

# Natural help for mature skin



By Gemma Hurditch for **CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine)**

**H**ydration inside and out is very important for our skin. Aim for 2 litres of water per day: try caffeine-free, skin-loving herbal teas such as nettle, rooibos and rosehips. Red clover tea is also lovely for mature skin, it contains phytoestrogens so can be supportive of those going through menopause and beyond. Red clover tea needs to be steeped in hot water for about 30 minutes to extract full flavour, so use a teapot with a tea cosy and 2 teaspoons of the herb per cup for best results. If unwanted facial hair is a concern, spearmint and green tea can be a useful addition for supporting hormone balance. Reduce alcohol intake, particularly if redness or rosacea is a concern. If you do enjoy a tippie, organic red wine is preferable to white wine, beer or spirits.

## Good fats

Good fats are also important to keep our skin healthy and lubricated, try 1g of good quality fish oil daily, or even better eat oily fish a few times per week; sardines, mackerel and anchovies are great choices. A couple of tablespoons of fresh ground flaxseeds or an algae omega 3 supplement can be substituted if preferred. Cold pressed, organic olive oil is excellent to add at the table. For cooking, a little coconut oil is preferred. Avoid margarines, frying in seed oils, and processed meat. These all contain nasties that are ageing for our skin and the rest of the body, too.

Ensure adequate nutrition for repairing and renewing skin. To get your vitamin A, opt for

orange, dark green and yellow coloured fruit and vegetables. Avocado and almonds are great for vitamin E. Eat lots of organic fresh vegetables and fruit. Go whole grain and limit processed foods.

When washing, water should be warm not hot, hot water will strip natural oils and dry out the skin. Finish your shower with cool water. Use only gentle natural care products. Do not use soap on the face. A microfibre cloth and warm water is often all that is needed to cleanse the face of dirt and makeup. Use a fresh cloth each time you wash to avoid contaminating skin with old bacteria. (They are washable.) Moisturise directly after showering. A gentle circular motion is best. Be particularly mindful not to pull at or drag the skin of the face, neck and décolletage, which can be very fine and sensitive.

## DIY serum

Make your own skin support night serum from jojoba oil or rosehip oil for the face, and coconut oil for the body. Add 6 drops of essential oil per 20ml of jojoba/coconut or other carrier oil. Great choices for mature skin to combat signs of ageing include; Frankincense, Rose, Geranium, Lavender and Sandalwood.

Body brushing once or twice a week with a natural loofah brush before showering can remove dead skin and stimulate repair. Avoid the face, neck and décolletage. Firm but gentle exfoliation with the microfibre cloth is ample for these areas.

When outdoors it is important to protect the skin. Put a couple of drops of Red Raspberry Seed oil in your palm and mix with an equal amount of your night serum to boost its UV protection factor for day wear. Don't forget your lips! During summer months avoid midday sun particularly to the face and hands. Try natural zinc oxide based sunscreens, although shade is preferable to sunscreen.



*Naturopath Gemma Hurditch lectures at CNM.*

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