. If you are out in public (and not shy), you can do the same thing with the kind of hot-air hand dryer found in many rest rooms. Otherwise, you can use a light application of hairspray on the top couple of inches of hair and hang your head upside down for a minute, till the hairspray has dried.

Shopping

Look at the ingredients of haircare products and avoid any that contain oils, because they will weigh your locks down.

Switch to a volumizing shampoo and conditioner. Be sure to rinse thoroughly to keep residue from forming and weighing down your hair. Look into volumizing mouse to add some voom to your damp hair. Turn your head upside down and blowdry, using a large vented brush. When your hair is almost dry, flip your head over and part your hair on the opposite side that you normally do. Use Velcro rollers or a round brush and finish drying your hair. Use a wax or finishing cream to tame your hair. Put a dab in the palm of your hand and run your fingers through your hair. Using fewer products will help you have a fuller look.

Styling Tips for In-Between Bangs

Growing your bangs out doesn't have to be a fashion or beauty nightmare. Although the process seems to take forever and the look is not always great, there are ways to keep some sense of fashion during this awkward time. Bangs can make your face look smaller and mask a high or narrow forehead. They look good on straight hair but can be more of a challenge for curly hair.

It all starts with getting the right cut. Don't try to cut your bangs yourself. You would be surprised, and horrified, at the number of home jobs gone bad. It's much better to go to a professional and have them trim them just above your eyebrows. This is neither too short nor too long. Don't cut them too short. You will end up looking like the guy from "Dumb 'n Dumber". Be sure to keep them thinned out. Big, thick, chunky bangs will not be a plus in the beauty department. Also go back for regular trims to keep them your bangs from looking straggly.

The styling options are endless when trying to grow your bangs out. One day you can use a hair gel to try to get your bangs to blend in with your other hair.

Another day, try out the fashionable hair clips on the market. There are all varieties and colors to choose from such as butterflies, ladybugs, or if that's not your style, use old fashioned bobby pins. Whatever your style, there's a hair accessory to fit your personality. You can always pull your bangs back with a headband as well. Bangs can be a fountain of youth and make many women look younger. Having bangs means having more options. Play around with accessories and styling products to find the look that's right for you.

Try French-braiding one side of your hair, tuck in your feathers or braids, or wear headbands. Slick back your bangs with gel or pomade to bring focus to your face and keep the attention away from your awkward bangs. Once your bangs grow out, you can have them shaped into a chunky fringe that tapers down your temples. Maybe try going to bed with damp hair to see what materializes when you wake up.

Bangs can change your look subtly or dramatically. Bangs can be youthful, flirtatious, casual or sexy. The impact of one's bangs is dependent upon the cut and the length of them. Bangs can be short, long or mini. They can be layered, precise or wispy.

Many combinations are possible between these cut and length options.

Bangs are typically associated with youthful girls. We're all familiar with the rosy cheek little girl with pig tails and a full bang. We also know the classic teenager with a bouncy ponytail and bangs. Achieve a youthful look with soft edged brow length bangs. These bangs should extend from one brow tip to the other. The bang should be full with a slight bend at the ends.

Wear this style bang with a ponytail or the hair down. Bangs also allow one to conceal lines in the forehead, thus providing a more youthful look. Make sure the bang doesn't extend past the brow or it will be too heavy and dominate the face. Remember you are framing the face, not hiding it.

Sometimes you want a more relaxed look, yet still mature. Pair a precision cut bang with a bun or chignon. This bang can be from mid-forehead to brow bone in length.

Casual bangs can also be layered and swept to the side. Layered bangs should be eye length when un-layered, so that they are brow length when flipped

up. This look is good for weekends, stay at home moms and those with less formal occupations.

Flirtatious and sexy bangs can change your look dramatically. These bangs are always long. Sometimes they are layered and sometimes they are wispy. Layer these bangs and maintain the length from the nose bridge to the nose tip. They can be flipped up with a curling iron and swept to the side. They can also be multi length and wispy for a very soft effect.

The point is that they partially cover your eyes and lend an air of mystique. Layered bangs can be worn with one's hair down, buns, ponytails or upsweeps. Wispy bangs look best with hair down or ponytails, especially low hung ponytails.

This bang is great for evening galas and romantic dinners. It also works for those of us with artistic occupations or in the fashion business.

Whether you desire a subtle or dramatic change, bangs can help you achieve a new look. Bangs can be adapted to fit your lifestyle, whether casual, youthful or sexy. You can wear them long and layered or short and sassy.

Tips for Banishing that Gray

The first time you spot a gray hair, you may feel like you are aging before your time. Most people really start noticing their hair turning gray as they approach their late thirties. Some might be unlucky enough to experience gray hair much early. When you turn gray depends on the person and their genetics. However, there are things you can do to cover the gray.

Some people think that having gray hair makes them look more distinguished and do not wish to cover their new hair color. Most people are eager to find ways to turn back the clock by using a variety of methods to cover the gray. If you are facing gray hair, consider the following tips for banishing the gray.

Hair turns gray as you age because your body experiences a natural slow-down of the production of pigment. Pigment in your hair gives you the color. As you age, this process slows and the natural color begins to fade. Not many people experience a full head of gray hair overnight. Instead, the process takes time, which results in gray hair mixed with

color hair. Pulling out gray hair does not help. Instead, only another gray hair grows back to replace the pulled hair. Gray hair can also be less manageable because it becomes thicker, and coarser.

Gray hair also has decreased amounts of melanin, which naturally contains zinc, and iron that allows normal hair color to hold a dye. Therefore, gray hair can sometimes be harder to color. There are several steps you can take to help gray hair hold a hair color dye better and longer. Before coloring your gray hair you might want to take a minute to think about after care and maintenance. It is not always cheap or easy to continually color gray hair. If you do not want to make the commitment to color your hair every few weeks, then you should probably not dye your hair. You might even want to consider using color wands, which is similar to mascara. The color is not permanent but makes it easy and risk free to color gray strands.

Choose Your Dye Wisely

One common tip that helps cover gray hair is to choose a hair dye that is specifically made for gray hair. If your hair is not completely gray, then you will have a mixture of softer hair that is your natural

color and the coarser gray hair. There are many styling products and hair dyes that are designed just for gray hair. This will help you have a better outcome, especially when you dye your hair at home.

Leave the Product in Longer

Leaving a hair dye in for just a little longer can help the hair retain the dye, resulting in a longer lasting dye job. It will be important to thoroughly read all of the instructions on the bottle. Most hair colors give specific instructions for dying gray hair and generally recommend leaving the dye on for at least 45 minutes. This will help all of the hair to be completely covered.

Pre-treat or Pre-soften the Hair

Gray hair is often resistant to color and a dye job may not last more than a few days. You can apply a 20% peroxide to help open the hair cuticles. This will allow the hair to soften and more readily accept the hair dye. It is a good idea to leave the peroxide on the hair for about 10 minutes, depending on the length of the hair in order for it to completely coat the hair.

Purchase Good Products

After you have successfully colored your gray hair, shop for shampoos, conditioners and styling products that are specifically for gray hair or colored hair. Many stores, salons and boutiques carry these types of products. Using these maintenance products will help make a color last longer on stubborn gray hair.

Leave it to the professional: If the idea of using products and dyes at home scares you, leave it to the hair professional. There are many beauticians and salons that specialize in covering stubborn gray hair. Before you make an appointment, consider how much you want to spend and what color you want your hair. Have some ideas before your appointment and talk with your beautician to get ideas. You will get good results and usually a guarantee if you go with a professional.

Dye Jobs Gone Bad

Everyone can benefit from a great head of hair, whether it is a stylish new haircut or a great dye job. Great hair can boost self-esteem and make you feel like a million bucks. But what happens when you get an awful haircut or your dye job goes horribly wrong? Self-esteem hits rock bottom. Besides wearing a hat for the next three months, consider the following tips to ensure a healthy, attractive head of hair.

If you leave the hair salon or barbershop only to get home to notice an awful haircut, there are steps you can take to help you look your best. You probably will not be able to get your back, but you can return to the place or person who cut your hair and ask them for help. It might help to request a new beautician or to have the one that originally cut your hair show you ways to style your new hair-do. It could be that the haircut you got was what you wanted and you are just not styling it properly.

For hair that is cut too short, you may have to look at accessories to help style your hair while it is growing out. Small alligator clips are fashionable

and can keep layers out of your face during the growing out period. In addition, if you get a haircut that is so short or so embarrassing, consider looking at synthetic hairpieces. Many stores carry clips, ponytails and other accessories with synthetic hair attached. They come in virtually every shade to match any color of hair.

Bad dye jobs can often be easier to fix than bad haircuts. If you are the recipient of an especially bad dye job there are a few steps you can take to correct the problem. First, if you have dyed your hair by yourself and find that you have under colored you hair, you probably rinsed too early. You can easily correct this problem by applying another dye to your hair and leave it in for the required time.

Over coloring your hair can be harder to correct. When this happens, it usually means that you have selected the wrong color for your hair or you have left the chemicals in too long. There are several products you can purchase that will help you take the color out of bad dye jobs. However, these products can be tricky to use and if you are afraid of the results, you might need to consult a professional. A beautician that specializes in hair

color can help you correct your hair color without damaging the hair.

Another common hair problem does not have to do with bad haircuts or dye jobs, but with colored or blonde hair turning green when exposed to chlorine. This can be quite problematic, especially in the summer months. One way to correct this problem is to wash and shampoo hair right after swimming in chlorinated water. You can also help remove the green tint by purchasing a special product available through most retail and drug stores. If your hair is dyed or permed and it turns green, you may not be able to correct the problem at home. Seek the advice of a hair care professional before attempting to correct the problem at home.

There are preventative steps you can take to ensure you always have an attractive head of hair. If you are ready to change hairstyles, one tip is to make sure you understand what styles work best for your face shape. Also, consider using a beautician you know and can trust. Never have a drastic hair cut or dyed by someone you have never seen before. Also, have pictures available of what you expect your hair to look like, but at the same time, have realistic expectations. Not everyone can have the

hairstyle of a movie star and expect to look that good. You will need to learn how to style the new cut and how to take care of the color.

Another good tip is to use products that are appropriate for your hair. If you have dyed blonde hair, look for shampoos and styling products specifically for dyed blonde hair. These types of products can help you keep the color longer. The right styling products are a must for certain hairstyles, too. Ask your hair care professional what is right for your new haircut.

Natural Remedies for Dandruff

Dandruff is a skin condition where shiny, silvery, scales separate from the scalp and collect in the hair and fall into your brows, shoulders, and clothes. This condition becomes a problem when skin gets infected. The best remedy is to keep the hair and scalp clean to keep dead cells from accumulating. Getting a bit of sunshine may also aid in keeping dandruff at bay.

Dandruff Symptoms

The scales from the scalp fall when the hair is combed or brushed, or when the scalp is scratched, the scales from the scalp fall like snowflakes and settle on the eye brows, shoulders, and clothes. These scales sometimes appear as lumps or crusts on the scalp.

Itching is there and scalp may become red. Often there is itching as well and the scalp may become red from scratching.

Dandruff Causes

Impairment of general health, wrong food intake, constipation.

The main causes of dandruff are impairment of general health, development of a toxic condition mainly due to taking of wrong foods, constipation, and a low vitality due to infectious diseases.

Emotional Tension, Harsh Shampoos, General Exhaustion

Other factors contributing to this disorder are emotional tension, harsh shampoos, exposure to cold and general exhaustion.

Home Remedies for Dandruff

Dandruff treatment using Fenugreek Seeds

The use of fenugreek seeds is one of the most important remedies in the treatment of dandruff.

Two tablespoons of these seeds should be soaked overnight in water and ground into a fine paste in the morning. This paste should be applied all over the scalp and left for half an hour. The hair should then be washed thoroughly with soap-nut (ritha) solution or shikakai.

Dandruff Treatment using Lime

The use of a teaspoon of fresh lime juice for the last rinse, while washing the hair, is another useful remedy. This not only leaves the hair glowing but also removes stickiness and prevents dandruff.

Dandruff Treatment using Green Gram Powder

A valuable prescription for removal of dandruff is the use of green gram powder. The hair should be washed twice a week with two tablespoons of this powder mixed with half a cup of curd.

Dandruff Treatment using Beet

Beets have been found useful in dandruff. Both tops and roots should be boiled in water and this water should be massaged into the scalp with the finger tips every night. White beet is better for this purpose.

Dandruff Treatment using Snake Gourd

The juice of snake gourd has been found beneficial in the prevention and treatment of dandruff. The juice should be rubbed over the scalp for this purpose.

Dandruff Treatment using Other Remedies

Dandruff can be removed by massaging the hair for half an hour with curd which has been kept in the open for three days, or with a few drops of lime juice mixed with lime juice every night, before going to bed. Another measure which helps to counteract dandruff is to dilute cider vinegar with an equal

quantity of water and dab this on to the hair with cotton wool in between shampooing. Cider vinegar added to the final rinsing water after shampooing also helps to disperse dandruff.

Anti-Dandruff Diet

All-fruit diet with three meals a day of juicy fruits. Diet plays an important role in the treatment of dandruff. To begin with, the patient should resort to an all-fruit diet for about five days and take three meals a day of juicy fruits.

Avoid citrus fruits, bananas, tinned fruits: Citrus fruits, bananas, dried, stewed, or tinned fruits should not be taken.

Well-balanced diet

After the all-fruit diet, the patient can gradually adopt a well-balanced diet, with emphasis on raw foods, especially fresh fruits and vegetables. Further short periods of an all-fruit diet for three days or so may be necessary at monthly intervals till the skin's condition improves.

Avoid strong tea/coffee, pickles, refined and processed foods.

Meats, sugar, white flour, strong tea or coffee, condiments, pickles, refined and processed foods should all be avoided.

Other Dandruff treatments

Keep hair and scalp clean to avoid accumulation of dead cells.

The foremost consideration in the treatment of this disorder is to keep the hair and scalp clean so as to minimize the accumulation of dead cells.

Hair should be brushed daily to improve circulation
The hair should be brushed daily to improve the circulation and remove any flakiness. The most effective way to brush the hair is to bend forward from the waist with the head down towards the ground, and brush from the nape of the neck towards the top of the head. The scalp should also be thoroughly massaged everyday, using one's finger tips and working systematically over the head. This should be done just before or after brushing the hair. Like brushing, this stimulates the circulation, dislodges dirt and dandruff, and encourages hair growth. Exposure of the head to the rays of the sun is also a useful measure in the treatment of dandruff.

Finding the Right Hairstylist for You

Finding the right hairstylist may take some time and research, but the time will be well spent when you find the perfect person to help you with your look and hair! Your hair should be trusted to someone with experience, knack, or talent. Here are some tips:

Ask your friends and acquaintances about their stylist. If you see someone on the street or in the grocery store whose haircut you like, ask what salon they go to. Most people would be flattered and more than happy to share that information with you. Word of mouth works best when it comes to hair care. Choose a salon with a good reputation and ask for a stylist that specializes in caring for your hair type. Ask for certifications, credentials, and experience. If you want to get a feel for the salon before forking over any cash, most salons will offer a free consultation. Atmosphere is very important as well. Make sure the salon is neat and orderly and that their scissors and combs are sterilized. Get to know the stylists, their tenures at salons and their particular product preferences.

Check out your stylist's own hair style to see if it's healthy and attractive. How he or she presents themselves speaks volumes about the quality of work they produce. If your stylist is truly focused on you, she will ask you pertinent questions and validate your concerns. If she doesn't, keep looking. She may ask you about how many times you've colored or permed your hair and also how much time you want to spend on styling. If you want a totally new look, and you trust your stylist, let them give you what they think would look best on you. Some salons have computer technology which allows you to scan a picture and click on different styles. You are then able to see how a certain style looks with your face! This helps you decide on any major changes to your look before cutting off any locks. This is wonderful for giving you a feel as to how your overall look would be changed with your hairstyle! It is also a good idea to bring a picture of the look you're aiming for so your stylist has a starting point. She can also tell you if the look is suitable for the shape of your face. Another test that all serious stylists need to have mastered is the straight razor test. Ask to see the salons straight razor. If they don't have one, keep looking for your stylist. If the staff looks at you with a blank stare, walk out and report them to the better business

bureau. Also check to see if the stylists at the salon regularly attend hair shows for training updates. Higher end salons regularly send their stylists to shows across the country. Ask them for the latest popular styles and trends to make sure they are up to speed with the ever-changing beauty industry.

Once you have chosen a stylist, ask her to analyze your hair type and texture so that the proper hair care products are recommended. If your hair is severely damaged or dry, your stylist should be able to bring it back to a healthy state. On the other hand, don't expect your stylist to be a magician. She can only work with what she's given. Don't go in expecting to come out looking like a completely different person. You aren't going to look like Charlize Theron just because you got the same hairstyle that she does. You have to look at her facial structure, shape, complexion, among other things. Just expect to look refreshed!

Also, plan ahead. A good stylist will be booked several days, or even weeks, in advance. For wedding hairdos, your stylist may charge you for a consultation, for a fee. You may have to go in a few days before for a practice run so you and your stylist can agree and understand what you want

before the big day. She may take the consultation fee off on your wedding day, as most use that fee as a down payment of sorts. Of all days, a girl's wedding day is one where her hair must be styled appropriately!

Choosing and Wearing a Wig

Wigs are made of either synthetic (man-made) material such as acrylic, natural human hair wigs or a combination of the two. The wig you choose to wear depends on your own personal preference. According to hairstylists specializing in wigs, “The most important thing in the appearance of a wig is the styling and shaping of the haircut.”

Synthetic or man-made wigs have lots of benefits. They hold their style well even under unfavorable weather conditions such as humidity, cold temperatures and a tremendous amount of rain. Also the fibers of the synthetic wig do not fade in the bright sunshine or change colors due to weather conditions. However if you smoke be careful of the wig and also when you cook watch yourself as these types of wigs can catch fire easily. The modern synthetic wigs are lightweight in construction as they have an open-cap which makes it possible for the head to breathe properly because it is not hot or itchy to wear. Standard synthetics are still worn by some wig wearers and these can be made even cooler by accenting the

wig with a mesh wig liner that resembles a fish stocking.

Natural wigs are constructed entirely from human hair and can be made from fine or coarse hair. Just like with real hair, natural wigs experience “bad hair days” due to humidity and rain and sometimes can be flat, frizzy or lifeless looking. Natural human hair wigs are made of a thicker construction than synthetic wigs and can be very hot on the head because they are sewn on caps made of full lace. Unfortunately natural wigs can get drab looking over time because they don’t contain the natural oils of real human hair.

