

YOUR HEALING KNEADS

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Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Healthy Aging and Your Skin

Trends and Treatments for Baby Boomers

With more than 70 million baby boomers in the United States poised to join the ranks of those aged 65 and older in coming years, this generation has embraced a new twist on aging gracefully. These individuals don't think of themselves as old, and in many respects, they are not, at least not in the same sense their parents were after they passed the 65-year mark.

A State of Mind

In addition to wanting to remain vital and active, boomers are increasingly expressing a desire to look as young as they feel. Many boomers are turning to minimally invasive procedures to avoid the downtime and drastic changes in

One of the first indicators of overall health and how gracefully someone is aging is the condition of someone's skin. Take the backs of the hands, for example. The increasingly noticeable and enlarging veins and so-called age spots are some of the first telltale signs of aging.

Vitality at Any Age

John Roseby, executive spa director at the famous Arizona-based spa, Canyon Ranch, says skin care, massage, and bodywork are part of their wellness philosophy.

"Health and vitality at any age is one of our core messages and one we believe in

*Tomorrow
belongs to
those who can
hear it coming.*

-David Bowie



Feeling fit and healthy--no matter what your age--contributes to a quality life.

appearance associated with plastic surgery. Almost miraculously, it's possible to look much younger than one's years, since modern health care is helping ward off life-shortening disease at a tremendous rate. The result is a growing population expected to live longer than any generation before and to look better doing it.

passionately," he says. "Regular skin care programs allow vibrant health to shine from deep within."

Anne Williams, esthetician and director of education at Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals, agrees and says a spa is an excellent place to treat the

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entire body. "Massage improves the appearance and condition of skin, and tones muscle tissue, thanks to improved local circulation."

With age and inactivity, circulation slows and skin becomes pale and cold. "Massage has a stimulating cellular function in the hypodermis, dermis, and epidermis," says Sharon Puszko, director of Day-Break Geriatric Massage Institute. "Touch nurtures, relaxes, and heals, as well as stimulates and activates."

Ultimately, Williams says, one of the greatest benefits of any type of skin care and bodywork treatment is the ability it gives you to reconnect. "You re-experience your body. When you're in your body, you own it in a different way. You care about it in a different way."

Skin's Graceful Aging

Proper skin care can help ward off signs of aging. Here are some healthful skin care tips for caring for maturing skin.

Protect Your Skin

The most important thing you can do for your skin, Williams says, is to consistently use sunscreen. Whether skiing the Colorado Rockies, swimming the Pacific Ocean, or just walking to your car for a lunch break, sunscreen should be a part of your daily routine, as sun damage is the number one cause of prematurely aged skin. Consider buying makeup or moisturizer with an SPF of 15 or higher to ensure constant protection. To protect you from the full range of ultraviolet rays, look for products containing at least one of these ingredients: avobenzone, titanium dioxide, or zinc oxide.

Keep it Moist

Depending on where you live, you may not give much credence to moisturizer use, but experts say it is a critical piece of the puzzle for great skin. Avoid traditional grocery store finds in favor of a more targeted moisturizing product, preferably one recommended by your esthetician. If you spend money on anything, Williams says, spend it on a good moisturizer. A gentle cleanser (no bar soap on the face, ever, she says) and an alcohol-free toner will round out a simple, yet effective skin care plan. In general, it's a good idea to stick with one

product line since products are usually designed to work together.

Don't Overdo It

In our zeal to clean our skin, we often overdo it. Just as you shouldn't exfoliate too often (no more than once a week), you should also avoid overscrubbing your face, even with just water and a washcloth. Your skin is fragile; treat it as such. It pays to leave the serious exfoliation to an expert esthetician and go gently on your skin at home.

Watch What You Eat

The healthier you eat, the better your skin will look. This means natural, unprocessed foods with high antioxidant and vitamin contents (in other words, fruits and vegetables). Strive to replace processed breads and cereals with whole-grain alternatives that contain fiber. Eliminate or go easy on caffeine and sugar. Many believe drinking plenty

of water will keep your skin hydrated and healthy.

