For Women of Color

DISCOVER The Secrets to Having BEAUTIFUL SKIN!

JULIETTE SAMUEL
For African American Women,
Discover the Secrets
to Having BEAUTIFUL Skin!!

As an Esthetician that specializes in skin care for African American Women, I have found that everyone wants to have beautiful skin, no matter what color it is, and there are some steps that we all need to take to keep it that way. However, Black Women are blessed in more ways than one when it comes to keeping your skin fresh and youthful and if you will simply take a few precautions, you can proudly proclaim, “Black don’t crack!” as you age gracefully.

Sooner or later, everyone’s skin ages and becomes wrinkled, for some this is a frighteningly rapid process while for others the years go by without a wrinkle or line to show for it. One of the underlying factors that contribute to aging wrinkle free, is starting out with the dreaded oily skin. And here is where black women have the edge. For some of you, your skin is naturally oilier than that of other women.

But that doesn’t mean that you can just ignore your skin and let nature take its’ course. Oily is not the same as moisturized. A sheen of oil across one’s T-zone (that area across your forehead and down the middle of your face and chin) does not guarantee that the underlying tissues are well hydrated, in fact the opposite can often be the case. Because skin oil is produced by sebaceous glands on the surface of the skin, it does not get into the deeper layers. While it might provide a barrier to inner moisture loss, it will also cause clogged pores, acne and a less than elegant appearance.

Acne is a serious problem of all women (and our men suffer with this too!). Fighting acne breakouts requires a many-fold program which includes scrupulous cleanliness, consultation with a dermatologist and willingness to wait out the hormones that often trigger acne attacks in our youth and adult life.

Acne can cause scarring in all skin tones but this is far more serious with darker skin types because the surgical remedies that can work for lighter complexions can actually cause even more damage on dark skin. It is far better to take care of the situation before it results in permanent scarring and not count on microdermabrasion or chemical peels to fix up your face later on.

While it may be nice to assume that when we need it, a plastic surgeon can step in and rid us of wrinkles and other spots and blemishes, in reality, it is so much better and safer to take care of what we have and avoid the expense and risk of worse scaring from surgery.

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Start with your natural advantage, skin that resist wrinkling and go from there. A simple regimen that involves deep cleansing, toning, exfoliating and moisturizing will serve you well for your entire life. It is never too early or too late to begin taking good care of your skin. It is the largest organ in your body and protects your inner organs from damage, keeps your blood on the inside and deserves a little special attention so that it will last for as long as you need it.

**THE FIRST STEP—Determine Your Skin Type**

**Oily Skin**

Are you constantly blotting your face throughout the day to rid it of sheen from excessive oil? Does your eye makeup cake into the creases of your eye lids? Do your pores tend to clog and turn into whiteheads or blackheads? Do you have acne breakouts across your forehead, around your mouth or on your nose? If you can answer “yes” to even one of these questions, you have very oily skin. This can be quite a problem when you are young but it does tend to lessen as you age until one day, you hit your 60’s and suddenly you have dry skin!

Let’s not wait that long, let’s work on this problem immediately so that you can have beautiful skin forever.

Oily skin is a blessing in disguise. While it drives you nuts, it is also keeping you youthful looking and actually makes your skin care regimen easier.

If you have acne, run, don’t walk to a dermatologist. These doctors specialize in skin problems and acne almost always responds to antibiotic treatments. Your goal is to lessen the severity of outbreaks and the subsequent scaring that can mar your complexion long after the acne has receded into your past.

But don’t just depend on antibiotics to solve your acne problem. The doctor will make many suggestions for caring for your black skin, heed them. Keep your face clean and don’t allow excess oil to clog your pores. Weekly facial masques using a product that contains clay will help keep your pores open and prevent them from becoming clogged with sebum and dead cells. Unclogged pores will not become enlarged and this is a good thing.

It may seem silly to put a moisturizer on skin that is naturally too oily, but remember, after you deep clean your face, it might feel tight and dry. This is the time to pat on your toner and then apply a deep moisturizing product that will keep the inner layers of your skin hydrated. Believe it or not, if your inner skin is well hydrated, your oil glands will produce less oil and your face will be less prone to shininess.

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Another step that will keep your pores open and prevent the formation of blackheads and pimples is to carefully exfoliate at least once a week. Use a product that contains jojoba wax beads as the abrasive and gently but thoroughly go over every inch of your face and throat, then wash off the residue. Choose a moisturizer that contains a high quality moisturizing oil like jojoba or shea butter and apply a small amount of wither of these products to seal the surface of your clean skin afterwards.