Natural wigs are a great deal more expensive than synthetic wigs but also have more lasting power than a synthetic one- in the area of three to five years. They require a more precise fitting than do synthetic ones as well. A synthetic wig is easier to take care of because it is not made up of real hair. Natural wigs need to be styled in the same way that real hair does which is a drawback for some women. Many women who purchase real hair wigs and like to have them professionally cleaned splurge and buy two so that they will always have one on hand.

Most well made wigs are made with Velcro attachments in the back of them to allow them to remain on the head snugly, even if you are out in a windstorm. Sweating under a wig is very commonplace regardless of whether you choose a synthetic or natural wig. To help minimize the discomfort of this problem, apply a tiny cotton liner or a speck of cornstarch-based baby powder.

It is recommended that you shampoo your wig (with special shampoos designed for wigs) as often as you used to wash your hair. You can do this in the privacy of your own home or can have it done at a private room in a beauty salon.

In order to feel comfortable and not as self conscious, when choosing a wig choose one that is as close to your original hairstyle and color as possible. In some cases you should be able to convince your hairstylist or a person specializing in wigs to cut or style a wig to your exact specifications. It may sound silly but when you first put on the wig make sure that it is placed on your head in the proper way. It is all too easy to put a wig on backwards. Check and then double check for proper fit. Another thing, don't be fooled by

expensive price tags, cheaper wigs can be as viable and of as good a quality as a more pricey one. Also whether they look real or not has nothing to do with the price tag. Many women choose to only wear their wigs when they are out in public and not wear them in the comfort and privacy of their own home. When you choose to wear yours is completely up to your own discretion. Do what feels most comfortable to you. Some ladies prefer a cap or scarf when they are sitting out on their patio or gardening. You must do what feels right for your self and not cave in to the ideas and opinions of others.

Tips for Beautiful Skin

The ABC's of Caring for your Skin

At some point in your life, you will start to reflect on your aging. It might be a line that shows up or a gray hair that catches your eye as you look in the mirror. Either way, though, you will see it and it will be time to start considering the implication of growing old. You don't want to just lie down and take it, though, do you? The number one way you can fight the effects of aging is by taking care of your skin. By taking the proper measures to care for your skin from head to toe, you will be able to reverse some of those effects of aging while at the same time improving the health of your skin as well.

What steps should you take then? The best way to remember is that you have to keep with your "ABC's" when caring for your skin from head to toe. "A" is for anti-aging cream, "B" is for blemish control, and "C" is for collagen. If you keep those three words in mind, you will be well on your way to proper skin care and reversal of those wrinkles associated with aging. Each word is a reminder

about an important step in the skin care and age reversing process.

“A” is for anti-aging cream, and that is an incredibly important step in the care of your skin. Hopefully you were properly hydrating and caring for your skin before that first wrinkle. If you weren’t, though, once you see that little aging sign it is time to spring into action. Waiting or ignoring the wrinkle is the worst thing you can do. Once you see a sign at all, application of a quality anti-aging cream will possibly stop new lines from forming while getting rid of the one or two wrinkles that have shown up already.

Though anti-aging creams are not miracle drugs or fountains of youth, they do actually help. They are made up of vital vitamins and nutrients that science has proven to rejuvenate skin. Look for an anti-aging cream that contains Retinol. Retinol is a form of Vitamin A that has been shown to rejuvenate the effects of aging on the skin.

“B” is for blemish control. Blemishes, pimples, zits if you will, are not only for teenagers. They are something that can affect your skin for your entire life. So you need to always be diligent in your

search for and treatment of blemishes and potential blemishes. They can manifest themselves in a number of ways: whiteheads, blackheads, and minor inflammations. Each should be caught as early as possible since they actually can be prevented in most cases. If you can't stop them, you can conceal or cure them with over the counter medications and skin care products. What you use will vary depending on when you catch the blemish and what kind it is. Just be sure to use the proper medication rather than squeezing and popping your blemishes which can cause scarring and in some cases can even lead to more blemishes down the road.

“C” is for collagen. Collagen is contained in your skin and is what makes it elastic and smooth. As you age, the collagen molecules in the skin begin to break down .This break down creates wrinkles and lines on your face and body. The problem in the past has been that anti-aging creams could only use partial collagen molecules because they are large and difficult to get into the skin through lotion. Recently, though, one major company developed and patented an infusion system for collagen. With it, creams can deliver whole collagen molecules into the skin. Once the collagen has been delivered,

there is a noticeable difference. Your skin will have a healthy and rejuvenated glow. In addition, the wrinkles and lines that come with aging will begin to dissipate. Collagen is important, and it is the closest thing we currently have to a miracle aging cure.

If you are ready to put up a fight against the effects of aging, the process is going to start with your skin. Take the time to learn you're "ABC's" of skin care and you will start to look younger and your skin will begin to feel better. Remember, anti-aging cream, blemish patrol, and collagen is the key to your fight against aging skin.

Combination Skin

Combination skin is when you have certain areas on your face that are dry and others that are oily.

Usually, the oily part of your face is in what is called the “t-zone” or the area of your forehead, nose and chin. When you have combination skin, you will probably notice that most days, you will experience normal or dry skin. There are several ways you can take care of your combination skin. Here are six strategies for a healthy glow.

How can you be certain you have combination skin? If you have combination skin, your skin on your face might feel tight or dry after washing or taking a shower. Your face might also feel rough, look flaky or have an overall dull appearance. On the other hand, on other areas of your face, you will experience shiny skin that might feel or look greasy. This is most common in the “t-zone”. Those areas are more prone to developing blackheads, pimples or other bumps.

There are ways to care for combination skin. After you have determined what kind of skin you have on your face, you can take steps to find the proper

products and care for your skin. It may be that you have combination skin during certain seasons, such as summer. Your skin may be normal during other parts of the year. People, who spend a lot of time outdoors, might experience a dry skin all year round.

The first step you can take to treat and care for your combination skin is to cleanse. Look for products that are made specifically for combination skin and use it twice a day. This will help combat the oily skin on the “t-zone” and help keep other parts of the skin healthy. Make sure that you keep your face clean and free of residues at night. This is a good step to take towards caring for combination skin.

The second step to care for combination skin is to moisturize. When you have combination skin, some parts of your face might be oily, but other parts are dry and flaky. You cannot ignore the dry skin when treating the oily skin. The answer is to use moisturizer on the dry skin only. Products made for dry skin will help hydrate the dull and flaky skin. Try to keep the moisturizer off of the oily skin. That will only make it worse.

The third step is to balance your skin. There are many products that can help normalize your skin. Look for those that have alpha hydroxy acids, or retinol, which is a vitamin A product. Also, use a toner everyday to help keep the skin in balance. Steer clear of products that contain alcohol because that can irritate dry skin. Use toner at least once a week to combat combination skin.

The fourth step is to control the skin by eating healthy and drinking plenty of water. When you practice a healthy diet, you can take a big step in controlling the quality of your skin. Fatty and greasy foods are not good for any type of complexion. Eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables and try healthier oils. Drinking water will also help by hydrating your skin the natural way.

The fifth step is to use appropriate make up. Make up that contains oil-absorbing properties will help your appearance. Oil-free make up and make up that is labeled as non-comedogenic will help by minimizing the chances to pimples and blackheads. Another important part of skin care is to make sure make up is thoroughly removed each night before bed. Never go to bed with make up on because it can cause skin irritations.

The sixth step is to use a good sunscreen. Look for sunscreens with an SPF of at least 15. Using a daily sunscreen will help ensure that your skin does not become sunburned, which leads to dry skin. There are several varieties of sunscreen that are made specifically for daily use on the face. In addition, look for moisturizers and make ups that already contain sunscreen for added benefit. Using sunscreen everyday, even in the winter, will help ensure that you have a healthy glow to your skin.

Masks, Scrubs, Exfoliating Products

Your skin is the first thing that people probably notice about you. Did you know that it also plays a vital role as your body's largest organ? It protects your muscles, bones, blood vessels and internal organs. So, if the skin is so vital, why do some people not take proper care of it? Going outside without sunscreen, using harsh products and not drinking enough water and other fluids does not help matters. You have to live with your skin all your life, so why not treat it with the utmost care? There are a countless products on the market these days that can help you achieve healthy skin. You just have to know what to do.

Before determining the best skin care regiment, you have to determine what condition or skin type you have. If you are one of the lucky few, you might have normal skin – nothing too dry or oily. A large part of the population might have combination skin where there are parts of your face and body that are dry and other parts that are oily. Or, you might just be one oily mess! No matter what skin type you might be, there are products made that cater just to you. Among these many products made for your

face are facials masks, scrubs and exfoliating products. Do you have any ideas what these skin care products accomplish in your beauty care regiment? If not, then read on for some highlights:

Facial Masks

There are a variety of facial mask products that are made for any condition or skin type. If you are plagued by acne or blackheads, there are facial masks that you apply, then let dry. Once dry, you can peel them off and hopefully some dead skin covering those blackheads will become unclogged so you can clear them up. There are also facial masks, like a mud mask that you apply and allow to dry. Afterwards, you would wash your face with warm water to clean off the mud mask.

These mud masks offer a variety of benefits like oil control. Your skin afterward will have a healthy glow and not be shiny from oil. The mud masks remove impurities in your skin's pores as well as minimize the appearance of those pores. Pimple production is reduced and also blackheads dissolve and wash away once you remove the mask.

Scrubs and Other Exfoliating Products

Just think of exfoliating as using a piece of fine sandpaper on your skin. You are using a mildly abrasive substance which buffs the dead skin cells away, leaving healthy, glowing skin behind. There are several benefits to exfoliating. For one, the old dead skin cells that make your complexion dull are buffed away, leaving new skin cells that are vital and fresh. Secondly, after exfoliation, your skin can more readily absorb any moisturizers or other skin treatments.

There is some debate in the beauty world as to how often you should use some type of exfoliating product on your face, heck on your whole body for that matter. If your skin leans toward normal to oily skin, exfoliating is beneficial about three to four times a week. This action will also help with the excess oil production on your skin. With drier skin, exfoliation should only be done maybe once or twice a week at the most.

For facial masks and scrubs to be truly beneficial to you and your skin, you must follow a beauty routine that encompasses both of these products and more. Use cold cream or a product that matches your skin type to remove your makeup daily. Then use a light cleanser to remove any light traces of makeup. The

next step would be to exfoliate. This can be a homemade remedy like a paste made from baking soda or lemon and sugar. Or, you can purchase a specially formulated salt or sugar scrub that will accomplish the same thing. From there, you would rinse off all traces of the exfoliating product, then moisturize, again using a product based on your skin type.

The facial mask is something that is best suited during a relaxing bath in place of exfoliating. They should be used once all traces of makeup are removed. If you want to minimize the appearance of wrinkles and pores, then facial masks are the way to go.

Skin care is not complicated once you know all the players involved. What is hard is being diligent about your beauty routine and not skipping a step or two. However, the rewards of younger, vibrant looking skin more than make up for those extra efforts.

Secrets to Sexy, Sunless Tanning

Sunless tanning is the “in” thing to do these days, thanks to the threat of skin cancer. Getting a little sun is beneficial because your body requires it to produce certain vitamins you need. However, staying in the sun can be hazardous to your health in the long run. That is why sunscreens are essential when going outside for any length of time. The ultraviolet rays from the sun are so damaging. So what do you do if you want a healthy looking tan but without the risks of prolonged sun exposure? You go the sunless tanning route.

For some reason, a nice tan is considered sexy and healthy looking. However, baking in the sun for that golden brown glow will not only increase your chances of skin cancer, but it will also cause premature wrinkling and age spots. The wrinkle factor alone should drive many tan worshipers to the sunless tanning method. There are several ways to achieve that tanned look without the sun.

Sunless tanning lotions or mousses are popular with the do-it-yourselfer. When these sunless tan products first hit the retail market, many people had

problems with them like uneven applications that caused streaking on your skin. Not only that, but the color achieved after the lotion application was not always tan, it was more of an orange tint in comparison.

Luckily, these days, the sunless tanning products produce a better natural-looking tan. The lotions are now tinted slightly so you can tell where you applied the tanning product. This feature helps reduce the streaking. There is also a sugar-based ingredient in the lotion that reacts with the pigments in the outer skin of the body to produce the tan appearance. Your sunless tan will last anywhere from three to seven days, depending on how fast your skin grows and you shed your dead skin cells.

Another option for a sunless brown glow is patronizing a spa that offers a spray-on tan. If you are not confident that you could apply the sunless tanning product evenly on your own, a spray-on tan would be worth it. Plus, you could achieve an overall tan, with no lines if you choose to do so. The procedure would involve you standing in an enclosed booth sans clothing or you would wear something that covers the important parts that you don't want anyone else to see. You would protect

your hair and any other area that you did not want the tanning product to cover. Then, you would be sprayed by a mist of the sunless tanning product all over your body in an even application. In some instances, a spa technician might do an airbrush technique similar to those methods that body shop people use when painting a car. It is a technique that takes more time and is a little more intimate, body-wise. However, the results can be outstanding.

Regardless of which sunless tanning method you choose, there are a few preparations you can make to ensure an awesome looking sun kissed glow. First of all, make sure you have plenty of time to spare, maybe a couple of hours. Regardless of which method you use, it will take a while for the sunless tanning lotion or spray to dry. In the meantime, you cannot take a shower, bath or put on clothing.

Before the process, you will want to take a bath or shower. This will soften your skin. Then, you will want to exfoliate your entire body so that the dead skin cells are sloughed off, revealing the newer skin growth. Make sure that special care is taken with the places on your body where wrinkled skin can

occur, like your elbows and knees. These places will need exfoliating as well. Once you have exfoliated and rinsed off, you must dry your body completely. Moisture will hinder the sunless tanning product from properly adhering to your skin.

Don't forget that the sunless tanning process can take a while! However, the efforts will have been worth it once you see your healthy "tanned" skin. One of the drawbacks to sunless tanning is that the effect only lasts for a few days because your body sheds skin cells constantly. But you know what? That's ok since the tradeoff means fewer worries about skin cancer. So go out and show off that sexy new tan of yours!

Solutions for Unsightly Cracked Skin

As if dry skin doesn't present enough problems by itself, there are worse things. Once eczema sets in fully or psoriasis makes itself a home in your skin, you can quickly go from dry and itchy to cracked and painful skin. Cracks in your skin can be painful, and that pain can even get worse when you move or stretch. Usually the hands and feet are most susceptible to these cracks, which doctors refer to as "skin fissures." The heels of the feet and the knuckles on the hands are particularly vulnerable to this problem. If you go barefoot often or wear open backed heels on your shoes you are even more likely to suffer cracked skin on your feet. No matter where the problem rears its head, there are some things you can do to help, and you should make sure you are treating it. Cracked skin is not properly protecting your body so it is actually a health risk.

The first thing to do is start soaking the area regularly. The best way for you to treat any skin cracking is by hydrating the area every single night. The cells in the skin require a certain amount of moisture. They soak it up like little sponges. So each night before you turn in, you should soak the

cracked part of your skin in warm water for at least 20 minutes. This will allow your skin cells time to absorb the water and hydrate them. Once you are finished soaking, you should pat the area dry with a soft towel. This is step one in the process.

Next, since you have hydrated the skin cells, you need to keep the moisture in there or you will be right back where you started. So once you have finished soaking, seal in the moisture with a petroleum jelly product. Lotions you may have do not seal as well as Vaseline and other lubricants can. So once you have hydrated and lubed, you now have slimy hands or feet. That is no problem if you are prepared. You should put on cotton socks for your feet or cotton gloves for your hands and then go to bed. As you sleep, the moisture can begin to revitalize your skin cells and help your feet or hands heal up properly.

What about the existing fissures and cracks, though? There is something you can do to start relieving the pain and seal them up. It sounds crazy, but you can actually super glue the cracks up. According to dermatologists it is okay on minor cuts and cracks to apply super glue to the area. A small amount of Super Glue in the crack will take the air

away from the nerves. At the same time it seals up the slits. Add this to your moisturizing regimen to help get the pain and irritation under control while you take care of the greater hydration problem.

Cracked skin can also show up on your lips. This skin is a little different, so it is better to prevent than to have to treat with a lip balm. Tartar control toothpaste can actually cause cracked skin and cause rashes. This only happens if it is used more than once a day, but it is important to note. In addition to avoiding over use of tartar control tooth care, you should also keep balm on your lips and keep your entire body hydrated.

Cracked skin, whether it is on your lips, hands, feet, or elsewhere is not only painful, but can also be unsightly and embarrassing. Hands are hard to hide, and maybe you enjoy open heeled shoes or sandals. In addition, it is not good for your health to have cracks in your skin. The best bet then is to prevent and treat the problem. Keep your body hydrated by drinking lots of water, first and foremost. If cracks have already shown up in your skin, you can super glue them close as a way to manage the pain while you fix the problem. Soak the area nightly for at least 20 minutes and then

seal them with Vaseline or petroleum based lubricant rather than a moisturizing cream which will not seal the moisture in. Cover with a cotton glove or socks and head to bed. Perform the ritual nightly and you will soon have smooth feet or hands that are free from those painful and ugly cracks.

Scarred for Life?

A scar is “the body’s natural way of healing and replacing lost or damaged skin.” A scar is made up of fibrous tissue and occurs due to damage to skin as a result of an accident, disease, infection, injury, surgery or inflammation. Scars can have different appearances on the body, whether they are flat, lumpy, and sunken in nature and can be colored, itchy and/or painful. A number of factors figured into how a scar ends up looking including an individual’s skin type, where the scar is to be found on the body, the wound’s direction, the kind of injury it is, the age of the person and his or her physical health. Scars unfortunately occur after almost any injury to the skin with the exception of very minor cuts and scraps. All scars leave marks but there are ways to make them less noticeable.

Dermabrasion can be undergone to help minimize the appearance of many small scars, acne scars and surgical scars. Dermabrasion involves “abrading” (or removing) the top layers of skin with an electrical machine. This should give the skin afterwards a fresher and smoother appearance.

Chemical peels are good for superficial scars and they take place when the upper layer of skin is taken off with a chemical solution made of glycolic acid that in turn allows the skin to go through a process of regeneration.

Collagen injections are sometimes used to minimize the look of sunken scars. Collagen is an animal protein but must not be undertaken by individuals suffering from certain diseases. Speak to your doctor first before booking an appointment to have a collagen injection. More than one treatment is often required for this form of scar minimization.

Cortisone-like injections are another way to minimize the look of scars and these work best on hard scars to soften and then shrink them. Another method of minimizing scars is cryosurgery which helps to decrease scars by freezing being applied to the top layers of the skin. The freezing used in cryosurgery prompts blistering, and then healing. Another option is laser resurfacing which can be used on both fine scars and wrinkles. With this procedure light of a high-energy source is utilized to burn away skin that is damaged.

