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A KEATS GOOD HERB GUIDE



Herbs for Healthy Skin, Hair & Nails

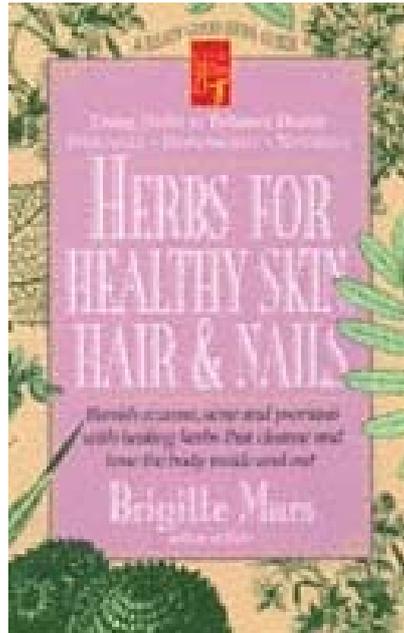
Banish eczema, acne and psoriasis with healing herbs that cleanse and tone the body inside and out

Brigitte Mars



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To My Daughter Rainbeau Mars

Herbs for Healthy Skin, Hair and Nails is not intended as medical advice. Its intent is solely informational and educational. Please consult health professional should the need for one be indicated.

HERBS FOR HEALTHY SKIN, HAIR AND NAILS

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Natural Beauty

The word cosmetic comes from the Greek word *kosmos*, meaning "order in the universe." The wise use of natural cosmetics can help us reflect the beauty of nature, enhancing our health from the outside and providing us with a pleasurable experience while using them. Plants transform the nutrients of the earth, making them more bioavailable to our bodies. What we put on our bodies makes a difference. Even medical doctors recognize the transdermal delivery system of the skin when they prescribe a patch of estrogen, nicotine or heart medicine to be worn on the skin as a means of delivering that substance to the bloodstream. The face is especially permeable. Plants such as aloe vera and calendula soothe the skin and benefit both from the outside and into the deeper layers of the body.

For thousands of years, millions of people have relied on the bounty of plant preparations to cleanse and nourish the skin, hair and nails. Their benefits are legion. When we use pure botanicals, there is no need to test them on animals. Plants come with their own natural fragrances and colors. The chamomile or rosemary that nourishes our hair also provides nectar for the bees and oxygen for our planet. Cosmetics that are truly made in harmony with nature enhance rather than pollute the environment. Would you rather have an acre of lavender or a large chemical company in your neighborhood?

The Skin

The skin is our interface with the world. It protects the bones and organs of the body by keeping them clean and holding them in place. Our largest organ, the skin, weighs about seven to ten pounds and covers about 20 square feet. This amazing covering is supplied with more nerve endings than any other organ except the brain. The skin, linked to the brain, is considered a sensory organ. We pale when fearful, blush when embarrassed and glow when delighted. The skin mirrors our health. Sleepless nights, sadness and joy are all reflected in the skin. The skin serves a multitude of functions; it is a sensory device, an excretory and respiratory organ and a temperature regulator. Sometimes the skin is referred to by natural health practitioners as our "third lung." About two percent of the oxygen that enters the body does so through the skin. Toxins are released from the body through the skin in the form of perspiration.

Wearing natural fiber clothing and even taking relaxing nude "air baths" for ten minutes daily can be very beneficial to the skin. Fresh air is free medicine for the skin.

Deep breathing is also very important for healthy skin. Water makes up over 70 percent of the content of the skin. Not uncoincidentally, the earth is also about 70 percent water. We are a reflection of our environment.

Exercise also benefits the skin, delivering oxygen and nutrients to the skin cells. Exercise also raises the temperature of the skin's surface, thus causing many types of

harmful bacteria to die off. Massage also moisturizes and tones the skin.

The thin outer layer of the skin is called the epidermis, which renews itself with new skin cells growing from within. The epidermis has four layers; new cell growth begins on the bottom layer and then moves upward. Below the epidermis are small capillaries that supply nourishment and water. The skin may get clogged from the inside (food, toxins) or the outside (dirt, chemicals, cosmetics).