Everyday you will need to cleanse your skin thoroughly both morning and evening and never go to bed with your makeup on. Use a facial cleanser that dissolves makeup while lifting surface oil then rinse with warm water, apply a toner with a cotton puff and use either shea butter, jojoba oil or an antioxidant night cream before your face dries completely. In the morning you can apply makeup as soon as the moisturizer sets and in the evening you are ready for bed. Shea butter and jojoba oil, despite their names, are actually vegetable waxes that soak deeply into the skin and do not leave a greasy residue on the surface. You needn’t worry about staining sheets or pillows.

**Dry Skin**

Like Oily skin, if you have dry skin you probably already know it. Your skin always feels tight, especially after cleansing with soap. You have a tendency to chap in cold weather too. It is unlikely that you suffer from breakouts of acne but the trade-off is that your skin will age much faster and show fine wrinkling around your eyes and mouth.

The only way to deal with dry skin is to constantly moisturize it. Instead of using harsh detergent based soaps for cleansing you need to seek out a cream cleanser or a super-fatted beauty bar and not use soap at all. For your body keep a bottle of body oil in your shower and before you towel off, anoint every inch of your skin with the oil. This will seal in the moisture from your shower and will prevent you from feeling tight after you dry off. Jojoba oil, which is actually a vegetable wax, will not leave a greasy feel on your clean skin while it seals in the moisture.

Dry skin also benefits from exfoliation but select an exfoliant with extra moisturizing ingredients. Those little exfoliant pads are not for you. You need every bit of moisturizer on you skin that you can get and this only comes from a good body scrub with a shea or jojoba base.

 Carry a moisturizer with you in your purse. If you start to feel dry or itchy, moisturize at once. Protect your face from cold and drying winds so that you don’t get chapped and rough areas. Dry skin benefits from a weekly masque that will add emollients not remove them.

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Never use a clay based masque on your dry skin but select one that tones and hydrates at the same time.

Never, ever, forget to apply a night cream and pay special attention to the delicate eye area and around your lips. These areas will be the first to show fine lines as you age. Keep them moisturized and you can take years off your appearance.

**Combination Skin**

Combination skin is both dry and oily at the same time and this is often how oily skin ages. Over the years the oil glands on the face will begin to shut down until finally you are left with an oily T-zone, across your forehead and nose.

As you slowly go from oily skin to combination skin you will have to slightly modify your moisturizing process. Pay much more attention to the dry areas, using a rich, deep moisturizing product that will keep the skin looking fresh and dewy. When you exfoliate, be more gentle in the dry areas and concentrate on the oily ones. If you have been using a clay masque all over your face you will begin to notice that it is not working very well in the dry areas. Now is the time to start using two different masques. Keep the clay masque for your T-zone and use a hydrating masque on the dry area. It is not as difficult as it sounds and you will notice an immediate improvement in the appearance and feel of your skin.

As your face becomes less oily with age you will notice that your entire body is also becoming dryer. To combat this, wipe your body after you shower or bathe, with your damp cloth, to remove excess water, then apply a thin layer of jojoba oil to all of your skin. This will lock in the moisture and make your skin feel more supple all day long.

**About That Sun!**

**Are you Getting Enough Vitamin D?**

If you are a Baby Boomer or younger, you know how the sun has been demonized and sun bathing has fallen out of favor. Well, cutting-edge medical research has shown the sun to be our friend after all!! In moderation, that is.

Without a healthy dose of sunlight everyday, our bodies cannot manufacture Vitamin D and without Vitamin D, we are in big trouble. In fact, Vitamin D deficiency has become the deficiency disease of the 21st Century and is causing a lot of problems for children and adults. This is especially true for all people of color. The dark pigment prevents the penetration of UV rays, those that trigger our bodies to manufacture Vitamin D.

Next time you visit your doctor, it wouldn’t be a bad idea to have your levels checked, especially if you have any annoying little complaints that are hard to categorize. If you are achy for no reason or are having trouble losing weight, Vitamin D deficiency could be

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your problem. If your sex life is less than satisfactory, Vitamin D deficiency could also be to blame. Don’t just assume you have a deficiency, however, and start self-medicating. Sun exposure is fine but don’t overdo gobbling Vitamin D in pill form.

This vitamin is a precursor hormone and our bodies need enough of it to make all those great hormones that help things work correctly. So stop being afraid of the sun but do take precautions not to allow your skin to become unevenly tanned. All it takes is a little common sense and about 40 minutes a day, and it doesn’t have to be all at once, exposing as much of yourself as is practical to the warm rays of the sun.

Never forget that too much sun can cause painful sunburn, no matter how dark your skin might be and sunburn is not only painful but causes serious damage to skin, damage that is difficult to reverse. But if you are smart, you can get your Vitamin D-producing sun exposure without risking any damage. Keep in mind that the sun will still come through sheer fabrics, so a light cover up caftan will keep you decent while still allowing you t get enough sun exposure without risking a burn. Continue to use a sun screen on your face but allow the rest of your body to get its’ fair share of sun. Morning and late afternoon are the best times to sun bathe and avoid getting a burn.