Punch grafts, another scar minimization method, are basically tiny skin grafts that are placed over scars or a scarred area of skin to improve the appearance of it. This is how the procedure is done- a hole is punched in the skin to do away with the scar and it is then replaced with skin that is “scar-free” and is more often than not, taken from the back of one earlobe. Punch grafts work best on deep acne scars. Surgical scar revision takes place when the scar is removed on a surgical basis and the exposed new skin is then “rejoined.” This results in a new but much less visible scar. Surgical scar revision is used in only certain situation- such as when a scar has healed in a strange (or very abnormal) sort of way, very long and/or wide scars that are in places of the body where they are extremely visible, such as on the face, neck or hands.

Silicon gel sheets aid in reducing the appearance of unsightly scars. If worn on a regular basis a silicon gel sheet can be placed over the top of a scar to soften, flatten and eventually fade red and raised scars. Once only available with a doctor’s prescription, these sheets can now be purchased over-the-counter at drugstores. Research has

shown that they are extremely beneficial in minimizing scar tissue.

Plastic surgeons have found a lot of success with a patented silicone gel called Kelo-cote that improves upon the look of scars and works towards the prevention of abnormal and/or excessive scar formation.

Healthy healing is supported by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables and this also helps cut down on the level of scarring after an injury to skin due to an accident, surgery, etc. Healthy cells need lots of vitamins and minerals, in particular zinc (which is to be found in cheese, lean meat, poultry, nuts and seeds) and vitamin C (which is to be found in citrus fruits). Consuming lots of water makes a difference as does taking vitamin E (which is in wheat germ, nuts, eggs and green vegetables). Some believe that vitamin E creams applied to scars help healing as does cocoa butter but neither claim has been substantiated yet.

Zapping those Zits

No one likes having pimples but help is on the way to get rid of them! Below are seven solutions for zapping zits and most are very commonsensical. Let's get down to business right away ...

The first solution is to include plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds in your daily diet. If you don't eat enough of these foods increase your supply pronto! In order to get more fruits in your diet whip up breakfast smoothies in the blender and juices made from fresh fruits. To get more vegetables eat at least one salad a day and include as many vegetables in it as you can. Snack regularly on dried fruits and nuts such as pumpkin seeds and Brazil nuts because they both contain the mineral selenium and pumpkin seeds also contain zinc. A lack of selenium and/or zinc is connected to the development of acne.

The second solution is to hydrate one's body (a lot) on a daily basis. You can never drink too much water so make it your goal to drink at least eight glasses of H₂O every day. Some individuals recommend drinking at least two liters of still

mineral water per day. Dehydrated skin does not shed dead cells as quickly or as efficiently as hydrated skin. A build up of dead skin cells can lead to the blocking of pores and then zits, here they come!

The third solution is probiotics and prebiotics. Probiotics are “friendly bacteria” that live in the digestive system but with repeated use of antibiotics can be destroyed. If zits (or anything else) have got you taking antibiotics then consider adding a probiotic supplement such as Lactobacillus Acidophilus to your diet. Antibiotics wreak havoc on the good bacteria in the digestive tract which can cause poor digestion, constipation and an inadequate absorption of vitamins, nutrients and minerals. Why would this lead to more zits? It could lead to more zits because waste builds up and toxins are expelled via the skin’s layers as opposed to the kidneys. Prebiotics work in conjunction with probiotics to improve the functioning of the digestive system. Prebiotics are foods such as artichokes, bananas, onions and honey. Consume more of these foods if you have recently finished taking a supply of antibiotics.

The fourth solution for zapping zits is to pay attention to the skin care and cosmetic products that you use regularly. Avoid skin care products that are heavily perfumed or full of chemicals because they can strip the natural oils off of the skin and this causes the skin to produce more oil to compensate for its loss. Unfortunately this can lead to lots of blocked pores and lots of zits. Look for products that are antibacterial in nature. People prone to zits should use as few products on their skin as possible- “less is more” is always best. Buy cosmetics that are non-comedogenic or non-acnegenic (which means they will not block pores). Natural products such as tea tree oil are excellent for the face and body of those with acne. Tea tree oil is very good for acne as it dissolves the pus of pimples and reduces the swelling and redness. Tea tree oil has antibacterial, antiseptic and antiviral properties. It is excellent for deep cleansing and also has an antifungal and antimicrobial agent.

The fifth solution for zapping zits is to learn how to reduce the levels of stress you suffer. Stress is one of the biggest causes of acne both during the teenage years and afterwards. When a person is under a great deal of stress the hormone cortisol is released into the system which increases the

incidence of acne. On the other hand, controlling stress decreases the occurrence of acne. It is wise to recognize when you are “stressed out” and to do something about it. Find ways to relax such as exercising on a regular basis (Yoga and T'ai Chi are good options), deep breathing exercises and meditation.

The sixth solution is to cut back on your consumption of refined carbohydrates and sugar. Refined carbohydrates are white bread, pasta, rice and flour which are bad for the growth of acne while too much sugar causes an increase in insulin production which causes the skin to dispel large quantities of sebum. Sebum encourages the bacterium that leads to acne formation.

Finally, the seventh solution is a simple one, get outside and enjoy plenty of sunshine and fresh air! Sunshine helps to bolster the levels of vitamin D in the human body which is very healthy for skin while fresh air is both healthy in a physical sense and also good for decreasing stress levels.

Turning Back the Clock on Wrinkles

Wrinkles are caused by aging skin and the elements that our skin is exposed to day after day. Wrinkles are a natural part of aging as our skin becomes thinner. Sun exposure is another major cause of wrinkles and can cause premature aging not only to the face, but also to other exposed parts of the body. Also, repeated facial expressions such as smiling and squinting cause's lines and wrinkles on the face. Whatever causes your wrinkles, there are steps you can take to prevent and treat wrinkles to turn back the clock and make your appearance younger looking.

Prevention is the key to many wrinkles, especially those due to sun exposure. It is estimated that the sun causes at least 90 percent of premature aging and wrinkles. Many of these lines and wrinkles can be prevented. This means that daily use of sunscreen can drastically reduce the amount of wrinkles that appear over time. UV rays can hit your skin year round, even when it is cold. If you are concerned with wrinkles, you should always apply a good sunscreen daily all year long. You can also help cut down on sun exposure by wearing a hat

that shades your face when you are working or spending time outside. If you can cut down on the amount of ultraviolet rays hitting your face, you can take a big step in preventing premature aging.

Another step you can take to help prevent wrinkles is to eat right and drink plenty of water everyday. Your body loses a lot of water each day. When you hydrate your body from the inside, your skin will reap the benefits. Drinking the recommend daily amounts of water helps your skin stay smooth and supple. Skin that is moist does not lose its elasticity as fast as dry skin. Also, make sure you eat healthy and enjoy a wide variety of foods each day. Whole grains, fruits and vegetables will help keep you healthy and your skin will benefit as well. Adding small amounts of healthy oils such as olive oil to your diet may also help your skin.

Washing the face everyday will help prevent wrinkles, too. It is recommended that when you wash your face, you use warm tap water and do not scrub. Also, it is important to thoroughly remove all make up and use a light cleanser with added moisturizer. When you are ready to dry your face, do not rub the towel on your face. Instead, use gentle patting motions to dry.

In addition to preventing wrinkles, there are steps you can take to help minimize the amount of wrinkles you may already have. One very common way is to use daily moisturizer. There are several types of moisturizer that actually helps hydrate the skin and leave the skin on your face looking smooth. This will help minimize existing wrinkles and may help prevent new wrinkles from forming in the long run. For added effect, use a moisturizer each night before bed and every morning before applying makeup.

Many people with wrinkles opt to use under the eye creams. These creams are specifically made to help reduce the puffiness and dark circles that are common under the eye. Because the skin under the eyes is very thin and does not produce oils as well as other parts of the face, wrinkles are common. Also, rubbing the eyes may cause wrinkles to form, so it is always best to apply eye moisturizer with very gentle tapping motions.

There are also many types of products that claim to help reduce or minimize the appearance of wrinkles. These products can be bought over the counter or by prescription through a dermatologist. Many

people believe these products work so if you are looking to reduce the amount of wrinkles, check some of those products out.

Another, but more expensive option to get rid of wrinkles is the visit a professional. Plastic surgeons see many patients wanting to look younger. Site injections such as Botox are becoming more popular as are facelifts. These solutions are not cheap, though. Be prepared to spend hundreds of dollars for surgical techniques to remove wrinkles. Botox injections are very effective, but the results are not permanent.

The Laws of Lotion

A lotion is defined as, “a fluid with healing, antiseptic properties that is used on the skin.” Lotions, in the form of moisturizing agents, are applied to the surface of the skin and go to work on dry skin to hydrate the skin, relieve flaking and itching. Lotions however, contrary to popular belief, cannot slow down the process of aging, prevent wrinkles from forming or penetrate the deepest layers of the skin.

Lotions are broken down into two types- emollients and humectants. Emollients form a barrier of oil on the surface of the skin that serves to seal in moisture and prevent it from quickly evaporating before it is absorbed. Emollients are very much like the natural oils found in the skin. They come in the form of lanolin, mineral oil and petroleum jelly. Humectants on the other hand both attract and then hold in water that is on the surface of the skin. Humectants come in the form of glycerin, lactic acid, sorbitol and urea. It is not always easy to determine what kind of lotion is best for your skin. A number of factors have to be taken into consideration such as how chapped, dry or sensitive your individual skin is. Do you have any known allergies? This is

another thing you must know as you don't want to have to deal with your skin breaking out. As a rule the simpler a lotion it is, the better it is for the skin. Lotions that are loaded with a lot of perfumes, colors, emulsifiers and thickeners are more likely to cause an allergic reaction to sensitive or delicate skin. If acne is a problem (as some people are prone to acne on their backs, arms or legs) overuse of lotion or the wrong kind of lotion could cause a terrible break out. This you want to avoid at all costs!

Lotions with alpha hydroxyl acids (AHAs) are good for skin that needs firming, smoothing and for skin damaged by the sun. AHAs are taken from fruit, sour milk and red wine. Research has shown that cell turnover is greater when a lotion contains these acids. Both low concentration as well as high concentration AHA lotions can be found on the market today. Speak to your doctor or dermatologist to determine which one, if any, might be right for your particular skin type or condition. Always look for non-clogging lotions that will not block up pores, especially if you are prone to break outs. Look for the word "noncomedogenic" on the labels of lotions.

Everyone requires a pH-balanced acid for his or her skin care regimen. People with delicate skin need a product that contains the same acid balance (or pH) as that of normal skin, and this would be in the range of pH 4.5 to 5.5. However labels on products can be misleading because many read “pH-balanced.” That really does not tell you anything because it could be pH-balanced acid or pH-balanced alkaline but neither of those is beneficial to the skin. To make a proper determination purchase pH papers (such as for example, pHyrion) and dip them into the product in question. The paper will change its color and then you can make a comparison with an enclosed color chart to find out what the pH level is in the lotion you are wondering about.

Sunscreen lotion is the single most important age-erasing step you can take in your daily skin care plan. Your best bet is to use a lotion or cream based sunscreen as a moisturizer for both your face and your body. Make sure to choose a sunscreen or moisturizer-sunscreen that has an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least fifteen, but preferably thirty, or higher (such as forty-five if necessary). Also look for a sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays. These are often referred to as full-

spectrum sunscreens. This form of sunscreen offers the most protection in terms of preventing the surface burning of skin and deeper tissue damage.

Skin that is prone to allergic reactions must be treated with care and that includes the lotion you choose to use. Look for lotions that are fragrance free and unscented, allergy-tested, dermatologist-tested and hypoallergenic (which means it is less allergenic).

The best time to apply lotion is right after a bath or shower before you dry off because this locks in the moisture and is very nourishing to the skin.

However do not apply lotion to a recently shaved area, such as the legs, immediately following a shower because the pores of the skin are open and red bumps on the skin are likely to result.

Magnificent Make-Up Tips

The Art of Applying Makeup

Learning the correct techniques when applying make up can help you look your best. When you know what types of make up to use and how to properly apply them, you can make sure your appearance is always at its best. In addition to learning how to apply make up, you should also understand what types of products are best for your skin type and what colors are most flattering to your complexion.

Applying make up using the correct techniques does not have to be difficult or frustrating. There are two very common mistakes that women make when they apply make up. They either use the wrong colors, or they apply too much make up. Using the wrong colors can make anyone look like they have just playing in their mother's make up bag.

Generally, chose colors that compliment your skin tones. If you have light skin, do not go with dark colors. Also, do not try to apply too much make up. Apply just enough for a natural glow.

When you are ready to apply make up, consider using a concealer. Concealer can help you hide under the eye circles, or flaws and blemishes on your skin. This can enhance the overall look of your face. Look for a concealer that closely matches your skin tone. If you get a color that is too light or too dark, it will show. When you apply the concealer, do not stretch the skin. Instead use a light patting motion. Concealer comes in stick creams, bottles and powders.

After you have covered your dark circles or blemishes you will be ready to apply foundation or base. This usually comes in a thin cream and also matches the color of your skin. Not everyone uses foundation, but if you have uneven skin tone or freckles, using foundation can enhance your appearance. When apply foundation, use a make up wedge or your fingers. Generally, start applying from your nose and work your way out. Make certain that the foundation is well blended around the edges of your face so the line is not visible.

The next step in applying make up is to use apply blush. Blush also comes in many colors and varieties. Powder blush is probably the most

popular, followed by sticks or creams. Find a shade that compliments your skin tone. If you are applying the powder variety, use an angled make up brush and apply the powder on the apples of your cheeks. Brush the powder upwards towards your temples. You can then blend in the powder using another brush. Make sure the blush is well blended around the temples making sure that the fine powder is not in the hairline.

After you have applied blush, you can apply the eye make up. Eye shadow can be a fun product to use if you want to experiment with different colors. Try shades until you find one that is flattering to you. When applying eye shadows start at the corner of the eyelid and apply it going out. You can either use the applicator the make up comes with or use a small brush that will look like a flat paintbrush. You can then apply a lighter shade on the top of your eyelid and blend the two colors together. You can even experiment with using several shades together as long as you blend the colors together.

Now you can apply eyeliner and mascara. When you apply eye make up, be careful to use clean applicators and never lick the eyeliner. Do not apply eyeliner on the inside of the eyelid. Eyeliner comes in various shades and in pencil form or a liquid form.

Pencil eyeliner is usually easier to apply than the liquid. Mascara also comes in several colors. If you have droopy eyelashes, consider using an eyelash curler for maximum effect. For those that suffer from watery eyes from allergies or who swim, look into using waterproof mascara.

When you are done, you can apply your lipstick. As a general rule, do not go too bright if you have pale skin. Make sure that you thoroughly remove all make up before going to bed each night. Also, throw away old make up when it is dry or cracked. Do not try to use old or expired make up, especially around the eye area.

Foundation Facts

Everyone has their own natural beauty. And for centuries, ladies have been using makeup in some form or fashion to enhance that beauty. These days, the cosmetic industry is booming with a plethora of products from eyebrow pencils to lipsticks to eye shadows to foundation. It is foundation, or liquid makeup, that provides the base for most women's beauty regiments.

Obviously, with the variety of ethnicity and skin types, all foundations are not created equal. So how do you decide which foundation is right for you? First of all, you have to know where to buy your foundation. You can purchase your makeup from the grocery store or even a pharmacy. And while there are some great makeup buys at those stores like eye pencils and lipsticks, the best place to buy your foundation is a department store. The makeup counters have experienced personnel who know about the various products that complement certain skin types as well as matching the skin tone and application techniques.

One of the first things you have to consider in regards to choosing the foundation that works best for you is your skin type. What condition is your skin in? Do you have dry or flaky skin? What about oily skin? Or maybe, your skin is a combination of the two. If you are a little unsure of what may describe your skin condition, ask for the opinion of the makeup consultant at the department store beauty counter.

After determining your skin type, you have to decide which foundation formula would best suit your needs. If your skin is dry, hydrating or moisturizing foundation formulas are great choices to provide a great base for your beauty regiment. Oil control foundations work best for the oily skin. And if you are prone to breakouts, look for formulas that cater to acne-free results. When you have combination skin, you need to find a foundation formula that would suit both oiliness and dryness.

When shopping for new foundation, make sure that you are not wearing makeup already. Having a clean face will ensure that you can apply a few colors of foundation on your face without it clashing with something else. Determining your skin tone is very helpful in choosing the best foundation as the

basis for your makeup. Fair skin might require a foundation with rosy undertones while a darker complexion might need something more yellow-based in color. With the multitude of skin colors – from the fair skin of Caucasians to the olive complexions of Latin descendants to the darker undertones of African Americans or Middle East Asians, there are a countless shades to choose from.

Pick the two or three shades that you think might best suit your skin tone. Apply the foundation shades at various places along your jaw line. Your skin in this area is the most true to the type of makeup color you need. Whatever you do, do not apply the makeup on your wrist or hand because these are not optimal areas to best determine the foundation's tone and color. Because the lighting in the store is mostly fluorescent, you want to go outside in natural sunlight to look at how well the foundation blends in with your skin. Your best selection would be the one foundation that is virtually undetectable on your skin. You should be the one wearing your makeup, not the makeup wearing you.

The reason why buying your foundation at a department store is stressed is because no one person perfectly fits the standard colors you may find in a pharmacy or grocery store. For the most part, people are in between shades. The department stores offer higher end foundations that are possible to custom blend into the shade you require. Another reason that department stores are optimal for your foundation purchase is because the makeup consultants can give you tips on applying your foundation as well as suggest complementary products or alternatives that you may not have thought of like concealer or tinted sunscreen or moisturizer.

Be sure and think about what you want out of your foundation as well. Do you want light and natural or something that makes your skin more luminous for evening events? How about a satiny finish or matte finish? The possibilities are many, but your needs are few. Decide what role your makeup will play in your daily life and activities and choose the best foundation that fits that role.

Don't Trowel on Makeup!

Ever get frustrated when you set out to do a task, but don't have all the proper tools to help you achieve the best possible results? Just think about that when you are applying your makeup. Having the right tools can make all the difference in the world, whether you are applying makeup to conceal imperfections or highlighting your assets. So how do you know which ones would best suit your needs? And how do you know which ones that you absolutely cannot live without? Read on to find out about the six make up tool "must-haves":

1. Makeup Sponges

Many women might use their fingertips to apply their foundation. While there is no real problem with that, sponges are definitely more advantageous. First of all, if you are prone to breakouts, your fingertips might add that extra oil your skin really doesn't need. Secondly, makeup will stay on your face for more even coverage than if with the fingertips. Plus, blending is easier and less noticeable with a sponge.

Triangular shaped sponges work the best to get

into the crevices of your face like around your eyes and along your nose. They are also great for blending foundation and other makeup along the jaw or hair lines without any noticeable makeup lines. Sponges can also be reused several times and even washed to prolong its usefulness.