The layer below the epidermis is known as the corium or dermis. It is within the dermis that the elastic fibers collagen and elastin are found. Below the dermis is a barrier of fibrous tissue containing nerve endings, hair roots, blood vessels, sweat glands, sebaceous glands and fat globules. There are three types of protein in the skin which account for about 30 percent of the skin's composition: keratin, collagen and elastin. Keratin is found in the epidermis, and collagen and elastin are found in the dermis and connective tissue. People with dark skin have more melanin, the pigmentation that helps protect the skin from the sun.

Foods for Healthy Skin

Nourishing foods to improve skin quality include dark orange beta carotene-rich foods like winter squash, carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes and yams as well as apples, apricots, avocados, green leafy vegetables, parsley, soybeans, lentils, barley, oatmeal and yogurt. Fish contain beneficial oils for the skin, especially sardines, salmon, tuna, bluefish and monkfish. Be sure to include some vegetable oils in the diet such as olive oil in salad dressing. A cup of yoghurt enriched with one tablespoon each of bran, brewer's yeast, flax seed oil, blackstrap molasses, wheat germ and lecithin is a super skin cocktail.

It is essential to drink at least two quarts of pure water a day to help eliminate substances that would otherwise clog the pores. Adding a squeeze of lemon or lime or a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar helps to keep the blood flowing smoothly, bringing nutrients to the skin. Fresh vegetable juices of carrot, beet, celery, spinach, parsley and cucumber will make your skin glow. Another excellent skin tonic beverage is barley water. This is made by slowly simmering one cup of washed barley in two quarts of water for two hours. Strain, flavor the water with a bit of lemon juice and honey and drink as a nourishing and cleansing tonic for your skin. The softened barley can be eaten much like rice.

Be aware that alcoholic beverages, caffeine-containing sodas and coffee can dehydrate your skin.

Foods that may be harmful to the skin include fried foods, refined carbohydrates, wheat products, tomatoes, citrus fruits (especially oranges and grapefruit), chocolate, strawberries, peanuts (and peanut butter) and high-fat foods. Moreover, overeating causes blood to be diverted to the stomach to aid digestion, thus leaving the skin lacking all the nutrients it requires.

Since good skin health begins from within, various vitamins, minerals and other nutrients can also help.

Vitamin A helps to preserve the skin's elasticity, regulate sebaceous glands, protect against infection, and stimulate collagen formation. A deficiency may result in dry, itchy skin, with dead skin cells likely to clog the pores, resulting in breakouts.

The B complex vitamins help to keep stress from showing its ravages on our skin. A deficiency is sometimes revealed in cracks around the mouth, corners of the mouth and eyes. Wrinkles over the top lip are often an indication of a vitamin B2 deficiency.

Vitamin C strengthens the capillaries, promotes healing and increases skin elasticity. It is also necessary for collagen production.

Vitamin D nourishes dry skin.

Vitamin E helps the body utilize oxygen better, balances hormonal production and preserves the skin's elasticity.

Vitamin F (the essential fatty acids) is often referred to as "the cosmetic vitamin." A deficiency can cause wrinkles, eczema and thick dry skin.

Zinc helps to synthesize collagen, aids the immune system and is essential to restore dry flaky skin into balance.

Lecithin helps the body absorb essential fatty acids.

Flaxseed oil can help both dry and oily skin. It is a good source of essential fatty acids which can help prevent wrinkles, eczema and thick dry skin. Flaxseed oil can go rancid quickly, so buy small amounts fresh, refrigerate it and use it quickly. An alternative would be to consume three tablespoons of freshly ground flaxseeds daily. They can be sprinkled on cereal or added to yogurt.

An acidophilus supplement is especially helpful for acne, psoriasis and eczema if an underlying yeast overgrowth is part of the problem.

In Oriental medicine, it is said that skin problems indicate bad blood. Remember that all our organs of elimination can be a factor in the health of our skin, especially the large intestines, lungs, kidneys and liver. Practicing deep breathing, wearing natural fibers as well as adequate exercise can all benefit the lungs and skin. Our large intestines will be healthier when we eat a high fiber diet and drink ample pure fluids.

Smoking, junk food, lack of nourishing foods and fluids are all a barometer that shows up in the health of our skin. The skin of smokers ages up to 20 years faster than that of nonsmokers. The very act of smoking encourages wrinkles around the lips, crow's feet, leathery skin quality, grayish color, undereye puffiness and discoloration. Also the exposure to carbon monoxide reduces circulation by constricting blood vessels, resulting in drier, more wrinkled

skin. Yet even after long-term tobacco use, the skin's color and texture will improve once the habit is kicked.