Having a correct level of Vitamin D in your body is an important factor in maintaining a youthful appearance. The importance of this vitamin has only begun to be appreciated by scientists and doctors, so don’t wait for your doctor to bring it up, be proactive and ask on your next visit. Women are even more affected by low levels of Vitamin D and need to take charge of their health issues.

A healthy body is the most important step to looking and feeling beautiful and when something is wrong, the skin is frequently the first to show the stress.

Foods That Promote Healthy Skin

When it comes to the category of food that best promotes healthy skin, for this report, let’s talk about the fruit group. Alright, alright, so vegetables are right up there as well, especially kale and spinach, but fruit is just so much tastier to eat. And you don’t have to peel, cut, chop and cook them, either. Raw fruits are so simple to consume and each one is its own handy little package filled with vitamins and minerals and all sorts of good things.

Mango: Loaded with Vitamin A, they help repair damaged skin cells by eliminating flakiness. It also contains beta-carotene, a nutrient that helps your vision.

Guava: Fresh guava has a tyrosinase inhibitor which helps reduce dark-colored spots often found on the skin as you age or from a scratch or scar from a wound.

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Orange: Certain citrus fruits, including oranges, grapefruits and lemons, can assist in fading or reducing the appearance of spider veins. These fruits contain an antioxidant, known as bioflavonoid, which strengthens the valves in the vein that blood flows through. Blood is prevented from backing up, which, when it happens, enlarges the veins. Juice does not contain as much of the bioflavonoids, so eat your citrus fruit fresh and sweet. Oh, and that white stringy pith that you’re always picking off, Leave it. The pith is jam packed with bioflavonoids.

Papaya: Packed with good stuff, including the ABC’s of vitamins, calcium, iron and amino acids. Papaya contains papain, an enzyme which promotes effective digestion by breaking down protein.

Kiwi: This fuzzy little fruit helps absorb those rascally “free radicals” that can speed up the aging process. Ounce for ounce, it’s also got more Vitamin C than pretty much any other fruit. The Vitamin C maintains the skin’s collagen, which means it stays supple.

Avocado: Plenty of nutritional goodies help your skin stay in tip top shape, primarily Vitamin E and mono-unsaturated fat, which helps moisturize your skin from the inside out, and eliminate dry skin. Avocados also contain niacin, which calms irritated skin.

Berries: All of those colorful fruits—blueberries, strawberries and blackberries, have antioxidant properties, as well as Vitamin C and E. Eat them fresh, when they are in season, they’re great for your skin.

Remember the old “Strive for Five” campaign to get you to eat your fruit? Now, here’s the best reason to add them to your daily diet.

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GETTING STARTED- The Daily Routine

Cleanse-
You first need to get your skin clean and this can be accomplished by washing it gently with a cleanser that’s right for your skin type. Apply with your fingers and move in a circular motion all over your face. Rinse with warm, not hot water and pat dry. Do this daily, morning and evening to get your skin clean. And don’t forget that your throat and upper chest are part of your facial regimen. Especially if you have very oily skin, you’ll want to cleanse these areas twice daily.

Tone –
You’ll want to apply a toner to your face, throat and upper chest using a cotton puff. In the summer or warmer climates, using a mister to apply your toner on feels really good. Then you allow it to air dry.

Firm –
If you have mature skin, you’ll want to follow the toning step with a face serum. Use as directed on the container and pay special attention to the corners of your eyes and around your mouth. Allow the firming serum to dry before moving on to the next step.

Moisturize –
Before putting on your makeup or retiring for the night, apply a light film of moisturizer. Moisturizers can provide the perfect base for your makeup and will not rub off on your bed linens.

WEEKLY TREATS FOR ALL SKIN TYPES

Once a week you should exfoliate your face and your body. Exfoliating helps remove dead skin cells before they have a chance to clog your pores. After exfoliation, your skin will glow with freshness as you remove the dull coating of dead cells and sebum.

Facial Masques are a wonderful way to control excessive oiliness or re-hydrate dry skin. For oily skin a clay masque is good and for dry skin a hydrating masque is best. Combination skin benefits from both type of masque.

These simple steps will help you keep your beautiful skin looking its best, always. Plus you will have the added confidence that goes with greeting the world in the certain knowledge, that you look marvelous!

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Greetings,

Look for new and exciting manuals, courses and teleseminars on Black Skin Care. Feel free to write us and let us know what challenges you may have with your skin. Also, let us know if there is any information that you would like to see covered in future articles on Black Skin Care.

To Your Beauty,

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