2. Powder Brush

A thick, lush power brush is a necessity in your beauty palette of tools. Most face powders come with a small applicator or powder puff. These devices do not adequately distribute the face powder on your face. The powder brush will help blend the powder and give you control on exactly where you want the powder applied.

3. Eyebrow Brush

Your eyebrows are like the window dressing to your eyes. When your eyebrows are not groomed properly, it is one of the first things people notice. Brushing your eyebrows into a certain shape can help you identify those errant hairs that need plucking. Also, an eyebrow brush can best distribute a little color to your brows in case you have to fill in any “bald” spots or

enhance the brow color.

4. Eyelash Curler

This is a tool that is not in many women's repertoire yet it has the power to really make your eyes pop. The eyelash curler is especially helpful to ladies whose lashes don't curl up very well. The trick is to briefly heat up the curler with a hair dryer, and then curl the ends of the lashes for several seconds. Once completed, you would follow up with an application of mascara to the lashes to maintain that curl.

5. Eye Shadow Sponge Applicator

Eye shadow can sometimes appear flaky upon application. The eye shadow sponge applicator allows more control over gliding the makeup along your eyelids, thus reducing the chance of powder flakes from escaping. In addition, the use of a sponge applicator allows for easier color blending, especially if you are using a base color on the lower lid along with a highlighting color above it.

6. Foundation or Concealer Brush

Many makeup artists are now swearing by using a thick, densely packed brush to apply

foundation. The reasoning is that it gives you a light application of makeup without looking “made up.” It is a great blending tool. Concealer brushes are similar in scope, except have a smaller head for easier manipulation for smaller areas. Even if you don’t wear foundation, you can use it to apply a concealer for dark under eye circles, blemishes or other imperfections.

You can probably “get by” without these six makeup tools. However, when they are available and you add them to your beauty regiment, you will notice a discernable difference in your appearance after your makeup application. Makeup will look more natural on your skin with no noticeable delineations. You will also find that you have cut down your prep time in your beauty routine. Some of these tools can be bought at the dollar store or a pharmacy. However, if you want your beauty tools to last, consider a trip to the department store makeup counter. Sure, these makeup tools will be more expensive, but remember – you are investing in your appearance! Aren’t you worth that investment?

Blushing Basics

Some people are born with natural high cheekbones and some people need a little help in accentuating what they have. That is why having blush as part of your makeup and beauty regiment is important. Not quite half of women these days wear blush and those that do, apply blush incorrectly. Adding blush to your makeup routine can perk up a face that appears washed out or colorless. If you are tired and decide only to apply a few beauty essentials to your face, blush should be one of those items. Blush can give you the appearance of being wide-eyed bushy-tailed when in actuality, you are exhausted and need help getting through the day.

One of the most important questions that women have in selecting blush is what color they should get. That can be a hard task if you don't have a natural eye for color. If you don't want to subject yourself to the makeup counter at a department store, there are one or two things that can guide you to a color decision. First, think about when you exercise or do some type of strenuous activity. Getting physical puts color in your cheeks doesn't it? The color you achieve in your cheeks from a

light physical activity is one way to steer you to an appropriate blush color. Another way is to pinch your cheeks and wait a second or two. The color you get from those pinches should also help in your decision.

Your second step on the road to a beautiful blush is to decide what type of blush to purchase. There is a variety to choose from including the powder, gel, cream and tint blushes. The condition of your skin should dictate what type of blush you want to buy. Here is a brief breakdown of each:

- Powder blushes are universal, meaning that most skin types can wear them. If you want a long-lasting color, powder blushes are the best.
- Gel blushes provide more of a translucent shine and are best suited to those oily to normal skin types. It is best applied with the fingertips and dries fast.
- Cream blushes can also be applied with the fingertips. They are thick in consistency, but not overwhelming on the skin once applied.

Because cream blushes are rich in moisturizing ingredients, they are best suited to those women with dry skin.

- Tint blushes are like a cheek stain. It dries very quickly, so you have to move fast to apply it correctly without streaks or mishaps. Tint blushes are the least user-friendly but last until you wash your face.

Now that you have an idea of the types of blushes to choose from, it is time to apply the product to your face. You want to make sure and complete most of your makeup routine first, meaning foundation, powder and any eye products like shadow, eye liner and mascara. Blush is considered the finishing touch. If you are completely done with your other makeup, you will have a better idea of how much blush to apply.

Determine what the shape of your face might be. Knowing whether you have a round, oval, square or heart-shaped face will give you a better guide as to where the blush is going to be applied. Dip your brush or applicator into the blush and tap it to shake off the excess. Look into your mirror and smile. You should have a hint of where your cheekbones

are; the rounded part of your cheekbones is called the “apple” and that is where you need to apply the blush. Start at the “apple” and follow the natural contour of your cheekbone, toward your hairline. Blend the color so there is no obvious delineated blush line. You want the color to look as if nature put it there.

Don’t worry if you apply too much blush, especially if it is a powder blush. You can use your translucent face powder to gently blot over your blush to tone it down if need be. To get the best results, do not use the dinky blush brush that comes with your makeup. Purchase a separate, professional blush brush that you can purchase at any makeup department store counter or beauty supply store. If you want the best results, you have got to have the right tools!

Eye Makeup Tips

Your eyes are a barometer of your mood, a window into how you are feeling. Just one look can show sadness, joy, pain, happiness, exhaustion or thoughtfulness. Your eye color, whether blue, green, brown or shades in between, expresses thoughts which are not always said. That is why, for women, eye makeup is an important part of their beauty routine.

A beautifully made-up eye can enhance those come hither looks when you want to be flirtatious. If you want to appear mysterious, eye makeup can help you achieve that look as well. Expressing a mood and accentuating the eyes are among the most important reasons why women take great pains to apply their eye makeup. When adorning the eyes, you are talking about a variety of products that can be used. Eyebrow pencils, eye shadow, eyeliner and mascara are a few of the main items that are used in a beauty regiment. You can read on for some advice on eye makeup:

1. Eye Shadow

Just because eye shadows come in a palette of

colors does not mean you have to go hog wild in its application. If you go for too much color you will end up looking like Bozo the Clown. The key is to choose neutral, understated colors first to get the hang of applying the makeup. Make sure that the colors you do use complement each other. Luckily, many eye shadows come in pre-made color palettes, so you don't have to guess which color will provide a base and which one will be a highlighted color along your brow bone. Most eye shadows are in a compressed powder form and you use a foam brush for application. There are some cream shadows however that glide effortlessly and are easy to apply with either your fingertip or a small eye shadow brush. Eye shadow pencils are also gaining popularity.

2. Eyeliner

There are numerous options when it comes to eyeliner. There is liquid eyeliner that is applied with a small brush. You need a gentle, steady hand to apply the eyeliner. There are also eyeliner pencils that you have to sharpen periodically. This option more readily defines your eyes and you have more control in its application. Some eyeliner pencils come with a built-in sponge "smudgers" that can blend in your

eyeliner for a smoky, sultry look.

3. Mascara

This is a product that many women say they cannot live without. Even if they don't wear any other makeup, they wear mascara because it has the power to "wake" up and accentuate your eyes. If your lashes are pretty meager, mascara can plump them up and make you appear to have more lashes than you really do. It is important that you dab the excess mascara off the wand before applying, starting at the base, to ensure that it does not clump. There are a variety of colors and formulas. You might consider waterproof mascara if you have allergies or plan on doing any crying (like attending a wedding). It won't budge unless you wash it off.

To make your eyes really pop, there are a few tips you can try, like utilizing an eyelash curler. Use your hair dryer to briefly heat it up, and then curl your lashes. Once your lashes appear longer, with more curl, apply a mascara to set it. A lightly sculpted eyebrow also works wonders for accentuating the eyes. Use an eyebrow brush to groom the hairs, and then pluck any errant strands.

Clean lines and a light application of eyebrow pencil will help in your quest for pretty peepers.

Taking care of under your eyes is also part of the beauty regiment. If you have circles under your eyes, you need to make sure that you get enough sleep at night and drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. Also, sometimes, it is allergies that cause dark circles under the eyes. You might have to resort to under eye concealer as camouflage.

Once you get the hang of applying eye makeup, don't be afraid to experiment a little, either with a colored eyeliner or mascara. Have a home spa makeover day with some friends and play around with a casual, light daytime look or an evening party-girl look. With a little experimentation, you could be ready for any event with a gorgeous pair of eyes that really pop.

Banish those Eye Circles

No one enjoys the look of dark circles around the eyes (especially on the day of a big meeting or a big date!) but they are a very common beauty worry for lots of women. Dark circles appear under the eyes because the area under the eye does not contain any fat (as opposed to other areas of the face that do) and as a result, blood vessels are very apparent, giving the area a transparent look and prompting the unenviable title of “raccoon eyes.” Due to the lack of fat (or subcutaneous fat layer) there is a very high probability that fluid, as a result of a series of sleepless nights, too much drinking or a great deal of crying, etc. will collect and make it appear as though “bags” have developed under the eyes. No one enjoys this look and it can put a damper on an otherwise good day. Let’s take a closer look at this beauty problem, including the factors that contribute to the development of eye circles and how to combat them.

Age is a common factor in the development of dark circles under the eyes. Like it or not as you get older you will be more prone to them. The skin that protects our eyelids is of a thicker quality when we

are young but gets thinner with age. With thinner eyelids comes the exposure of more blood vessels as they are closer to the surface. They become more visible as we get older and therefore more prone to stand out.

Heredity also plays a role yet heredity is unfortunately something we have no control over whatsoever. Allergies to just about anything and the tendency towards thinner eyelids are passed on in families from one generation to another. If heredity is to blame then you simply must accept it and learn ways to handle it as best as you can. Allergies can be to blame for under eye circles while nose related problems such as chronic nasal obstruction can contribute to them as well.

Chronic fatigue and/or a lack of sleep are a very common cause of eye circles but fortunately this is easy to remedy- just get more sleep! Spending too much time in the sun can increase one's chances of acquiring dark under eye circles as can "woman-related" problems such as menstruation and pregnancy.

Consuming too many alcoholic beverages as well as caffeinated beverages (namely sodas and

chocolate drinks) can encourage the swift arrival of those dreaded under eye circles and yet another reason exists for quitting smoking- smoking is another major cause of developing a case of dark under eye circles and smoking serves to wreak havoc with circulation to many areas of the body (even the eyes).

There is no one “cure-all” for dark under eye circles unfortunately but the good news is that there are ways to help avoid getting them as well as ways to help keep them at bay or from being all too painfully obvious and ruining your otherwise flawless look.

Hydrating your body on a daily basis is so very important- and this means drinking water and plenty of it. This point cannot be emphasized enough. The suggestion of drinking “at least eight glasses of water a day” is very true. The body is composed of a lot of water (almost one half) yet we excrete a lot of water regularly and therefore need to replenish the supply constantly so drink up often!

It goes without saying that plenty of shut-eye will go a long way in helping you to avoid the “raccoon eyes” syndrome. Another idea for concealing dark circles is to apply cold compresses to the eyes (or

slices of cucumber work just as well) to bring down the swelling or puffiness (especially first thing in the morning). Splashing cold water on your face first thing in the morning has a similar, although less beneficial effect, but it will leave your skin with a rosy glow which should take some of the focus off of the dark circles rimming your eyes!

It has not been proven that eye circles can be banished entirely using creams but there is some evidence to show that they work somewhat in concealing them. Choose creams for eye circles that contain their fair share of antioxidant vitamins (the most essential one being vitamin C). Finally concealer applied after foundation is a must for ladies who wake up to dark eye circles. Always choose a color that is a shade lighter than your skin tone and apply it very gently, making sure not to tug or pull on delicate skin in the eye area.

When Beauty Products Go Bad

Ever wonder how long is too long to keep makeup products? All makeup has a shelf life and it is important to be aware of what it is because not all are the same. For example mascara should be discarded the most often as it is the most easily contaminated of all cosmetics and anything that comes in contact with your eyes should always be clean and as safe as can be.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has something to say about how long it is safe to keep makeup. According to them: "Cosmetic products are generally formulated and tested for a shelf life of 1-3 years under normal storage conditions, depending on a product's composition, packaging, preservation, and other factors. Consumers should be aware that expiration dates are simply, "rules of thumb," and that a product's safety may expire long before the expiration date if the product has not been properly stored. Cosmetics that have been improperly stored, for example exposed to high temperatures or sunlight or opened and examined by consumers prior to final sale may deteriorate substantially before the expiration date. On the

other hand, products stored under ideal conditions may be acceptable long after the expiration date has been reached.”

As a guideline to how long you should keep your makeup products, a water-based foundation will last for up to one year and an oil-based one for a year and a half. If you find that your water-based foundation dries out before it is all gone (or has expired) all you need to do to revive it is to add a few drops of alcohol-free toner and then shake it a little to rid it of any lumps. Oil-based foundation on the other hand is likely to separate as opposed to dry out, so you will need to give it a shake sometimes to refresh the consistency.

Concealer (or cover stick) can be kept up to a year and face powder (pressed and translucent although translucent usually stays fresh longer) up to two years. Blush can be kept up to six months and cream and gel cleansers, a year.

Eye liners can last up to a period of three years time and should be sharpened on a regular basis for a smooth application and finish and to guarantee that no bacteria has had time to settle and take up residence on it. Eyeshadow can last up to three

years as well, whereas mascara is the product that must be disposed of most readily. Get rid of your mascara after three or four months (regardless of whether the tube is finished or not). Mascara is the most likely to harbor bacteria which can make it bad news! And contrary to popular belief, there is no need to pump the mascara wand in and out before applying it, instead simply twist it slowly in a circle in the tube before opening it up to use.

Lip liner can last up to three years but there is a mixed opinion about lipstick. Some cosmetic experts say lipsticks are good for a year or two while others say they are good for a period of up to three to four years. You will know that a lipstick has gone bad when it smells funny. If it does then don't use it on your lips whatever you do, toss it out. In order to preserve the longevity of your lipstick, keep it in the refrigerator.

Nail polish can be a tricky one. If stored properly it can last up to two years (if you store it in the refrigerator it will last even longer). In some cases nail polish will only last one year. If you notice that the bottle of nail polish has separated, then shake it up a bit. If the colors and oils don't meld back

together and it smells odd then it is old and it is time to get rid of it.

There are other things to bear in mind about the ditching of makeup products. Learn to use your own discretion when it comes to deciding if a product is safe to use or if it should be thrown out. Some products might be safe to use past the expiration date but this is not recommended. It is very easy for contaminants and bacteria to innocently find their way into makeup products (in particular eye makeup) no matter how hygienic you attempt to be. Always wash your makeup brushes every two to three months in warm soapy water, mild detergent or baby shampoo. Sponges should be washed every ten to fourteen days and then rinsed with cool water. Sponges should not be kept anymore than a month or two.

Six Important Tips in Makeup Removal

Removing makeup every day is a tricky process as you don't want to pull or tug the delicate skin around the eyes nor do you want to cause your skin to dry out by using a harsh cleanser and/or makeup remover. Let's take a look at six important points to keep in mind when removing your makeup each night.

First of all baby shampoo is an excellent way to remove mascara that is resistant to other kinds of removers. Waterproof mascara can be one of the most difficult mascaras to remove as it is designed for staying power and a little bit of baby shampoo applied to a cotton ball or your finger tips should do the tricky nicely. Baby shampoos contain lower concentrations and softer detergents than other shampoos which makes them less irritating to the eye area. Baby shampoo can also be used to remove makeup on the face but use a very small amount as too much can be drying to the skin. Another option for the removal of waterproof mascara is extra- virgin olive oil. Olive oil is very gentle to the skin and ideal to use in the eye area as it is a natural anti-oxidant and does not contain any

harmful substances. All you need to do is apply a few drops to your fingertips, a tissue or a cotton ball, and while keeping your eyes closed massage the eyelashes in a gentle motion until all traces of the mascara are gone. Then use a mild soap or cleanser and water to clean up further.

The majority of cosmetics are oil-soluble which makes baby oil an excellent way to remove all traces of eye makeup, blush, foundation, and concealer and so on. All that is needed is to apply a tiny bit of baby oil to a tissue and then gently wipe it all over your face until the makeup is all gone. After you finish there is no need to use soap of any kind, simply rinse your face with cool water and your skin should feel soft to the touch.

The fourth tip is one that can never be stressed enough- never ever go to bed with your makeup still on! Not only will you stain your pillowcase but also you will be contributing to the clogging of your pores that can lead to acne, breakouts, splotchiness and a host of other potential skin problems. No matter how tired you are, take the time to remove the day's makeup and grime off of your face and let it breathe and regenerate while you sleep!

The fifth tip is to always use a mild makeup remover- nothing harsh or drying to the skin- and never use makeup remover that is specifically for your eyes on other parts of your face. This is particularly important if you suffer from oily skin as this can lead to break outs. Pay attention to what the label says as it specifies these things for a reason!

The sixth tip is to not remove your eye makeup with any kind of cleanser. Keep in mind that the eye area is very sensitive and delicate and you don't want to injure it in any way or cause an allergic reaction to take place. Also some people are prone to oily eyelids and you don't want to encourage an overabundance of oil in this area. If oily eyelids are not a problem you might to consider using petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline) to take off your eye makeup but remember to be gentle! Use a tissue or cotton ball to take off your eyeshade and a Q-tip to get rid of the eyeliner.

It's best to always start by removing your eye makeup first. Always choose a facial cleanser that is meant for your particular skin type and if possible purchase one that has been tested to both breakdown and remove makeup from the face. All

cleansers are not designed for this purpose and some soap as well does not thoroughly remove makeup from the face. Go over your face gently more than once but be as precise as possible. Do the same thing when you rinse, rinse a number of times to remove all traces of both cosmetic and cleanser residue.

Helpful Hair Removal Tips

Selecting the Right Razor

There are many different types of razors on the market for shaving unwanted hairs. Some razors are made of lightweight plastic and are disposable, some have heavy handles and only disposable heads and others come in the electric form. The one that is right for you will depend on your personal preferences. If you are in need of selecting a razor, here are some points to ponder in selecting the right razor for you.

Shaving has been going on for hundreds of years. Early men pulled out unwanted hair with their hands. Later, hair removal became a little less traumatic and blades were used for shaving facial hairs. During the middle ages, women began tweezing and shaving facial hair to keep up with fashion trends. Now it is common for both men and women to rely on razors to remove hair from every part of their bodies.

So, what kind of razor is right? Picking a razor will mostly depend on your preferences. Some people prefer using a new razor each time they shave, so a disposable razor. Others dislike the cuts and nicks from blades and prefer an electric razor. There are razors of various sizes, colors and blade number. Some are marketed for women and others are for men. The main consideration when choosing a good razor is to find the one that gives you the kind of shave and results you want when shaving. Everyone has different hair types and skin types. What works for one person, may not work for another.