Skin Brushing

Brushing the skin is as important as brushing the hair and teeth. Buy a soft vegetable fiber skin brush at the health food store. Before bathing, with a gentle circular motion, start by brushing the feet, followed by the legs, hands and arms, working the torso front and back towards the heart for two or three minutes. Be gentle over the face and breasts and avoid the genitals. Then shower or bathe, ending with a cool water rinse to give yourself a good circulatory massage. Every two weeks wash your skin brush and dry it in the sun or a warm place. Dry-brush skin massage is excellent for loosening dead skin cells, improving circulation, breaking up cellulite, moving lymphatic fluid and energizing yourself. A good massage can also be beneficial for the skin as well as to one's total well-being.

Skin and the Emotions

When dealing with skin problems, ask what the skin is trying to tell you on an emotional level. For example, broken-out skin may serve as protection from the threat of intimacy. When dealing with skin problems, do your best to understand what was going on in your life at the time they started.

People with very sensitive skin should do a patch test on the forearm by applying a bit of an intended skin product and leaving it undisturbed for 24 hours. If swelling or irritation develops, the product should be avoided.

Dry Skin

As the skin ages, it naturally produces less oil. Dry skin results when there is too little moisture in the stratum

corneum cells, leaving the skin rough, chapped and red. Thin, fair, dry-skinned people are more likely to wrinkle than those with dark, oily skin. Very dry skin can be due to a depletion of fluids and internal moisture in the body. Though dark, oily skin may have tendency to break out during puberty, it does age more gracefully.

One way to affect the moisture of the skin is by eating fruits, vegetables and cooked grains, which are full of water. Herbs like marshmallow root, Irish moss and violet leaves taken as tea or in capsules can also help to moisturize from within.

How we cleanse the skin can also alleviate dryness. If you use soap, avoid brands that contain deodorants and detergents. Soaps made of glycerin, oatmeal or olive oil are the least drying. Your local natural food store has gentle cleansers available with soothing ingredients for dry skin such as Vitamin E, aloe vera and lecithin.

The best time to apply a moisturizer is right after bathing as water helps to keep the skin's outer layers from drying out and oil seals it in. When applying a moisturizer in cold weather, put the bottle in a cup of hot water for a few minutes before applying. Avoid poor-quality cosmetics that contain mineral oil, chemicals and artificial colors and fragrances.

During the day, it may be helpful to rehydrate the skin with a spray mist, especially on the face, which is the part of the body that is most exposed to the elements. A mister bottle may be filled with various moistening ingredients, such as mineral water with essential oils, and sprayed lightly (with eyes closed), even over makeup. One could also fill a mister with a tea of chamomile, fennel and orange blossoms. These mixtures should be kept refrigerated when not in use. One half-cup each of rose water and mineral water may also be used. An easy-to-prepare spray can be made with 8 ounces of pure water and 10 drops of lavender oil. Shake before spraying. Other spray-mist recipes are provided at the end of this book. If you fly a lot, remember that cabin air is very drying, and a spray mist is great to use.

Consider using a humidifier in your bedroom, especially during the winter months when the air becomes very dry because of indoor heating. Plants or an aquarium are also very moisturizing.

Oily Skin

Stress can cause the skin to become more oily. Avoid fatty foods such as fried foods, ice cream and potato chips as they may aggravate oily skin. A deficiency of vitamins B2 and B6 can also contribute to excessive oiliness. If using makeup, use only water-based products rather than oil base. Essential oils such as geranium, lavender, lemon and tea tree oil can be used to help regulate the sebaceous glands. These oils need to be diluted. A facial spray with lemon balm essential oil can help close the pores. (See recipe for Facial Spritzer on page 81.) Witch hazel can also be applied after cleansing. Remember that one of the benefits of oily skin is that it is slower to age!

Pleasures of the Bath

Soaking in a warm fragrant tub is a favorite delight of many wise and happy people. It can be time to retreat, reflect and refresh. Baths can also be an opportunity to merge with your herbs of choice. Since we don't want to waste resources, it's not necessary to fill the tub too high; if you use natural products, you can even collect some of the grey bath water to water your houseplants or garden.