Talk to the Experts

Williams says working with a skin care professional will help establish a good base of knowledge about how to care for your skin. Having an expert who knows you and your history will help address changes going forward. For example, if you change climates, your skin's needs will change as well. The same is true with the seasons.

The seasons of your life will bring yet more changes to your skin care needs. Talking to an expert will help guide you through those changes and give you proactive self-care steps. Growing older doesn't have to mean growing old.



An esthetician can help you determine noninvasive ways to maintain a healthy complexion.

Afternoon Essential Oils

Jeanne Rose

It's easy to enjoy the benefits of aromatherapy, even when you're not in the therapy room. Here are some ways to incorporate facets of aromatherapy into your daily routine, and even into your lunchtime!

Consider having a protein-filled lunch of 4 ounces of chicken breast mixed with salad. Make sure your salad includes at least six red and green items combined, such as cucumber, lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, bell peppers, and radishes. Add chopped basil, sage, or sweet marjoram. Make a simple dressing of olive oil and lemon juice. Add culinary essential oils such as dill weed and black pepper. Have a glass of aromatic iced herbal tea, and add to it 1 teaspoon of melissa hydrosol. This is tasty and encourages deep thinking and relaxation. If, however, you need to continue your workday, then add 1 teaspoon of rosemary hydrosol to your lunchtime iced tea.

Why not take a five-minute scented breather for an afternoon break. The

aromatic properties of plants are effective tonics and energizers. Dabbing the temples with essential oils or spraying the nape of the neck with hydrosols of rosemary or peppermint is a wonderful way to implement the potent effects of these distilled plant materials. You can also use a mixture of distilled water with essential oils of peppermint, sage, and basil dissolved in alcohol (10 drops essential oil, 20 drops alcohol, and a half-ounce of water). Basil and peppermint herb, and their essential oils, have been used for centuries as a mental stimulant.

Complete your afternoon break by lying down for 3-5 minutes with a couple of slices of fresh cucumber on the eyes. Cucumber contains enzymes that help soften the skin. If the day's work has brought on a headache, a drop of rosemary oil to the temples or around the ears works wonders.

Jeanne Rose has been teaching and researching natural remedies for 30 years, beginning with her

first book, *Herbs Things*.



Find out which essential oil works best for you.

Don't Get Sick!

Prevention is Key

Leslie Roste

Regardless of whether the threat is a simple cold or the flu, there are several things you can do to protect yourself from unnecessary downtime.

Proper Hand Washing

This gets top billing because of its true effectiveness in preventing illness. The most important aspects of hand washing are the length of time (at least 30 seconds) and the amount of friction you use, not the water temperature. In fact, warm water is better than hot, as hot water dries the skin, leaving more microscopic openings on its surface. In cases where hand washing is not practical, keep hand sanitizer available. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can also contribute to drying of the skin, so be diligent about moisturizing.

Immunizations

Have you had all your shots? The most underimmunized group in America is women aged 30-55. Check with your physician to make sure you are up-to-date on everything from influenza to tetanus.

Fluids and More Fluids

Staying well hydrated clearly benefits our skin, the largest organ of our immune system. The advice to stay adequately hydrated is even more important in the cold, dry months of winter.

Eat Your Vitamins

A balanced diet, which includes all food groups, gives your immune system the resources it needs when it faces a challenge like the flu.

Eight Hours of Sleep

Research continues to prove how vital

this is to every part of our well-being. It affects everything from our ability to resist illness to managing weight.

Hands and Face

It is important to keep your hands away from your face--particularly the eyes, mouth, and nose, which are favorite points of entry for viruses. Start paying attention to how frequently you touch your face. Break the habit, and you could reduce your risk of colds and flu this season by more than 50 percent.

Leslie Roste has degrees in nursing and microbiology and is employed by King Research in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

*A man who
correctly guesses
a woman's age
may be smart,
but he's not very
bright.*

-Lucille Ball

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