If you are new to shaving, you might want to consider using a razor with a safety blade. Using a razor on any part of your body for the first time can be scary. If you are not careful, you could end up with more cuts and nicks on your skin than you bargained for. There are several types of disposable razors that come with a guard wire. This helps cut down on the amount of cuts and red bumps on the skin, more commonly known as razor burns.

In addition, anyone that is afraid of cutting their skin is new to shaving or might not have a steady hand, might consider an electric razor. These razors are

rechargeable and some can even be used with water or shaving gel. For the most part, these give close shaves without the worry of nicks. Sometimes, electric razors do not give close shaves in areas that are bony, such as around the chin or knees. Electric razors are also good options for those who are on the go or who travel frequently and need a quick shave without the water or shaving lotion. These also come in all different brands and prices ranges. Still, these are good options for some.

Disposable razors might be the perfect choice for those looking for a close shave without the worry of changing out the head. These are inexpensive and come in all different varieties. If you are considering using a disposable razor, think about what you need in a razor. Some are very basic, offering just one blade. Others use new technology with up to four blades per razor head and swiveling heads. As a general rule, disposable razors with several blades offer the closest and smoothest shave. In addition, many of these razors come with a lubricant strip to help soften the hairs and skin during shaving. These strips are not intended to replace soap or shaving gel or lotion. Instead, the strips help get a better shave. If you have very sensitive skin, the razors with lubricant strips could irritate your skin. Some

razors even make strips designed with sensitive skin in mind. Disposable razors are often perfect choices for those who need a very close shave such as in the summer months during short and bathing suit season.

Disposable razors are another option. These are very similar to disposable razors, but they handle is used over and over again and the heads are replaces with each shave. These are often a little more expensive than disposable razors and often give similar shaves. Some people prefer these because the handles tend to be heavier and easier to manipulate with wet hands and skin. These razors also offer close, smooth shaves.

Words of Wisdom on Waxing

If you are tired of pulling, tweezing and shaving, only to get red bumpy skin, then waxing might be a good option for you. Waxing is temporary hair removal using a wax substance. Hair that has been waxed will not grow back for three to five weeks depending on the person. Any part of the body can be waxed. That includes the underarm, legs, bikini area, arm, lips and eyebrows. Men generally favor waxing the back, chest, shoulders, hairline, ears, nose and sometimes the legs.

There are several different waxing methods. A common way for people interested in waxing is to visit a salon that specializes in body waxing. Other might prefer learning the method themselves and waxing in the privacy of their own home. Waxing involves spreading a very thin layer of a wax mixture over the skin. A paper strip is then pressed to the warm wax and pulled out with a quick motion against the direction of the hair growth. Not only does the waxing remove the hair, but it also removes the dead skin cells. When skin is waxed, it leaves the skin smoother than it does when shaving. Also, when the hair begins to grow back it

is less coarse than with shaving. After repeated wax sessions, some hair may not grow back at all.

Whatever method you prefer, consider these few hints and tips the next time you are ready to wax.

If you choose to visit a salon to have hair removed by waxing, it is important for you to find a salon that you can trust and one that is experienced in hair removal. It is common to find salons that may only wax facial hair. If you are looking for waxing for the legs, underarm or bikini area, ask around and find out who is experienced. There are several areas of the body that should only be performed by a licensed cosmetologist or esthetician. These areas might include the genital areas and the chest area. These areas might need special care and it should not be performed at home.

There are several benefits of waxing over shaving, plucking or tweezing. One big benefit is that waxing is much longer lasting than other hair removal methods. After an area has been waxed, it can take anywhere from three to five weeks for the hair to begin growing back. Some individuals may experience even longer periods. Also, hair that grows back after waxing tends to be softer and smoother than it does with shaving. This can

reduces itching and irritation, especially in the more sensitive areas. Waxing is better than shaving or depilatory creams because that only removes hair at the surface. This causes the hair to grow back at a much faster rate than with waxing.

There are some disadvantages of waxing as well. For those with a low tolerance of pain, waxing might not be the best option. Waxing can be temporarily painful. When the wax strips are removed, it pulls the hair from the root. A sharp, stinging pain will be felt. Also, waxing is much more expensive than tweezing or shaving. This is especially true if you opt to have the procedure performed at a salon. You can expect to pay anywhere from \$60 to \$80 depending on the area. It will be less expensive for smaller areas such as the eyebrows. Waxing can also promote ingrown hairs. This is caused when the hair is pulled from the opposite direction. This can disturb the hair follicles and can irritate the skin. Waxing is also not recommended for certain people. Those that are prone to spider veins can experience a more spider or varicose veins after having the procedure. Also, people who are diabetic and have poor circulation should not have the waxing procedure. There are also a few types of medication that those who wax should not take because waxing

can cause weakening of the skin. If you suffer from pimples, skin rashes, moles or have sunburn, waxing is not a good option.

If you do decide to wax, make sure that you do not wash the area before the procedure. The skin must be dry and free of any lotions, make up or other residues. Swimming, showers or baths can cause the hairs to be too soft and will not produce good results. Also, consider using a moisturizer after the skin has been waxed. There are several brands that are made just for waxing. This can help reduce the redness and swelling caused by waxing.

Hair Removal below the Waist

The removal of hair below the waist can be as frustrating as it is painful. For women, hair removal is usually a year-round job. During the summer months, women usually have the desire to have smoother and silkier skin as they wear revealing bathing suits and shorts. No one wants to experience raw, red skin after shaving or waxing. There are several ways to remove hair the right way without ruining the risk of red, bumpy skin. Here are a few do's and don'ts of hair removal below the waist.

Women have been shaving, pulling, or plucking unwanted hair for decades. During the middle ages, it is widely recorded that it actually become fashionable for women to pluck, pull or shave their all of their hair on their face including their eyebrows, temples and even eyelashes. This trend continued well into the 1770s when French women started shaving their heads in order to wear large wigs. Shaving the legs, however, did not become fashionable until around 1915 when an ad appeared in a magazine showing a woman with no armpit hair. This spurred women in the United States to

start shaving. In fact, during World War II, supplies such as razors were hard to come by and many women found other ways to remove unwanted hair. Some even resorted to rubbing coarse sandpaper over their legs. Liquid depilatory was introduced and marketed towards women in the late 40s making it easier to remove unwanted hair from below the waist.

Shaving, waxing and using depilatory lotions and creams can be extremely confusing and uncomfortable if you are not sure what steps to take to make your skin smooth and hair free. In order to make hair removal less uncomfortable, consider the following do's and don'ts.

DO:

Do choose the right kind of tools. If you want to shave your legs or other areas below the waist, look for a good quality razor. Razors with the most blades often give the closest shave and will reduce the chance for razor burn. There are several kinds of blades available on the market. Disposable razors have plastic handles and are designed to be used two to three times. You can also purchase a razor with disposable heads. These are generally a little more expensive, but give a good shave. Also,

check into electric razors. Other helpful products are shaving gels or lotions, which are available for almost any skin type and a small pair of scissors. If you are shaving an area with long hair, trimming the hair first will ensure a better shave.

Do use warm water while you are shaving. Shaving on dry skin invites bumps, nicks, cuts and razor burns. Always run the water warm and wet the skin thoroughly with the water and shaving lotion before beginning to shave the area. It is a good idea to soak the area you are shaving in warm water for up to three minutes before starting. The water will help the hair follicles open and will allow for an easier shave. This is especially true for coarser hair.

Do rinse often. This includes the blade and the area you are shaving. Rinsing the blade cleans it off before shaving the next area. If the blade is full of hair, you will not get a close shave. Also, thoroughly rinse the skin after shaving. Make sure all of the removed hair and shaving lotion is removed.

Do moisturize the skin. After you are finished shaving, it is always a good idea to apply lotion, aloe or other moisturizer. This will help reduce the chance of razor burn and will give you smooth skin.

DON'T:

Don't use an old razor or blade. Using an old or dull blade is an open invitation to cuts and razor burns. If you are unsure whether or not the blade is old or not, it is always better to get a new one.

Don't apply too much pressure. This is especially important for areas with sensitive skin. Applying too much pressure with the razor or blade can cause cuts on the skin.

Don't apply scented lotions, perfumes or other products for several minutes after shaving. This can cause burning and itching and cause red bumps. If a product stings the skin after shaving, do not continue using it.

Defeating the Unibrow

A unibrow, or monobrow, is the presence of abundant hair between the eyebrows, so that the eyebrows seem to join up above the nose to form one long eyebrow. In Western culture, the unibrow is often derided as being a throwback to a "primitive" state or as exhibiting a lack of self-grooming. Hence, especially among women, the region between the brows is often plucked or treated with electrolysis or other forms of depilation. Unibrow separation is often the only form of eyebrow grooming (a stereotypically feminine behavior) among men. However, in some countries this facial hair does not have the same stigma.

How your eyebrows are groomed can make a considerable difference in your appearance. Eyebrows help shape your eyes and give you character. If you have bushy eyebrows, it's important to keep them trimmed and well groomed. Most people need some kind of eyebrow maintenance. Many of these tips work well for women as well as men.

Never shave your eyebrows for a quick fix. You will regret it later when they all start growing back in. It will look obvious, and require constant maintenance -- so save the razor for your beard.

Depilatories are not a good idea to use around the eye area and there's plenty of room for mistakes. This can irritate your skin and your hairs will also grow back much quicker than waxing or tweezing. Waxing your eyebrows is best done professionally, however there are many kits on the market for this purpose. They come with step-by-step instructions to simplify the process. If you decide to do this at home, have a professional do it the first time so you can see how it's done. Be prepared for some temporary discomfort and pain.

Trimming Your Eyebrows

Depending on how thick your eyebrows are, sometimes all you need is a small pair of scissors to trim away the stray hairs. Grooming and trimming your brows is best done under bright lights for accuracy.

First decide what areas need attention and slowly trim your eyebrows in the direction of hair growth. Don't go overboard, if you trim your hairs too short,

they will stick out and look silly. You may want to do this over a few days, after you have a chance to decide if you're on the right track.

Plucking away Stray Eyebrow Hairs

Aside from waxing, tweezing is still the most efficient method for removing eyebrow hairs. If you need to pluck your eyebrows, keep a clean pair of tweezers handy for this use only.

Men are tempted to use tweezers for other things, such as cleaning their fingernails. Don't! This will make them unsanitary and less effective. If you do this, you'll probably need to buy a new pair when the ends don't meet properly to grab the hairs.

Start off with moistened brows. Tweezing after a shower is ideal, but you can soak your brow area with a warm washcloth for several minutes and it will have the same effect. Comb your eyebrows in the direction of their growth and let them fall naturally in place.

After deciding which areas need thinning out, tweeze your eyebrows in the direction of hair growth. For an even look, start underneath, from the inside, out. Pull them out one by one to avoid

mistakes. Be careful, some hairs may not grow back!

Tweeze the center of your eyebrows and look carefully to make sure you don't get them too far apart. You can always go back later and remove additional hairs if you need more space.

Don't pluck away too many hairs from the top of your brow. Target the obvious stray hairs and thin them out a little. Again, start from the center, then outwards.

Correcting Eyebrow Mistakes

Mistakes are bound to happen, even with a steady hand. If you should find yourself with some empty spaces or bald patches, don't fret. Fill in your eyebrows with an eye pencil or eye shadow that closely resembles the color of your hairs. By grooming your brows and blending in the color, they will look more natural.

These are the best eyebrow shaping and grooming tips:

- Get a good magnifying mirror.
- Get a GREAT pair of tweezers.

- Pluck just out of the shower. It is easier and less painful to tweeze hairs when you first get out of the shower.
- Map out your route.
- Keep the eyebrows balanced.
- Don't over-pluck. Pluck slowly and take away only those stray hairs that are particularly obvious.
- Clean up. Wipe the area with an antiseptic wipe to clean and close pores when you are finished tweezing.

Shaving Issues for Men

Properly used, most electric shavers can offer the user a shave that is just as close as a blade razor. How is this possible? An electric shaver rolls up the skin ahead of the hair-forcing the whisker up above what would be considered the skin line where it is then cut off.

Other benefits of electric shaving are its ease of use and almost complete absence of cuts and scraping. You can even shave with your shirt and tie on with an electric shaver; most men wouldn't attempt this with a blade razor. The time spent shaving is so variable due to individual habits that it would be debatable as to whether blade razor or electric shaving is faster, but most men find that the electric shaver is a quicker, less messy, more convenient way to shave.

The four steps of good daily shaving:

STEP ONE

Clean your shaver's screen and cutter regularly. On most shavers you can lift off the head frame which holds the screen, and gently brush out the whisker

dust from the underside with the cleaning brush all manufacturers furnish with their product. Do not touch the screen itself with the cleaning brush. It is very fragile. Below the screen is the cutter and that's the part you need to brush out with your cleaning brush. Get all of the accumulated whisker dust out of the cutter so that it can properly apply its metal surfaces to the task of cutting off your whiskers. Whisker residue built up on the cutters can seriously impair the effectiveness of your shaver. It is best to clean your shaver after every third shave, and preferably after every shave. The weekly use of a cleaning solution is recommended for a really thorough cleaning.

STEP TWO

The metal surfaces of your screen and your cutter need lubrication. Spray a product, an aerosol lubricant, on the shaving screen while the shaver is running. This immediately frees up any metal against metal binding. Use this lubricant sparingly. No need to wipe it off. Proceed with your shaving. You'll notice a pick up in the sound level of your shavers' motor which tells you that it is then operating at its maximum power level. Do this daily, while the shaver is running, just before you shave

STEP THREE

Use gentle pressure against your beard and shave against the grain of your beard growth. Do not press down hard, or move your shaver too rapidly over your face. This will not get you a closer shave but will cause your shaver head to wear out quicker

STEP FOUR

Many men who have very sensitive skin report that it helps to shave the tenderest areas of their face (the neck area below the jawbone) first and then move up to the tougher areas of their face in the areas between the ears, nose, and mouth. Some shavers generate heat on their shaving surfaces and heat can cause irritation. So shave the tender areas of your face first while the shaver head is coolest.

Switching Shaver Systems/Manufacturers

If you have been using a different brand electric shaver than the one you are switching over to, then please allow some breaking in time. Although most shavers have somewhat similar shaving principles, their "in use" applications differ. Give yourself a week or two for your face to adjust to your new shaver.

If you have been using a blade razor, then you must give your face a minimum of 2-3 weeks to adjust to electric shaving. Why? Well, every time you shave with a razor you actually take off a very thin layer of skin. With electric shaving, you are shaving at or below the skin line. So, you need this 2-3 weeks adjustment time to get rid of the replacement scar tissue that the body produces after every razor blade shave. You don't produce this scar tissue with electric shaving. And don't fluctuate back and forth between blade shaving and electric shaving if you want to achieve the many benefits of electric shaving. Be determined, and stick with your decision to use an electric shaver.

Whether you are a young man shaving for the first time or a seasoned veteran at blade shaving, the process of getting used to an electric shaver for the first time is the same. Chances are that your first couple of shaves will be just awful (but not always) and you may experience irritation, missed areas of hair (especially in the neck area) and just a generally poor shave. FEAR NOT! Your face will almost always take at least 1-3 weeks to adjust to the shaving system that you are using.

Shave every day with the new shaver and let your face get acclimated to the way the shaver shaves you. Your beard needs to be "trained" to be shaved a certain way and this process is the only way to do it. If after a few weeks of shaving you are still not happy with the shave results you are getting then that is not the shaver for you. Take advantage of any money back guarantees offered to you (most shavers offer 30-60 days) and try a different system.

It may take a little patience but you'll get there.

Changing Your Foil and Cutter (heads)

Most foil and cutter sets (rotary included) need to be changed about once per year. Tough beards, rough handling, dirty cutters will all lessen the amount of time that a foil and cutter set will last. Usually you will want to change the foil and cutter at the same time even if the foil looks "fine". The reason being that as your blade (cutter) gets duller, your foil gradually gets thinner as you press harder on your face to get the same quality shave you are used to. Putting a nice new sharp cutter under a thinning foil will usually put a hole in it rather quickly-possibly leading to a nasty cut or nick in your face.

Rechargeable vs. Cord Shavers

Contrary to popular belief cord model shavers are NOT more powerful than rechargeable shavers. It is true that a battery powered rechargeable shaver will lose its charge more quickly as the battery dies out (usually between 3-5 years). However this can usually be battled by following the proper procedure for charging and discharging your shaver:

1. Charge your shaver completely.
2. Use the shaver daily without the cord until it runs all the way down.
3. Recharge the shaver.

This procedure may seem obvious; however 90% of the premature battery problems that occur could be avoided if these 3 simple steps are followed. Using a rechargeable shaver continuously with the cord plugged in will destroy the batteries over time.

Foil (or "Oscillating") vs. Rotary Shaving

Foil shavers are machines that use an oscillating (back and forth) motion to cut hairs through a foil (also know as a screen) and cutter (blade) system. Rotary shavers are machines whose cutting system is based upon circular, rotating series of blades that move under a usually slotted head. Neither system is "better" than the other. Neither system gives a

closer shave than the other. It is all based upon personal preference and very few people can get good results with both. Trial and error is the only way to know what will work best for you.

Beards, Goatees and Moustaches

Here are some tips for beard, goatee, and moustache grooming:

- Some recommend only having this done professionally. Others won't let anyone else get near their beards with scissors or trimmers.
- If you're going to trim your beard yourself, you'll need the right tools. You will have to decide whether to trim using scissors or a beard trimmer.
- If you decide to trim primarily with scissors, consider purchasing a pair of professional barber's scissors.
- When considering beard trimmers, a rechargeable cordless model might be a good choice.
- You should also have a good wide-toothed comb. Optionally, for the mustache, you might want to have a fine-toothed comb. Some

specialty stores sell small mustache combs.

- A good-sized wall mirror is usually indispensable. You might also benefit from a magnifying mirror and possibly a three-way mirror.
- Do not trim a wet beard or mustache. Wet hair is longer. When it dries you may find you've trimmed too much.
- If you use a comb and scissors: Comb through the beard and cut the hair on the outside of the comb. It will take some practice to perfect this technique. It is better to err on the side of not cutting enough rather than cutting too much.
- To help maintain a balance between the two sides of your face, you may find it useful to start near the ear on one side and trim down to the chin. Then repeat on the other side.
- Beard trimmers almost always come with an adjustable and removable trimming guide. By adjusting the position of the trimming guide, you control how closely it will trim your beard. Refer to the instructions supplied with your trimmer for

details. Until you've mastered the use of your trimmer, it is best to adjust the guide for a longer beard length setting at first.