Baths before bed help to induce sleep. However, if you take a bath during the day and expect to get any work done, make it a cool, short bath and include energizing herbs and oils. A bath after you come home from work may melt the stresses of a busy day.

If you like to soak in the tub but have dry skin, consider mixing up a rich bath oil of 1/2 cup each of the following: avocado oil, safflower oil, sunflower oil and almond oil; then add 1/2 ounce of pure lavender oil. Shake the oils together and add 2 tablespoons to the bath.

You can also enhance your bathing with the addition of a mixture of herbs tied into a washcloth and allowed to steep in the tub. Moisturing herbs that feel and smell wonderful include chamomile, fennel, comfrey leaves, violet leaves, elder blossoms, rosebuds, lavender and calendula. To use herbs in the bath, simply tie a handful of them in a washcloth securely with a rubber band or hair tie. Use a dark cloth, since the herbs may discolor a light fabric. Alternatively, make a few muslin bags, sewed on three sides for this purpose. Make a strong herbal tea with about one half-cup of herbs. Simmer lightly for 20 minutes, then strain the tea into the tub or make the tea with four or five standard herbal tea bags.

Before you get into the tub, dry brush your skin and write down some of the things you need to take care of tomorrow so that your mind will feel unburdened. When the bath is a comfortable temperature, immerse yourself. Feel the enveloping, comforting warmth. Use the herb-filled washcloth to gently scrub your body as you deeply inhale the fragrance. When you are finished, add the used herbs to your compost or garden.

An even easier way to prepare a bath incorporating plants is to use 5 to 10 drops of essential oil. Add these after filling the tub to keep the oils from evaporating too quickly. Swish the oils before getting in the tub so they don't all collect on one part of your skin. Close the shower curtain, if you have one, to hold in the steam and fragrance. Many of the herbs listed below can either be used as bath herbs or as pure essential oils.

Athlete's bath: Ginger, juniper berries, lavender, marjoram, mustard, rosemary, thyme.

Cold and flu bath: Ginger, mustard.

Dry skin bath: Chamomile, elderflower, jasmine, oatmeal.

Energizing bath: Eucalyptus, lemon thyme, peppermint, pine, rosemary.

Hot weather bath: Sliced lemon and peppermint.

Kid's bath: Hibiscus (gives pink color), lavender, orange flower, rose.

Lover's bath: Cardamom, cinnamon, jasmine, rose, sandalwood.

Oily skin bath: Lavender, lemon peel, orange peel, yarrow.

Premenstrual bath: Chamomile, clary sage, lavender.

Relaxing bath: Catnip, chamomile, hops, lavender, linden flowers.

Sore muscle bath: Bay leaves, rosemary.

Skin healing bath: Calendula, chamomile, comfrey.

Sunburn bath: black tea added to a cool bath.

Aromatherapy Bath Dosages

Foot baths. 2 to 6 drops lavender, pine and/or sage. Ginger foot baths are helpful for gout.

Hand baths. 2 to 4 drops. Same herbs as for foot baths.

Hot tub. Add 3 drops of essential oil per person. Consider eucalyptus, lavender or tea tree oil.

Sauna. 1 to 2 drops of eucalyptus, fir or tea tree. Add the oils first to a pint-sized pot of water to splash on the rocks. Do not pour essential oils directly into any heat source.

Shower. 8 drops maximum can be added to a washcloth and used to vigorously scrub the body.

Sitz bath (when just the hip area is submerged). 2-3 drops to a shallow tub of water.

Besides herbs and essential oils, there are a few classic kitchen medicines that can be added to the bath for their health benefits.

Apple cider vinegar bath. For sore muscles, itchy skin and sunburn. Helps draw pollutants out of the body and is gently acidic. Steep 1 cup herbs such as lavender or rosemary into 2 cups apple cider vinegar for two weeks. Use one cup of infused vinegar per bath.

Baking soda bath. For itchy skin, insect bites, chicken pox and poison ivy. This is a very detoxifying alkaline bath. Use 1 pound per bath.

Barley and bran bath. For very soft skin simmer 1/2 pound barley and 1 pound bran in a quart of water for 15 minutes. Allow the mixture to steep for an hour, then strain into a half-filled tub.

Cornstarch bath. Softening to the skin and relaxing. Use 1 pound per bath.