- To trim your mustache, first comb it straight down. Then use either the beard trimmer or scissors. Start in the middle and trim first towards one side of the mouth, then towards the other. Normally, you should not shave or trim the top of the mustache. It usually looks best if you let it grow all the way up to your nose.
- After you've trimmed your beard and mustache, then you should maintain the shape of your beard. Use the beard trimmer with the adjustable trimming guide removed (be careful) to keep the neck line of your beard well-defined.

Alternatively, you could carefully shave the lower portion of your neck to maintain the neck line of your beard.

- Miscellaneous stray hairs can be removed with a trim razor. Plucking them is not recommended.

Keeping a Beard Clean

- Just like your hair, wash and shampoo your beard regularly. A mild shampoo is easier on your skin.
- After shampooing, you may use a conditioner. Be sure to rinse thoroughly. Failure to rinse sufficiently may result in flaking. Because beard hairs are so coarse, conditioners will have less effect on the beard than on the hair on your head. But a conditioner will still help make your beard feel softer.
- Gently pat and wipe your beard dry with a towel. Blow drying is not really necessary and can be harsh on your skin.
- Comb your beard and mustache with a wide-toothed comb to remove tangles. Optionally, you can finish up by using a brush.

To Trim Mustaches

- Place a finger on upper lip to extend hair away from skin.
- Trim hairs using an upward motion.

- After achieving desired length, use a downward motion to blend mustache hairs.

NOTE: Use slow and light pressure. Too much pressure may trim off more hair than desired.

- Turn trimmer OFF.

A goatee is a cross between a miniature beard and a moustache. It is essentially a circle of facial hair that wraps over your lip, around your mouth, and across your chin. If you aren't confident with your shaving skills, grow out your facial hair to the length that you want your goatee to be and then go to a hair stylist to get your first goatee. Ask your stylist to show you the easiest and most effective way to create the look. The goatee is a great style for all ages, and it is a classy, smart, and manly look and it is one of the favorites for women! Every man should try out a goatee look at least once!

How to Make Your Goatee Even

- Face it, the ladies aren't clamoring for guys with lopsided goatees. To keep your goatee properly aligned, always use a shaving oil or clear gel.

Unlike foam, these products will allow you to see exactly what you are and are not shaving.

The moustache has been around as a men's facial hair style for centuries, but it remains a timeless look with a plethora of variations. Young men, between the ages of 18 and 35, generally do not look good with a bushy moustache. A big, bushy moustache will make you look too stern and gruff for your age. Instead, go with a neatly groomed moustache that does not extend any longer than the corners of your mouth. Make sure that you trim your moustache so that the hair does not fall over your upper lip. If you are older, a moustache can help to hide your thinning lips: let the hair fall just slightly over the top of the upper lip to create an illusion that your lip is fuller than it is.

While a bushier moustache is more appropriate for older men than young men, even older gentlemen should avoid too much bushiness. A good rule to follow when trimming a moustache is to follow the natural curve of your top lip - every mouth is different, and you want your moustache to match your face. If you are seeking a more unique style, you may want to give yourself a thinner moustache

or a moustache that flares up over the corners of your lips.

Touchable Hands and Feet

Beauty Tips for Hands

Beautiful hands start with a good diet and healthy living. Because you do a lot of things with your hands, you need to ensure that you have adequate vitamin and mineral intake to keep your fingernails strong to avoid cracking or peeling. Plus, your hands are one of the first body parts to show your true age; so when you pamper them, you are essentially halting the clock on the aging process. With some basic tips on caring for your hands, you can keep them looking beautiful and young.

Gloves can play a big part in preserving your fingernails as well as protecting your hands. Outside contaminants such as dirt, chemicals, water and even the harmful UV rays of the sun contribute to a degradation of the skin and nails unless you protect them. Washing dishes in hot soapy water can dry out your hands. Gardening can also dry out the skin on your hands as well as damage your fingernails. Wearing gardening gloves and dish

gloves can go a long way toward protecting your hands.

Indulging in a hand massage improves color and circulation thus promoting a healthy appearance. When performing a hand massage, using almond oil or some other moisturizer will help keep your hands and nails hydrated, meaning less dry skin. To lessen your chances of age spots and wrinkles to due sun exposure, wear a sunscreen on the tops of your hands. And if your hands are chapped or very dry from washing dishes or extreme cold weather, apply a light coating of shea butter or Vaseline, then wear cotton gloves over it over night. When you wake up in the morning, your hands will feel soft and hydrated.

Another hydrating tip for your hands involves wearing your latex gloves when washing dishes. Before slipping the gloves on, apply a moisturizing lotion on your hands. When you wash dishes, the heat from the water will interact with the lotion on your hands, providing a deep hydrating treatment. By doing this procedure a few times a week, you would have soft hands in no time.

The moisturizing treatments for your hands are also beneficial to your fingernails and cuticles. When your cuticles look ragged or torn, it can make your hands look unattractive. Thanks to these moisturizing treatments, your cuticles would be soft enough that you can use a cuticle tool to gently push them back and keep them clean and even.

Caring for your nails is another major area that will help you achieve great looking hands. The problem with your nails is that there are so many factors that can affect their condition. The vitamins and minerals you consume influence the health of your nails. For instance, if you don't stay adequately hydrated or don't have enough calcium in your body, your nails will develop ridges or split easily. In addition, if you don't take the time to adequately perform a home manicure, your nails will look dingy and unkempt.

When caring for your fingernails, it is important that you clip any torn or ragged fingernails. Use nail scissors or clippers to shape them into a pleasing round contour. Gently file them with an emery board – be sure to file one way only! By filing in a sawing motion, you could end up destroying the tip of your nail or weaken it, leaving it prone to splitting

or tears. Once your fingernails are filed, wash and dry your hands. You can then use a nail buffer to gently buff away any ridges in your nails.

Afterwards, apply a lotion of nail cream to your fingernails. This will keep your nails feeling nourished.

Keep in mind that there are numerous possibilities in your own kitchen pantry to concoct some fabulous hand remedies. Mixing a little honey and cornmeal together makes for a great exfoliating scrub for your hands. It would loosen the dead skin cells that make your hands look dull and wrinkly. Repeated applications of lemon juice on age spots have been believed to make them fade. Soaking your fingers in warm vinegar or buttermilk have been known to not only nourish the nails but also loosen dead skin cells.

The key to keeping your hands looking young is good old healthy living. By eating right, staying hydrated and taking a daily multivitamin, you can make great strides in keeping your hands looking great. The pampering and maintenance, however, is something that you have to institute into your daily routine.

Maintaining Healthy Nails

Your nails play a big role in your day to day life. They protect your finger tips; they help you scratch that itch, and are even a big part of picking up small objects. Why, then, do so many people abuse them to the point where they have to eventually give them the treatment they should have in the first place. In addition, the way you maintain your hands and nails sort of show the public how much attention you pay to your hygiene. Many people even use nails as a way to see into the person, fair or not, they are treated like windows to you.

The first and worst habit you can have when it comes to your nails is biting them. Biting leaves bad edges on your nails, tears them, and leaves them looking uneven and unkempt. Though it is often a nervous habit, if you want to have nice looking nails, then you have to get rid of that habit before you can ever truly have good looking and well manicured nails. Once you have that done, you can start moving on to the other care that is required.

So how do you know if your nails are healthy? Most of the signs are there visually for you. Healthy finger

nails should look smooth and curved. They should also be free of spotting, which can be associated with a fungal problem or dietary deficiencies.

Healthy nails should also be clear of any hollows or ridges in the surface. These hollows and ridges can result from biting as well as other problems. So take a look at your nails and see if they are curved, smooth, and with minimal flaws.

Next, you should always make sure your nails are completely dry before you do any filing on them. When they are moist they are also softer. With that softness, your nails can snag on a file and tear, which is certainly something you want to avoid. Wait until they are completely dry, instead, so that you can file them effectively without damaging them.

When filing or shaping your nail, always be sure that you use a fine emery board. A metal file can damage your nails as well as your fingers, so avoid using them. When you file, be sure to shape your nail into a curve that is similar to the curve of your fingers. That will give them a healthy look as well as a nice feel on your hand. Also, if you stay away from pointed shapes on the end you can prevent breakage and chipping significantly. Remember to keep your nails looking like ovals, not points.

Don't ignore your cuticles. Cuticles are the seal that exists between your finger and its nail. The best thing you can do is to easily and gently remove the dry and rough cuticle skin with some sort of exfoliating process. Getting rid of the dead skin exposes new skin which is more vibrant than the old dead cells you have removed. That new skin protects the matrix of your nail. That where your nail grows from.

Lastly, though it is tempting since they look so nice, don't over-manicure your cuticles. If you over manicure and groom the area. If you do, you could end up being counterproductive. The cuticle could start to thicken and overgrow in the area. Then you are actually causing the very problem you were trying to fix in the first place. So just manicure with care and on occasion.

Your finger nails actually say a lot about you. With proper care and proper attention to detail, you can have perfect looking nails on your fingers. Stop biting them and start caring for them so that you can look your very best. Some people look to your nails to understand how good your hygiene is and yet others do so to understand your personality. Is that

fair? Probably not, but if you keep your nails looking nice, you will make the first impression you want to. Beyond that, you will have functional nails, and look healthier. So take care of your nails and take care of your own image at the same time. You will be glad you did.

Pretty Piggies

Your feet take a lot of punishment every day. If you are a woman, you might wear three inch torture devices known as shoes or wear boots that rub blisters on your heels – all in the name of fashion or so-called beauty. Or you might try and stuff your feet into shoes that are too small for you. Going barefoot has its own drawbacks – you might step on stickers or splinters. You would definitely sub your toes and develop calluses on your heels. Taking care of your feet is a must, especially since they have to support you for the rest of your life! Luckily, there are numerous beauty tips just for feet.

Avoid getting rough – Rough feet can be terribly unattractive. Keep a pumice stone handy in your bathroom. After a bath or shower, you can dry off then use the pumice stone to gently buff off some of the thick calluses on your heels and even around some of your toes. Once you have buffed off a few layers of dead skin, gently rinse your feet and dry them. Apply petroleum jelly or a moisturizing lotion to your feet and promptly put on socks or protective booties. With your freshly clean and buffed feet, the lotion will soak into your skin better. To promote

softer skin and hydrate your feet at the same time, make sure that you sleep with your feet lathered in lotion covered with socks over night. You will not believe how soft your heels and skin feel on your feet!

Relax and rejuvenate – There is nothing more relaxing than a foot massage. Let's face it – your feet are one of the most overworked parts of your body. They hold up your body weight and when you walk or run, that is added abuse to your feet. A massage using essential oils or even a cooling mint lotion can perk up even the most tired of feet.

Soaking your feet is also beneficial. It loosens the muscles and you can soak out your aches and pains. Plus, by soaking your feet, you are softening your skin in preparation for a pedicure and even the use of a pumice stone as mentioned above. A great home pampering product for your feet is a foot bath that has little jets that pulse water and provide your feet with a heated water massage. Adding a little Epsom salt to the water promotes a relaxing experience which improves the circulation in your feet and eases aches and pains.

Pedicures – Because we tend not to look at our feet so much, the cuticles can grow way past the natural nail line. Take advantage of the pliable skin you have after a foot bath or shower. The cuticles around your toenails would be soft at that time and can be trimmed or pushed back easily with the cuticle stick. Since your toenails are usually thicker than fingernails, a foot bath or shower softens them up which is great situation for easier trimming and shaping. With toenails, you have to be careful how you trim them so as not to create a situation for a future ingrown nail. In addition, you want to use an emery board to gently file your toenails. This will ensure that there are no snags on panty hose or socks. Just remember – file in one direction instead of using a sawing motion.

There are several no-nonsense tips that can guide you to better looking feet. For instance, you may love wearing high heels. However, walking in them for any length of time can cause pain in the arch of your foot as well as cut into the circulation and cause pain. Make a compromise. Wear sensible shoes during your commute and change into your snazzy heels right before your event. If you are able to, do little foot and toe exercises to promote circulation, especially if you work in an office where

getting out and taking a walk is not always feasible. Doing little toe crunches is great to release some stress in your feet and eases some pain.

After a few feet pampering sessions, you will notice a change. So if you are in a profession where you are on your feet all day like teachers, wait staff or construction workers just to name a few, some of the tips above can be very beneficial to you. Just remember that you are not doing yourself any favors by not taking care of your feet. They are your main support system!

Paraffin Waxing

Dry, chapped hands ... cracked heels ... rough calluses on the hands and feet ... all of these need a treatment that can moisturize and soften the skin. Luckily, paraffin wax is a viable beauty treatment suited for just these particular purposes. Whether you work outside for a living or use or wash your hands a lot, hands and feet can take quite a beating. Add dry, winterized weather to this scenario and you can be talking about some painful hands and feet that have been exposed to abuse and the weather. A paraffin wax helps restore some moisture to the skin and in return yields a softness that is so touchable.

So what exactly is a paraffin wax treatment? It is almost like it sounds. It is a wax that is melted to a certain temperature. Once melted, you can dip your hand or foot into the wax to coat it. Once you pull your hand or foot out, you'll notice that the paraffin slowly starts to cool off and conform to the contours of that particular body part. It can be likened to a tight-fitting glove on a hand. Once the wax starts to cool off, you can dip your hand or foot in again to form another drying wax layer.

As your hands or feet start to cool off from the wax, you will want to cover them up with special mittens or with a thick, clean towel. This action will trap the heat from the paraffin wax for a longer period of time. And what exactly does this heat from the wax do for your skin and body? The heat eases muscle aches and even helps joint pain from such diseases as arthritis and fibromyalgia. This paraffin waxing event also increases the blood circulation in your body and improves skin tone. In addition, the skin's pores open a little more which allows the moisturizing properties to seep into the skin. The result is softer, pliable skin. It is just a relaxing, healing experience.

Paraffin wax is a derivative of refined crude mineral oil. It has a nice shopping list of properties which make it easy for even the most allergy-ridden person to use it without side effects. It is practically colorless and odorless, although you can add scented oil to the wax as you melt it for a little side benefit of aromatherapy. Paraffin wax is also nontoxic and does not react with other substances.

For several decades, doctors have been prescribing paraffin wax treatments for such conditions as listed

in the above paragraphs. It is also beneficial to the beauty industry for soft, moisturized skin. One of the most popular ways it is used in your beauty treatment is during a spa visit or when you go for a manicure or pedicure. The paraffin wax will relax your hands, warm them and leave them soft and supple. This makes for an easier time when trimming cuticles and it also softens rough calluses and skin on the heels of your feet.

There are two options for receiving a paraffin wax treatment – using a home wax kit or visiting a spa or salon that offers the service. If you go to a spa to have it done, be sure and ask about their clean-up practices and how they follow standard safety issues in regards to the paraffin wax. After one person is complete with a paraffin wax treatment, the leftover wax should be completely destroyed or thrown away. To use paraffin wax over and over again just begs for the growth of bacteria as well as fungus and other microscopic organisms.

There are home kits available in a variety of sizes as well as shapes. You can even pick a favorite aromatherapy scent sometimes to add to the melted wax. Paraffin wax treatments should typically be done at least once a week to achieve and maintain

your soft skin. However, if some people have underlying issues like arthritis, the treatment can be done everyday for maximum comfort. No matter how often you do a paraffin wax treatment, just know that you will experience supple skin after the first application. And within a few treatments, those rough calluses and cracked heels will diminish.

Tips for a Magnificent Mouth

Give Your Chapped Lips Some TLC

Chapped lips are painful because the dry and cracked lips are usually sore or bleeding. Chapped lips are most common in cold, windy and dry weather or when exposed to the outdoors for long periods of times. Sunburns can also cause lips to become chapped and painful. Lips are not able to produce the same types of oils that other parts of our skin do, so the result is that they become dry.

The natural reaction to dry lips is to lick or bite the lips. This does not help, and in fact, can make the situation worse. Severe chapped lips are flaky, bleeding and very uncomfortable. Anyone can suffer from chapped lips, including children. The key to treating chapped lips is to moisturize and treat your lips with a little respect.

The biggest thing you can do to treat and prevent dry, chapped lips is to use moisturizing chapstick. Chapstick is inexpensive and is easy to find at most

retail and drugstores. Look for a chapstick that contains beeswax, phenol and sunscreen for the best results. Remember to have chapstick on hand during the whole year, not just the winter months. Using chapstick on a regular basis will help your lips stay smooth and moist. Other types of products you can use to help chapped lips include Vitamin E and aloe vera products.

There are some types of chapstick that should be avoided. Flavored lip balms and some types of lipstick can often cause a more drying effect. Also, with children, a flavored lip balm might tempt children to lick their lips to taste the flavor. Licking will only cause the lips to become drier.

To prevent chapped lips, make sure you use a good chapstick before going outside each time. Have it in your pocket and ready for use. If you spend a good deal of time outside, especially in the winter months, reapply the chapstick several times while you are outside. This can also help prevent dry, cracked lips. If you find yourself without chapstick and you know you need it, you can rub the side of your nose with your finger and then rub your lips. The oil from your skin will help keep your lips hydrated when you are in a pinch. If you know you will be outside for

long periods of time, either use a chapstick that contains sunscreen or apply sunscreen to your lips. Sunburns will definitely affect your lips.

Another key prevention in chapped lips is to stay hydrated. That means you should drink plenty of water and fluids, especially during the hot months and the winter. When your body is dehydrated, your skin will suffer. As a result, your lips will become dry, as well. Also, you may feel a natural urge to lick your lips when your mouth feels dry and thirsty. This will cause your lips to become dry and parched. Keep a bottle of water handy and take drinks when you feel like you are thirsty or dry.

You can also help keep your lips soft and smooth during the winter months by covering your mouth with a scarf or masks when you go outside. This is especially important for children who will not notice that their lips are becoming dry and cracked. During the winter months, you can also combat dry, chapped lips by using a humidifier at home or at work. You can sleep with a humidifier on at night and it will help keep your lips moisturized.

If you wear dentures, dry lips can be caused by improper fittings. If you suspect this is the reason for

your dry lips, speak to your dentist and have the dentures refitted. The same goes for other dental devices, such as retainers, braces or dental partials. If you have poor fitting dental devices, this can cause you to breath out of your mouth. This will quickly dry out your lips causing dry, cracked lips.

In addition, getting sick is another common reason for getting dry lips. If you are suffering from a cold, be sure to take care of yourself. Use chapstick, stay hydrated and eat well. Fruits and vegetables will help keep your body hydrated and healthy during illnesses. Knowing how to prevent and treat dry, chapped lips will help you look and feel your best.

Paying Lip Service

They are one of the most prominent and noticeable parts of your body, but you may not always pay attention to them the way you should. Your lips, as part of your mouth, draw attention every time you talk, smile, or even when you subconsciously lick them. Since they do spend so much time in the eyes of people you are around, then shouldn't you make sure you are taking proper care of them? Lip care can improve your smile, your charm, and the way people view you, so it really is worth your time.

The problem most people have is that they don't really realize that lips are not the same as the other skin on your body. In fact, your lips are one of the most delicate and fragile parts of your body and should be treated as such. They are not made up of as many layers of skin as the rest of your body is which makes them more susceptible to drying, cracking, and chapping. In addition, they do not have their own oil glands which means without assistance they are more likely to dry out than the rest of your skin. Once you have realized that your lips are different, it is time to start thinking about how you can care for them.

The number one thing you can do to care for your lips is actually good for the rest of you too. You should be hydrating yourself regularly. Drink more water and less alcohol and caffeine. If you live in a dry region, you may even want to invest in a humidifier in your home. In addition, you should be applying Chapstick and other lip balms on a regular basis. All of these things are needed to keep your lips from drying out which is the number one problem you will get since, as mentioned before, they do not produce their own oils like the rest of your skin does.

You should also continue to protect and moisturize your skin as the day goes on, with something other than saliva. This will help to condition your lips and hydrate them to prevent the damage the elements can cause. You should also be aware of what kind of lip gloss or balm you are using. Wax based balms and glosses protect your lips well, but petroleum moisturizing products correct without protecting. So you may even want to look for both.

Another tip to keep your lips looking good and feeling good is to stay away from heat. Stay away from hot showers, hot baths, and the hot sun. Hot

baths and showers damage your lips by triggering dryness and taking moisture from them at the same time. If you are going to be outside during the summer months a lot, then you should use a wax-based lip balm or lip gloss. The SPF should also be at least a 15, but preferably more to protect you from the sun. During the winter, you should also be protecting your lips from the elements that can damage them. The reflected sunlight from the snow can be very hard on your lips, so continue to protect from the sun even in the cold winter months.

Another lip care strategy is to not smoke. Smoking, as you well know, is bad for you anyway, but it is terrible for your lips. It does damage to your entire mouth which includes your lips. In addition, the smoke itself will dry out your lips and kill healthy cells on a regular basis. In addition, it can discolor your lips the same way it does your teeth. Who wants tobacco stained lips, anyway?

You lips are not only some of the most prominent and noticeable parts of your body, but they are also covered in the most sensitive skin you have. Kissing is pleasurable due to that sensitivity, but aside from that it only means that your lips require a lot of care. Stay hydrated since lips do not produce oils, don't

smoke because it can damage your lips, and keep away from heat. All the while, be sure to wear a good lip balm or lip gloss to keep your lips looking good and feeling great.

Teeth Whitening Tips

Perhaps the greatest trend in dental care right now is teeth whitening. There are a number of ways you can get whiter teeth for that brighter smile. At the same time, there are just as many levels of cost associated with those methods as well as levels of risk that are connected with certain ways of teeth whitening. With varying cost levels, risk factors, and a certain amount of mystery in long-term teeth whitening effects, it makes sense to explore some of the natural methods of whitening your teeth. You don't have to resort to chemicals if you don't want to, there are other ways.

As you stroll down the dental care aisle at your local drug store or mega-mart, you will see that there are rows and rows of teeth whitening products. You will see mouth washes, gums, toothpastes, and even film treatments that you stick on your teeth for hours at a time. These are all quick fixes. If you want to use the natural methods of teeth whitening, though, you will need to be patient. Most of the natural teeth whitening techniques may be more natural, but results will be slow to show. If you are diligent in your use, though, and patient in waiting, you will find

that these methods are the healthiest and best way to whiten your teeth.

Back in the dental care aisle, you will notice that there are a number of varying types of tooth whitening toothpastes. This is a good place to start your search for natural teeth whitening. The toothpastes, as opposed to whitening treatments, generally do use natural whiteners. They are rarely chemically based, but it is best to check out the ingredients label first to make sure. Usually the label will even let you know what the “active” ingredients are. That should make it a little easier for you to tell what the whiteners in it are. If you are unsure about what you are looking for or looking at, then do more research. In most cases, you will see bamboo powder, calcium carbonate, or silica as the whitener in your toothpaste. If it is not one of those, it is probably not natural.

As you check ingredients, there are things you should look for and others that you should look to avoid. A rule of thumb is to avoid all abrasives. Abrasives are often used to remove stains from the teeth, but they may also remove enamel. Enamel is the outside coating on your teeth and what makes them durable, so it is counterproductive to whiten

your teeth with something that damages the enamel. What you should be looking for is silica. Silica is a cleaner and whitener of teeth that removes stains. It is able to remove stains without damaging enamel because it is not a harsh abrasive.

In addition to seeking out these natural teeth whiteners, there is something else you can do. You can drink a lot of water. Not only does drinking water keep your body hydrated, but it also steers you clear of other drinks that can stain your teeth. Coffee, tea, and dark colas are notorious for darkening teeth. Having one occasionally will not result in long-term staining, but drinking them often can cause a lot of staining problems in your mouth. Another thing you can do is stop smoking. Cigarette and Cigar smoking are not only bad for you, but they also stain teeth severely over time. Whitening teeth is not just about promotion whiteness, but also about preventing excess staining in the first place.

Maybe it's vanity or maybe it's just a desire to have healthier teeth, but either way, teeth whitening has become big business. There are mouth washes, treatments, creams, gels, tapes, toothpastes, and even gums that claim to increase the whiteness of

your teeth and remove stains. How do you sort it all out, though? If you want to avoid harsh chemicals and abrasives, it is best to make your way to the natural tooth whiteners. Usually found in toothpaste, you should consult the active ingredient list to locate the right one for you to use. In addition, you should be looking to prevention of future discoloration and staining by drinking plenty of water and avoiding those habits that can stain your teeth.

A Day at the Spa

Pamper Yourself with a Spa Visit

Why visit a spa? There are a number of reasons people do just that. They seek to look better with facials and body wraps. Some may go to relieve stress, and yet there are others who go to lose weight. In the end, though, they all fall into one category that you can relate to. They go to the spa to pamper themselves. From time to time, you just have to take care of you. At a spa, everything is about you: making you feel good, making you look good, and letting you get away from the world for a while are what spas are all about. Consider some of the wonderful ways you can get pampered at a spa.

First of all, there is the massage. Whether you choose a Swedish, deep tissue, sports, or other type of massage, it is not just a way of improving your health. Sure, a nice massage will relieve stress, help make your ligaments to stay flexible, rid you of toxins in your muscles, and do a number of other rejuvenating things to you. However, what about the pampering? During a massage you are

made to feel like royalty. Your muscles will melt away with the stress as you either close your eyes and relax or chat with the massage therapist to get rid of those mental toxins while the physical ones leave your body. Pampering is a side benefit that just cannot be ignored when it comes to massage.

Another spa service is the facial. A facial cleanses the skin on your face deeply. It rids you of dead skin cells and maintains smooth and clear skin that is well hydrated and tight. After massages, they are the most popular spa treatments. How is washing your face pampering, though? When your face looks younger and feels smoother you almost immediately feel better about yourself. You will feel rejuvenated to a degree you didn't know was possible from a simple treatment of your face. However, that cleansing of your skin will also help with a symbolic cleansing of your mind that will relax and energize you completely. Some are even accompanied by facial massages which only help to enhance the feeling of being pampered.

Another spa treatment that will help you look better while helping you feel pampered and more energetic is a spa manicure or pedicure. As opposed to a manicure or pedicure at your local nail

salon, at a spa you will get the whole atmosphere that will have you feeling like royalty. You will get the luxurious atmosphere of the spa as well as higher paid nail technicians who are very skilled. They will likely be able to help you choose the right color for you nails, professionally apply polish without bubbles or chips, and will be kind and friendly through the entire experience. You will come away feeling cleaner, healthier, and yes, more pampered than you do with a normal corner shop pedicure or manicure.

Depending on the spa you attend, you can also try a body wrap. A body wrap is a process by which you are wrapped in herbs and minerals and possible oils with fragrances. The process uses those minerals and oils to pull toxic fluids from your body and absorb them. The wrap will then squeeze your body so that the gaps left in your tissues will be pushed back together. Depending on the body wrap you choose, you can even lose weight in the process. Body wraps, in addition to making you healthier and making you feel better will give you a pampered sense of well being. A body wrap is just the thing if you are feeling down and are awaiting your turn on the massage table.

The best way to truly get the full spa experience is to enjoy the trip. You should arrive early so that you will be able to take your time and enjoy whatever treatment you have chosen. If you go into the experience relaxed, it just adds to the feeling of being pampered by the spa and by you since you got yourself there and took the time. By feeling healthier and looking better, you can bring a pampered feeling to you which will in turn reduce stress. Before you know it you will be energized and ready for work, for family, or for that night out with friends and all because you took the time to pamper yourself at the spa.

Having Fun with Spa Facials

With all of the stress in life and in jobs in today's world, spa treatments are gaining more and more importance. The benefits are now known to go well beyond the beauty processes they are built on. They help you to reduce stress; smooth muscles out and even relax your mind and body. Spas are a way to escape the world if only for a little while.

There are a number of services available from spas and each holds a certain amount of benefit for you if you choose to make use of them. From the fun of a facial to the melting of stress from a massage, you will find something to help you at your local spa. How do you know what to ask for, though? Take a look at this guide that can help you to understand what is offered and what it can do for you.

First of all are fun facials. A facial can help you look better and help you feel better all while you lay back and relax. It cleans your skin by helping to get rid of dead skin cells. A facial will help to hydrate your skin while smoothing your face at the same time. You could get a deep-cleansing facial that will feature a botanical peel and essential oils which is

targeted to your skin type. Another type is the oxygenating facial. For revitalizing dull looking skin, it usually contains a series of vitamins that will brighten your look. DNA facial will help restore the collagen in your skin, which is what helps get rid of wrinkles. DNA facials are great for those fighting hard against the effects of aging.

Similar to a facial, but for your entire body is a body treatment. They help to hydrate your skin, rid it of dirt, and open your pores up for a healthier look all over. There are some different kinds of body treatments. The body scrub is a massage where your skin is rubbed with salt, oil, and natural aromatics. After the dirt is off your body from this treatment you will find that your skin is soft and smooth. After a body scrub, a body mask often is done and it helps to hold in moisture. A body wrap is the wrapping of your body in herbs or aromatics so that your skin will not only be soft but smell great as well.

What good is a trip to the spa without a massage? Though you may be familiar with massage as a general term, you may not know about all the types. There are an almost infinite number of different

massages, but there are a few that are more popular that may interest you.

First is the Swedish massage. In a Swedish massage a wide variety of techniques are used to relax your muscles through pressure and rubbing them against your bones. The reason most people pursue this type of massage is that helps to increase oxygen flow in your blood and also helps to rid the muscles of toxins.

Another kind is the deep tissue massage. A deep tissue massage is performed on the deeper layers of your muscles. It is designed to release tension in the body by applying pressure on different areas. It is used to release muscle tension slower strokes of the hands and by creating friction across the grain of your individual muscles.

Then there is the famous sports massage. With a sports massage, you are getting a treatment designed for sports people and is sometimes done both before and after a sporting event. It helps to draw out exhaustion, take down swelling, and reduce the tension build up in muscles that can accompany the activity. The overall goal of a sports

massage to reduce stress and tension that builds up when competing on a physical level.

Spa visits are helpful in many ways. They can reduce stress, they can benefit your overall health, and they can be a way to get away from life for a little while as well. On top of all that, you can even look better after a trip to the spa. If you have never been, then this guide can help you know what to ask for and how to enjoy your trip to the fullest. Visit your spa soon; it's a healthy thing to do.

Rejuvenating Effects of a Body Wrap

Body wraps are becoming increasingly popular. They are relaxing and healthy, as well as trendy. They help tone your skin and tighten it as well. They can also rid your body of toxins and improve your blood circulation as well. All of this can even help fat to mobilize and get out of your body as well. You can even perform one at home, and why not since aside from all of the other effects, you can even lose weight. As you lose fat, gain tightness and health in your skin, and lose your toxins you will feel rejuvenated in ways you didn't know were possible.

A body wrap takes place in two stages actually. They absorb and the squeeze. In the first part, the absorption, a substance is applied to the body by wraps. This is to help open the pores of your skin so that fluids can be extracted and, yes, absorbed. Absorbents that may be used include sea clay, herbs, minerals, aloe, and even seaweed. Each is designed to help your body feel rejuvenated in its own way.

The second part of a body wrap is the squeezing. This is the compacting of your tissues together after

the fluids are extracted. When you extract those toxic fluids, there are empty gaps between your cells. The squeezing is for closing those gaps up so that you have a thinner and leaner look to you, which will leave you feeling healthy and revitalized to degrees you didn't know were possible.

Overall the body wrap will have you feeling healthier. They have been known to relieve pain due to injury and stress from work or from life in general. It detoxifies your body which can certainly leave you feeling rejuvenated and happy. It is well known by psychologist and behaviorists that when people feel better and healthier they reflect that in their look. You will have a glow about you that makes you seem like a new and happy person, which in turn then leaves you feeling a certain level of rejuvenation on your own.

If you are truly interested in weight loss from a body wrap, you should investigate the rejuvenating effects of an herbal body wrap. This particular kind uses a balanced combination of herbs and minerals. Those ingredients draw not only toxins out of your body, but also aid your body in the breakdown of fat while also tightening your skin. You will likely be wrapped tightly in soft towels that are soaked in

herbal and mineral formulas. In addition to the benefit of losing inches and looking firmer, herbal body wraps have other rejuvenating effects.

For instance they can help with certain injuries. Many people have noticed that an herbal body wrap can be used to help sprains, strains, skin conditions, and arthritis. These things feel better after many toxins have been released from your body so that it not only makes you thinner, it also makes you just feel better and rejuvenated all over.

Body wraps have actually been in the United States since 1961. They were first made popular, though, when in the 1970's they were shown on a popular daytime talk show. A live demonstration showed immediately fat loss on the host and the public's imagination was captured. Since that day, the media has covered body wraps, and specifically herbal wraps, extensively. They have become popular all over the world and as a part of spa treatments everywhere.

Body wraps are a must for any visit to the spa. When you make that trip you seek only to feel more relaxed and rejuvenated in addition to looking better, right? Well a body wrap does that all at once.

The absorbing rids your body of toxins and excess chemicals, and the squeezing closes in those gaps so that your body looks the way it is actually built. In addition to the weight loss and detoxification, though, the herbs and minerals will have you feeling a euphoria that rejuvenates your attitude to no end. Before you know it, you will be walking on clouds as you head back to the office. Being refreshed in this way will make you a better worker, better family member, and probably a more fun friend than you ever thought you could be. Experience a body wrap and you will be hooked on the rejuvenation you feel.

What You Wear

Clothing Hints to Slimmer-Looking You

Everyone wants to look slim but do you know how to dress to look the slimmest you can be? Whether you are bottom-heavy, top-heavy or want to look both taller and slimmer read on for some clothing hints to help you look your fashionable best!

If you feel you are bottom-heavy than your hips are wider than your shoulders and you have what is known as a pear-shaped body with rounded thighs. Look for tops that are fitted but not really tight but avoid extremely loose tops or blouses. Open collar tops, turtlenecks and V-necks are all good choices and look for blazers that fall just below the waist. Straight or boot cut leg pants and/or jeans are best for you but stick with dark colors for your bottoms such as black, brown, navy blue or dark grey.

A-line skirts that fall to your knees are good for your women with bottom-heavy figures but don't wear ones that are skintight and steer clear of mini skirts. Dresses that are nipped in at the waistline but have

a slight flare are flattering for bottom-heavy women who also look good in empire style dresses.

Strapless and sleeveless dresses call attention to the neck area, arms and shoulders and would be a style you might want to consider.

Top-heavy women have what is known as an apple-shaped body. This is considered a very womanly figure with full breasts, a soft middle, narrow hips and sleek, slim legs. Too light and too baggy tops are a no-no for top-heavy women who should go for boat neck, mock neck, turtleneck, V-neck and shirt collars that graze the body gently. As far as material goes, woven knits with stretch provide the best fit. Showing the hint of cleavage is appealing but don't overdo it. What looks really sexy is a camisole trimmed in lace worn under a top, jacket or blazer. Full or puffy sleeves should be avoided at all costs.

Flat-front, low-rise pants are ideal for top-heavy figures, as are front-pocket jeans for those who don't like their stomachs very much. Back pockets on jeans accentuate a flatter derriere. A-line skirts will bring the waist into focus while above the knee skirts are flattering for women with nice looking legs who want to show them off. Top-heavy women look

better wearing two-piece outfits (such as a top and skirt) but there are dresses that can look equally as attractive for this type of figure. Suggestions to keep in mind include soft princess seamed dresses, sleeveless sheaths (black is an excellent color choice) and strapless dresses with corseted tops.

Black is a very slimming color for every figure type as is navy blue. However if looking not only slimmer but taller is your goal then go for outfits that are monochromatic (in other words all one color) but throw in some contrast or a flash of color in the form of an overshirt, cardigan or blazer. To improve the vertical lines of the outfit, don't button up the cardigan or blazer. Always wear skirts that are longer as opposed to wider and match the color of your pantyhose or stockings to your skirt or pants and make sure your shoe color matches as well. Striped tops or blouses should have vertical as opposed to horizontal stripes as horizontal stripes make a person look "wider" whereas vertical stripes create an optical illusion by both slenderizing and lengthening the torso. V-neck tops are an excellent choice if appearing taller and slimmer is your goal and choosing shoes that boast a heel is the best bet (the higher the heel the better, but don't go overboard and choose "neck-breaking high!"). Other

tips for looking taller and slimmer include wearing scarves and tying them loosely so as to have long and vertical dangling ends; wearing long necklaces and/or pendants but avoiding chokers or any necklace that is short or very tight around the neck and steering clear of big belts which can be overwhelming both to the observer (and sometimes uncomfortable to the wearer, ouch!).

Another suggestion for how to look slimmer includes wearing a black dress under a bright colored blazer (such as red or fuchsia) to hide a big tummy or a bottom that is too large for your liking. The vibrancy of the blazer will call attention to the top half of your body instead of the bottom half.

What's a Bra to Do?

The word brassiere (which is often abbreviated to bra) comes from the French language and the old French word “braciere” which means, “arm protector.” In French a bra is an “arm” of a military uniform. As time went by the word came to be associated with a military breastplate and much later on, a corset designed for, and worn by, women. In the modern world of European French the word “soutien-gorge” means breast support and that is what a bra is referred to as. The specific use of the word “brassiere” by the French makes reference to a vest worn by infants while at times it is used in talking about a “bra-top” that does not contain any formed cups. In Quebec, Canada the words brassiere and soutien-gorge mean the exact same thing.