Epsom salts bath. Lymphatic cleansing and soothing to sore muscles. Use 1 pound per bath. Detoxifying after bodywork. Helps to eliminate drugs, chemicals and pollutants from the body.

Milk bath. Very nourishing to rough skin. Soak without using soap. Add 1 pint of fresh milk and 8 ounces powdered milk and swirl to dissolve the powder.

Mud bath. Detoxifying as it helps to draw toxins through the pores. Great to do at a spa unless you have access to our own private mud puddle.

Oatmeal bath. Use 1 cup of powdered oatmeal or 1 cup tied into a washcloth, secured with a tie. For irritated,

itchy skin and dry as well as oily skin. Leaves skin very soft.

Salt bath. Salt may be added to the tub or moistened salt may be used as a pack while one stands in a dry tub. To use as a pack, rub the salt into moist skin, starting at feet and hands, and work in small circular motions towards the heart to improve circulation and eliminate outer layers of dead skin. This leaves you very refreshed. Great after bodywork, to draw toxins out of the body and to relax sore muscles.

For a bath, add 1/2 to 1 pound sea salt to the tub. People with insulin-dependent diabetes, serious heart disease and open sores should avoid salt baths. Herbalist William LeSassier says salt and baking soda baths help clean "the health aura."

Seaweed bath: After bodywork, for glandular imbalances, weight loss and to help draw environmental pollutants from the body, including drugs, chemicals and radiation.

Create your own bath salts by mixing together 1 cup each of sea salt, baking soda and Epsom salts. Add 10 drops of any combination of essential oils. Mix well and store in a glass jar.

Flower essences such as the Bach Flower Remedies can also be added to the bath for enhancing emotional health. There are thousands of flower essences available and many books to guide people to the appropriate remedies. One of my favorites is *The Encyclopedia of Flower Remedies* by Clare Harvey and Amanda Cochrane.

Bathwater temperatures that are too hot are drying and enervating. Keep the water temperature between 75 and 98 degrees, depending on the season. If you do feel faint, splash your face and body with cool water before standing up. A final cold rinse will energize you. French women swear that a final splashing of cold water on the breasts

helps to keep them firm. A bath should not last much more than 20 minutes or you will start to wrinkle like a prune.

For invalids who can't stand up, a beach chair can be set into the tub.

A bath mat inside and outside the tub can help keep you from slipping. Create a sanctuary of serenity with bath pillows, loofas (Keep dry when not in use to discourage bacterial growth), fluffy towels, scented soaps and candlelight. Quiet music (using a battery-operated radio, tape or CD player to prevent the very serious potential for electric shock), a bowl of washed seedless grapes, sips of a soothing herbal tea . . . getting clean is only part of the pleasure. Bathe your body. Soothe your soul.

When done bathing, lie in the tub as you release the water down the drain. Visualize the tension leaving you and being soothed by the kind, gentle Earth.

Showers that are short and not too hot are considered less drying than baths. Saunas should be avoided by people with very dry skin; steam baths are gentler.

Facial Care

Cleansing the Face

These days there are many wonderful natural cosmetics available at local health food stores. However, there is something to be said for taking the time to do nurturing things for yourself. You can personalize your cosmetics, making what is good for your particular skin type, in small batches to see if you get the desired results.

You can make your own cleansing grains with 1 cup ground oats, 1/4 cup ground almonds, 2 cups white clay and 1 or 2 drops essential oils of lavender or geranium. Store in a glass jar in the bathroom. Oatmeal or cornmeal can be powdered and mixed with milk, yogurt or water and used as a very gentle cleanser. Grated potato makes a cleanser that is healing to blemishes. Baking soda can be used as an exfoliant and anti-inflammatory agent. Avoid scrubbing; just apply gently.

For oily skin, a cleanser can be made of buttermilk mixed with sea salt. Regular sugar can be used as a natural exfoliant. Even though we should do our best to avoid eating sugar, it is quick-dissolving and helps to cleanse and clear the skin. First cleanse the skin, then apply a light coating of vegetable oil. Using about a teaspoon of sugar, apply to several spots on the face. Use small circular motions being careful not to stretch the skin. Avoid using scrubs on very sensitive skin.

Ideally, cleanse the face with hot water and rinse with at least 10 splashes of cold water to remove any residue of cleanser.

Whenever the face needs to be wiped, such as in makeup removal, avoid using synthetic cotton balls or paper tissues which often contain irritating particles that can scratch the skin. Use only 100 percent cotton balls. Cleanse the face morning and night and never go to bed with makeup on your face.

Facial Steams

A facial steam is an excellent way to deep cleanse, relax muscles and improve circulation as you give yourself an invigorating rosy glow. Wash your face first. Pour 1 quart of boiling water over a handful of herbs in a heatproof glass bowl. Tie your hair back. Drape a towel over your head to create a tent-like effect over the bowl. Keep your face about 10 inches away from the water source to avoid getting burned as you inhale the sensuous steam for 5 to 7 minutes. Facial steams can be used once or twice a week. Select the appropriate herbs for your skin type.

Acne: lavender, red clover blossoms, strawberry leaves.

Blackheads: elder flower, rosemary.

Combination skin: chamomile, lavender, licorice, peppermint.

Dry skin: chamomile, comfrey leaves, elder flower, fennel seed, lavender, licorice, red clover, roses.

Oily skin: Eucalyptus, juniper berries, lavender, lemon grass, lemon peel, peppermint, pine, sage, strawberry leaves.

Sensitive skin: calendula, chamomile.

I often simply use PuriTea (available in health food stores), which contains many beneficial herbs for facial steam herbs. Facial steams can be followed with a facial scrub and then a mask.

Masks

Kitchens yield an array of ingredients that can be used to feed the skin from the outside. There are many types of masks that can be made in the kitchen from fresh ingredients that nourish the skin. These are fun to use, cost-effective and free of preservatives. Simply run the ingredients through the blender, if necessary, apply while you relax in the bathtub or lie on a slant board. (You may even use the pulp from your juicer for a mask if you've just juiced something from the following list.) Masks may be used once or twice a week. They are especially lovely to use while lying on a slant board for 20 minutes. Using a slant board is a wonderful way to destress on a daily basis, and lying on one for 10 minutes daily helps to prevent wrinkles and improve skin quality. I bought one as a present to myself a few years back and love it. However, a slant board should not be used by anyone who has had a recent stroke, has very high blood pressure or a detached retina without consulting with a physician.

Fruit, yogurt, and buttermilk. Contain the much touted alpha-hydroxy acids that stimulate new cell growth, are humectant and result in younger-looking skin.

Almonds. Ground and mixed with water, helpful for dry skin as well as blackheads and enlarged pores. Almonds are emollient and cleansing when shelled and finely ground. They are rich in calcium and beta-carotene.

Apple. Use for dry, oily and blemished skin. Excellent for exfoliating, mildly astringent and soothing. Rich in calcium, iron, phosphorus and potassium.

Apricots. Use to enliven tired or oily skin and prevent wrinkles. Rich in beta-carotene.

Avocado. Highly nutritive, contains penetrating oils for very dry skin.

Banana. Nourishing for dry and normal skin. Helps to soften skin and free it of impurities.

Brewer's yeast or nutritional yeast. Nourishing, deeply cleansing, good for oily skin, tightening. Enlivens dull-looking skin. Rich in B vitamins and protein.

Carrots. When lightly cooked and mashed, carrots help to nourish and treat blemishes due to their antiseptic properties; also good for dry skin. Good source of beta-carotene, iron and potassium.

Clay. Use only dry cosmetic quality clay. Absorbs toxins. There are several types of clay available. Blue clay is anti-inflammatory and useful for acne-prone, very sensitive skin. The blue color is due to the presence of natural cobalt. Green clay is rich in chromium, copper and nickel. It is good for oily skin. Red clay is naturally high in iron and good for normal skin. White clay is the mildest of all and contains aluminum oxide and zinc oxide. Fuller's earth and kaolin are both very fine clays, useful for oily skin. Avoid using clay close to the eye area as it can be too drying.

Cucumber. Cooling, soothing and astringent for oily skin, enlarged pores, freckles, sunburn. Helps reduce puffiness and inflammation.

Egg white. Tightening, use to minimize wrinkles.

Egg yolk. For dry skin.

Grapes (white seedless). Cooling, soothing and lightens the skin. Good for all skin types. Helps to heal chapped skin. Rich in sugars, beta-carotene, B vitamins and E.