Women need to wear bras, as the breasts, being made of mostly adipose tissue, need support so they won't sag over time. It is the Cooper's ligaments in the breasts that hold up the tissues and support their shape as well as the skin that protects them from outside injuries. The breasts therefore need as much outside support as possible and bras

provide this and not only this, but bras prevent the breasts from bouncing or moving all over the place at inopportune times. Bras also provide a certain level of comfort to the wearer and they can improve or call attention to a woman's attractive figure.

There is no conclusive proof that wearing a bra allows the breasts to retain their girlish shape however the opinions in the community of medical professionals are mixed. Some believe bras make a big difference as one ages and others do not. Some researchers looking into this subject believe that the movement of the breasts is healthy as it encourages the lymphatic system to do its job of eliminating toxins from the body at a faster pace but this claim has not been substantiated yet.

The concept of bras dates back to early Greece, around 6,500 years ago. On the island of Crete over 4,500 years ago Minoan women wore an early version of the bra. In the United States in 1913 it was a woman by the name of Mary Phelps Jacob who received the first patent for what is considered to be the modern bra. She eventually sold her patent to the Warner Brothers Corset Company.

The size of a bra is broken down into the “band size” and the “cup size.” The band size is identified by a specific number that describes the circumference around the body but does not include the breasts, while the cup size is assigned a letter which is connected to the volume of the breasts. Bras usually come in cup sizes A-DD with different manufacturers using slightly different sizing charts for cup sizes.

The size of bra cups can vary with the band size of the bra. For example, a 34B cup is smaller than the cup of a 38B. The band size of a bra is calculated by measuring a woman’s circumference underneath her breasts keeping in mind that a certain amount has to be added because the ribcage in most women usually is wider at the height of the breasts than at their actual body height. Another way of deciding upon band size is to take a measurement under a woman’s arms and across the top of the fullest part of her breasts. According to a number of bra manufacturers, in determining a woman’s cup size, generally a difference of one inch (or 25 mm) needs an A cup; two inches (or 50mm) a B cup, etc.

Bras offer a plethora of styles and come in a variety of materials and colors. Some bras are very

practical in nature whereas others are more geared towards making one's chest more appealing. There are full support bras which offer the most support for the breasts; shelf bras which are meant to be sexually enticing; training bras for young girls who are just starting to develop, and maternity (or nursing) bras which are designed for new mothers who are breastfeeding. There is the pushup bra which lifts the breasts and makes cleavage very obvious; minimizer bras for large chested women; strapless bras which are designed for strapless fashions and convertible bras which have straps that can be removed and/or changed for a new look (such as crisscrossed in the back). T-shirt bras have no raised seams; sports bras are meant to wear during exercise and mastectomy bras are intended for women who have lost either one or both of their breasts to breast cancer. Finally, underwire bras have a wire for support that runs from the side of the bra and under each breast.

Bonus Beauty Tips

Homemade Solutions

Home health remedies have been around since the beginning of humanity. In the early days, in fact, that is all there was. As your society as wandered into the age of convenience and service, though, the home remedy has gone by the way side in many instances. The one place where you can still find effective and affordable home remedies that work is with the beauty industry. There are a number of beauty treatments you can perform at home and beauty problems you can solve. Take a look at some of the most effective and popular and save yourself an extra trip to the drug or beauty store.

If for instance, you wake up in the morning with a pimple, there are things you can do. One suggestion is the application of Visine drops. They do not actually get rid of the zit but they will reduce the redness considerably. After that, you can apply ice wrapped in a paper towel to the area so that swelling will be reduced. Then, simply apply makeup to the area and it will virtually disappear.

There are other zit solutions as well. Tea tree, lavender oil, and toothpaste will help to reduce, but not cure, the pimple. Apply them throughout the day, but not all of them. Choose the one that works best for you.

What if you wake up with puffy eyes? The solution can be found either in your kitchen or in the medicine cabinet believe it or not. Go to your refrigerator and slice up a cucumber. Place the cool slices on your eyes and relax for a few minutes until the puffiness subsides. You can also cool down tea bags for the same treatment, however; do not use ice since the skin around your eyes is too sensitive for such a harsh treatment. Another method is one used by models. Take hemorrhoid cream and rub it around the area. It is a bit of a put off for some people, but it is very effective.

If your face is looking tired or the skin looks a little unhealthy you can always put together a home made facial mask. The process is not hard and can be very effective. There are a number of types. You can use a simple puree. For instance you can puree cucumber and yogurt together and apply it to reduce swelling and promote hydration. You could even put together an essential oil facial mask by

using things like lavender, sandalwood, or chamomile. These essential oils not only promote health in your skin, but will also have it feeling smooth and smelling wonderful.

Did you realize you can even treat dandruff at home? It starts with the fact that mild dandruff is not a result of dry scalp, but rather too much oil in the skin of the head. You can start working on your dandruff problem by drinking plenty of water and keeping yourself hydrated. You should also eat a lot of vegetable and rejuvenating fruits. You can control it through homemade remedies such as this one: Mix together 2 teaspoons of vinegar in 6 teaspoons of water. Apply the mixture to your scalp immediately before you go to bed for the night. You will need to tie a towel on your head to prevent a mess on your sheet, but remove it and wash your hair immediately in the morning. After you shampoo, rinse your hair with the vinegar mixture one more time. You can do this treatment once a week for great results. There are a number of other home treatments that work just as well. Lemon juice, vinegar, and even almond oil can help with dandruff.

Home remedies do not have to be a thing of the past. You can use the things you have around your

house right now to cure some of your most nagging beauty problems. Besides the above, there are a number of other recipes and cures out there so that you can have home body wraps, skin care creams, and even mouth washes. You will find that often times these home remedies not only work better than what is at the store, but that they also will keep you from getting build up and chemical reactions from those harsh products in the store. So get back to your roots and see what you can do with a home remedy for beauty products.

Bleach Products in a Beauty Regiment

Bleach is not just for laundry anymore. You will find that in a beauty regiment, bleach or the process of bleaching are very common place. Whether it is bleaching your hair for a certain look, bleaching your facial hair to make it less noticeable or bleaching your nails, you will see that bleach has found a place firmly in the consciousness of the beauty industry. How is it used and how can you make it a part of your beauty regiment? There are a number of ways that can be very effective if done properly.

One of the most popular uses for bleaching is to lighten facial hair. Bleaching this way actually has chemicals that fuse into the skin and lighten your facial hair. This is particularly valuable if you have a tendency to grow dark facial hair. It should not be confused with removal of hair; it only makes the hair less noticeable. There are essentially three types of bleach and none are great on your skin, but vary in their degree of damaging effects.

For the purposes of this information, you should think about the least harmful version of hair bleach

for the face. It is easy to make as well. You simply mix together two tablespoons of powdered milk, hydrogen peroxide until you get a paste, and if your hair is dark then perhaps a drop of ammonia. The mild in the mixture actually moisturizes your skin to prevent burns from the peroxide. Note that there is not liquid bleach in this. Do not use liquid laundry bleaches on your face; it is a harmful chemical. In beauty, bleach products refers to those that lighten or whiten. There are also store bought bleaches you can use on your face, but read the instructions carefully to prevent burns or irritation of your skin. Moisturize well immediately after.

Another beauty use for bleaching products is in removing stains from your nails. Whether it is yellowing with time because of diet or leftovers from polish, a bleach of some sort may be your answer. One recommended way of bleaching your nails is through the use of lemon. When you wear a lot of dark polish or smoke, your nails can yellow and lemon will help get rid of that. Slice a fresh lemon in half and stick each finger in it for a few minutes. The acids in the lemon will not only whiten, but also soften your nails to prevent chipping. Once you have removed your fingers, rinse them and make sure to apply a good moisturizer. Again, there are

also some store bought products that may work for you as well, but be aware of what you are getting with these as they may damage skin and nails over the long haul.

The other use for bleaching products in beauty is to bleach out hair. This can be hard on the scalp, so no matter what method you use, be aware of the dangers to your scalp of the integrity of your hair. You can either use peroxide or a kit to bleach your hair. Either way will work, but you should be aware that the keratin in hair is actually yellowish. So when you bleach hair too much, it may come out looking yellow. In addition, individuals differ in their chemical make up so they will likely react differently to bleach. Your hair may come out reddish, yellowish, or some other color depending on how your chemical makeup is. Other than that, just always follow the directions on the box or kit that you buy and take all precautions. The bleaches that are used in hair bleach are very harsh, so you should also care for your hair much more after you have bleached it to help it recover from the damage that occurs naturally during the bleaching process.

Beauty products come in all forms. However, bleaching products have become a big deal in the

beauty industry and should be taken note of.

Whether it is for your nails, facial hair, or the hair on your head, bleaching products should be used with care. They are harsh and should be respected.

Always follow directions carefully on boxes and read all warnings. If you keep that in mind, your facial hair will be less noticeable, your nails cleaner, and your hair lighter in no time.

Cottage Cheese Thighs

No woman enjoys the look of cottage cheese thighs. Blame it on one word- cellulite. Research has determined that a whopping 95 percent of women will develop cellulite on their bodies at some point in their lives. Cellulite is fat, pure and simple. It appears on the thighs as a result of the combination of fluid retention and fatty tissue and it is predominantly a female problem. Women have this problem more often than men due to the fact that adipose tissue (also the tissue that makes up the breasts) is very different in females than in males. As a woman puts on weight (regardless of whether it is a little or a lot) her fat cells begin to swell but the connective tissue remains as is.

Women of any age can get cellulite although it is more common as one ages and it is not directly connected to one's weight (contrary to popular belief). However women who gain and lose weight on a more or less regular basis have a tendency to acquire it more quickly. The fat cells in the lower half of a woman's body have been shown to store fat six times quicker than that on the upper torso but also to let them go six times less quickly. That is

why losing weight on the abdomen brings changes to the upper half of the body as well.

So are there ways to make the dreaded dimpling appearance of cottage cheese thighs less obvious? Certainly there is but your first defense should always be to repair the areas where cellulite has taken up residence already. You can do this by learning how to strengthen and hydrate both the cells of the body and its connective tissue.

Cellulite is defined as, “fat that has pushed through cell walls into the middle layer of skin and shows through the surface.” Circulation (or lack thereof) has a great deal to do with cellulite. In order to help reduce the appearance of cellulite you need to increase circulation to the area in question as cellulite is made up of lymph fluid and toxins that are trapped in the skin’s connective tissue. When it is just beginning to develop, wage war against dreaded cellulite by exercising on a regular basis (cardiovascular is best, such as walking or running, followed up by lifting weights) and by eating a healthy and sensible diet that includes plenty of vegetables (especially leafy green ones) and an abundance of fruit.

Remember to hydrate, hydrate and then hydrate the body some more. Drink lots of water and quit smoking as smoking is bad for you on so many fronts but in the case of cellulite development, smoking restricts the flow of blood (sluggish circulation equals cellulite development). Keep that equation in mind at all times! Avoid any alcoholic beverages, coffee, tea, diet soda, junk food, processed food and saturated fats (such as butter or margarine and any animal fats).

You might want to put yourself on a two-week detox plan that is made up of meals that include one serving of protein (for example lean beef, skinless chicken or grilled fish) and lots of fresh vegetables. Another excellent cellulite fighter is to incorporate dry skin brushing into your morning routine before your shower every morning. This process exfoliates the dermis layer of skin and removes dead skin cells; it boosts circulation to the skin; stimulates the flow of lymph; makes it possible for toxins to be released through the skin and it assists the growth of new skin cells. Doing this daily is strongly encouraged. Always begin at the feet and work up. Use a firm but not harsh, hand.

Two other suggestions are to end your shower every day with a cool or if you can handle it, cold rinse (a slow turn in the shower should do the trick) to both constrict the flow of blood and improve skin tone and secondly, to take a glucosamine supplement on a daily basis which aids the body in repairing damage to the dermis layer as well as the skin's connective tissue.

Cellulite creams and lotions can provide some help to make the appearance of cottage cheese become less noticeable although they are not miracle workers- in other words cellulite creams cannot permanently improve the condition of the skin. If you choose to try a cellulite cream choose one that contains alpha hydroxy acids because these acids reduce the unsightly appearance of cellulite by improving upon the level of elasticity in the skin and strengthening the connective tissue.

Special Tips Just for Men

Grooming Tips for her Guy

Most men are notorious for spending as little time as possible on their looks. For most guys, it is a quick shower and a shave before they hit the door. Men are not like women and are not interested in spending a lot of time grooming themselves in the mirror. However, there are certain grooming tips that women want their men to know.

Grooming is important. Not only will it make you look better, but also proper grooming will make you feel better about yourself. Plus, you should listen when your wife or girlfriend tells you that your eyebrows look a little shabby. Women spend a lot of time grooming themselves and they know what they are talking about when it comes to looks. You do not have to spend an extra hour in the bathroom every morning, but a few extra minutes will help you look and feel your best. Here are a few tips that the woman in your life wants you to know about.

Dry skin and lips: There is nothing worse than holding hands or kissing lips that are dry and flaky. This can be a problem in the winter months or for men who work with their hands a lot. You do not have to go around work apply lip moisturizer all day, but with a little chap stick in the morning and right before bed, your lips will stay moist and kissable. The same goes for dry skin. Have you looked at your elbows lately? Take a few minutes right after you get out of the shower and apply a good lotion to your hands, elbows and feet. There are many brands of lotion that does not smell like flowers and that works well. Also, use a little after-shave lotion after shaving for a smooth face. Avoid products with an alcohol base because it only exacerbates dry skin.

Nails: Do you bite your nails down to the quick instead of clipping? Rough edges on fingernails are turn-offs. Also, do not go out the door without taking a quick look UNDER the nails. Dirt and grime are huge no-no's when it comes to impressing the women. Buy a good quality nail kit that comes with clippers, a file and scissors. Keep your nails nice and neat by trimming and filing on a regular basis. Keep your nails clean by washing your hands with soap and water several times a day.

Bad breath: Nothing is worse than kissing a guy who has breath like King Kong. In order to combat bad breath, brush your teeth regularly. This includes flossing and brushing your tongue. Germs can build up in those places and cause chronic bad breath. If you do not have the chance to brush after each meal, try using breath fresheners or sugar free gum between meals. Also, remember that drinking alcohol can cause smelly breath. Brush your teeth before making a move.

Facial Hair: Women all have differing opinions when it comes to guys and facial hair. For some, any facial hair at all is a turn off and for others, the more facial hair the better. Before you decide to shave off that moustache or grow a goatee, check with your special someone and find out what she prefers. If you do have a beard or moustache, keep it neat and clean. Trim it on a regular basis, too. Facial hair also includes the “unibrow” or “monobrow”. If your girl tells you that you have a “unibrow” she is telling you look like Bert from Sesame Street. You need to take some time and learn how to trim your brows and how to tweeze unwanted hair from the middle. If you have never tweezed hair before, it may take a few times to get the hang of it. You might

experience a little pain and redness at first, but it will not bother you after you have done it a few times. Many men also visit a salon and have unwanted facial hair waxed. This is a good option if you do not want to try tweezing at home.

Nose and Ear Hair: Don't ignore your ears and nose. Hair grows from these areas, too. Invest in a good battery operated nose and hair trimmer and use it every couple of days. You will appreciate the cleaner look, and so will your lady.

The Metrosexual Male Defined

Metrosexuals, according to the New York Times, "are straight urban men who are willing, even eager, to embrace their feminine sides." They love to shop with their gal pals. They wear designer jeans, fashionable tops and have long conversations about thread counts. Some even wear makeup and nail polish. They sport the latest in fashion trends, and caring for and pampering their bodies ranks high on the list of priorities. Being a metrosexual means being sensitive, intuitive, and fashion conscious. Tell-tale signs include buying and using skin-care creams and fragrances. A metro's bathroom medicine cabinet is not complete unless it contains: bath oil, liquids and additives, conditioners, hair gel, mouse, spray, firming cream, and self-tanning lotions.

The typical metrosexual is a young man with money to spend, living in or within easy reach of a metropolis -- because that's where all the best shops, clubs, gyms and hairdressers are. He might be officially gay, straight or bisexual, but this is utterly immaterial because he has clearly taken himself as his own love object and pleasure as his

sexual preference. Particular professions, such as modeling, waiting tables, media, pop music and, nowadays, sport, seem to attract them but, truth be told, like male vanity products and herpes, they're pretty much everywhere. A man concerned with self-image, self-indulgence and money. (Usually urban, heterosexual, probably affluent). A man who is seen, sociologically, as having attributes common to homosexuals, but is in fact heterosexual.

Beyond, soap and shampoo in the shower, these guys are into a full range of cleansing products, shaving essentials, and moisturizers. Medicine cabinets are full of facial foams, scrubs, shaving foams and gels, balms, and creams, to name just a few. Be careful though if they start adding the word "product" to their vocabulary!

Jack Black is a skincare label dating back to the Civil War when soldiers were provided with shaving and grooming kits. Today, their products are packaged like motor-oil cans and sport a woman jacking up her car on the front label. Metrosexuals love to have facials foams rich in Vitamin E that remove dirt and excess oil for cleaner, naturally refreshed skin. Soap-free face washes, high in Provitamin B5, rank high on their list of essentials.

Facial scrubs purify, smoothen, and rejuvenate skin with micro particles and vitamins that also remove dirt and blackheads. Not any ordinary shave gel will do for a metrosexual. Balms are all the rage for the after-shaving experience. These products condition skin after shaving without leaving a greasy residue. Vitamin E and B5 also provide moisture and enhance skin's natural defenses.

Metros will also have non-leg body hair removed, making it gender-appropriate now to have a “back, crack, and sack” waxing. Facials, manicures, pedicures, and massages are now socially acceptable for metrosexuals. These men dress to impress and appreciate the arts. A day at the theater or museum is not a torturous affair for a metrosexual. Metros will enjoy these events as much as the ladies. Metros are artsy-fartsy types, to an extreme. These guys live close to shops, gyms, and clubs so their aesthetic needs can be catered to.

A metro man always takes too long to get ready and can't be pried away from the mirror. He occupies a large amount of closet space and owns more shoes than his gal pal. His hair care ritual involves multiple hair products and much primping. You will find a

metro getting a manicure/pedicure every two weeks as suggested by professionals. You have found a lifelong shopping partner as metros love boutique shopping. Metros are very particular about their clothing care. Only dry cleaning or handwashing and line-drying will do. A metro man will pick out and buy new shoes for his partner. He also loves shopping and will help you put together outfits. He loves his mom, works out, cooks well, loves shopping, has fashion sense, and keeps his nose-hairs trimmed. You can't beat that!

The workplace itself has changed for many men, too. As the proportion of white-collar workers grows, so does the need to look good. To compete in today's work environment, you must dress well, have your haircut neatly and take care of your body. This is exactly what metrosexuals are good at and known for!

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