Honey. Moisturizes and tightens, very nutritive. Good for lackluster skin, enlarged pores and blackheads. Try applying honey on the face and neck then gently tap over the area for two minutes. Rinse well.

Lemon. For lightening, uneven pigment, liver spots, antiseptic. Helps to restore normal acid balance to skin. Helps to tighten enlarged pores. Not for very dry skin. Dilute with water before using.

Oatmeal. Use leftover cooked oatmeal for blackheads, dry and oily skin. Helps to soften the skin. Can be used instead of soap as a cleansing agent for very sensitive skin.

Mayonnaise. Made from eggs and vinegar for very dry skin, rich in vitamin A, lecithin and protein.

Cantaloupe. Pore tightening, refreshing; use for oily and dry skin.

Papaya. Exfoliating, helps to get rid of dead skin cells; benefits oily skin. Green unripe papaya is even more effective.

Pineapple. Exfoliating.

Peach. To enliven tired, irritated and dry skin; anti-inflammatory and prevents wrinkles.

Pear. For dry, normal and oily skin. Calms sore, inflamed and blotchy skin and sunburn. Contains tannins and natural sugars.

Potato. Grated raw potato makes an excellent mask for both dry and normal skin. It can calm sunburn. Rich in potassium and vitamin C.

Seaweed. For dehydrated skin; firming for loose, sagging skin. Rich in iodine, protein and mucilage.

Sugar. Can be used as a scrub. It dissolves as you scrub, protecting the skin from being abraded.

Strawberries. Pore cleansing, tightening, lightening; for oily skin and blemished skin. Rich in iron and salicylic acid. Helps eliminate dead skin cells.

Tomato. Refines pores, blackheads, exfoliant. Good for both dry, blemished and oily skin. Helps to restore natural acid balance of the skin.

Watermelon. Refreshing and astringent.

Yogurt. Lightening, for oily or blemished skin. Kills harmful bacteria that makes skin blemish-prone.

If a mask needs to be thickened add a bit of powdered oatmeal or cosmetic clay as a thickening agent. Rinse the mask off. Splash with cool water, pat dry with a towel and finish with a toner.

Toners

Using a toner after cleansing helps to keep the skin acid and reduce blemishes that come from bacteria. Toners help to restore the PH of the skin's acid mantle. You can make a toner by putting 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar or lemon juice in 1/3 cup of water. Spray on face or apply with a ball of 100 percent cotton (not a synthetic puff). For dry skin, rosewater may be applied to help hold in moisture.

A formula for tonifying the skin has long been made, known as

Queen of Hungary Water

Cover the following herbs with apple cider vinegar:

- 6 parts lemon balm
- 4 parts chamomile
- 1 part rosemary
- 3 parts calendula
- 4 parts rose petals
- 1 part lemon peel
- 1 part sage
- 3 parts comfrey
- 2 parts elder flower

Cover and let sit for two weeks to a month, shaking the mixture daily. Strain out the herbs and compost them. Bottle the remaining liquid, adding 1/2 cup rosewater for every cup of herbal vinegar. Add 2 drops essential oil of geranium.

You can make a simple aromatherapy toner by adding 4 drops of pure essential oil to an 8-ounce spray bottle of mineral water. Some suggestions for essential oils to choose include:

Acne-prone skin: Bergamot, geranium, juniper, lavender, lemon, neroli, rosemary, sandalwood, tea tree, thyme.

Normal skin: Chamomile, geranium, jasmine, lavender, neroli, rose, rosewood.

Dry skin: Carrot seed oil, chamomile, fennel, frankincense, geranium, lavender, melissa, myrrh, neroli, rose, rose geranium, sandalwood.

Mature skin: Frankincense, myrrh, neroli, patchouli, rose geranium, sandalwood, rose.

Oily skin: Cypress, eucalyptus, geranium, juniper, lemon, orange, rosemary.

Psoriasis: Bergamot, geranium, jasmine, lavender, melissa, sandalwood.

Rosacea skin: Chamomile, peppermint.

Sensitive skin: Chamomile, lavender.

Witch hazel can also be used as a toner for oily or acne-prone skin. Many toners contain alcohol, which can decrease oiliness and tighten pores, but can also overstrip the skin's natural oils and cause a leathery look. Toners containing alcohol should be used only by those with very oily skin. The alcohol percentage should not exceed 35 percent.

Another easy and effective toner is ice. Rub an ice cube over the face after cleansing. This should be done after cleansing and before moisturizing. Put two trays of ice cubes into a sink filled with cold water. While wearing rubber gloves lined with cotton, splash the icy water on the face about 40 times, covering all the areas.

Carrier Oils

Be sure to select only cold-pressed oils that are free of preservatives and kept in the refrigerator to preserve freshness.

Almond oil. Use for normal and dry skin. Doesn't become rancid quickly. Good to use in aromatherapy products as it is light and odorless.

Avocado. For dry and mature skin. Spreads easily, rich in beta carotene, and vitamins B, D and E as well as lecithin.

Castor oil. For dry skin. Deeply penetrating and enriching. Used to help eliminate scars.

Cocoa butter. For dry skin, very softening and lubricating. Helps to eliminate scarring.

Coconut oil. Very nourishing and moisturizing. Use for oily skin.

Corn oil. For normal to oily skin.

Grapeseed oil. Light, good carrier oil for aromatherapy.

Hazelnut oil. Light and rich.

Jobba oil. A liquid wax, doesn't turn rancid easily, doesn't clog pores. Good for oily and acne-prone skin.

Olive oil. Rich and pure, excellent for very dry and sensitive skin. It is deeply penetrating. Be sure to use extra virgin. The disadvantage is that you will smell like salad dressing temporarily.

Peanut oil. For dry skin. Deeply penetrating, fairly stable shelf life.

Safflower oil. For normal to oily skin. High in linoleic acid. Inexpensive.

Sesame oil. Good for dry, normal and oily skin. Used in sunscreen preparations. Highly nutritive. Doesn't become rancid easily. Washes out of fabrics more easily than other oils.

Shea butter. A natural sun screen, rich in beta-carotene, vitamin E and allantoin. Refrigerate, as it spoils quickly.

Soy oil. Oily skin, high in linoleic acid, lecithin and vitamin E. Can clog pores.

Sunflower oil. For normal to oily skin. Rich in lecithin and linoleic acid.

Wheat germ oil. Rich in beta-carotene, vitamins D, E and lecithin. Helps prevent scarring. Sticky and thick, naturally antioxidant. Best to dilute with other lighter oils.

Petroleum products such as mineral oil and baby oil can clog the pores and impair the assimilation of fat-soluble vitamins. Do not use.

Moisturizers

Moisturizers add and help the skin retain moisture. Every time you cleanse your skin, a moisturizer should be applied; even oily complexions need some around the eye and mouth area. Using a light moisturizer on even oily skin can help calm the skin into producing less oil by providing what is needed. You can add 6 to 10 drops of pure essential oil for every ounce of vegetable oil to make your own moisturizer. Other recipes are given at the end of the book.

Moisturizers should always be applied with an upward motion. Do not move the skin forcefully as this can weaken collagen.

Skin Problems

Acne

Acne can have many causes. Stress, food sensitivities, yeast overgrowth, medication and allergies may all be contributing factors. Acne is likely to occur when sebum, a waxy substance that lubricates the skin, and keratin, a skin protein, block the sebaceous glands. It is important to keep all channels of elimination open, such as the colon, lungs, kidneys and liver. When they do their job of purifying the body, pimples won't end up on your skin. Our organs of elimination, especially the liver, also help to break down excess hormones that could also cause the skin to erupt. When acne occurs in adolescence it is called *acne vulgaris*. Acne is best treated with diet, herbs and exercise.

It can be embarrassing when one's health problems are so publicly announced on one's face. Herbs that help acne include burdock root, raw dandelion root, Oregon grape root, sarsaparilla root and yellow dock root. Drink plenty of fluids and teas made from these herbs.

The foods that are most beneficial to eat for healing acne include artichokes, barley, beets, cooked carrots, green leafy vegetables and winter squashes. Foods to minimize or avoid include oranges and grapefruit, hot spicy foods, peanut butter, wheat, nuts, high-fat dairy products, fried foods and hydrogenated oils. The hormones that are added to commercial dairy products and meats can overstress the liver. Some people with acne are sensitive to the iodine in shellfish.

Vitamin A helps to reduce sebum and is a natural anti-oxidant. One hundred milligrams of niacin, also known as vitamin B3, is a vasodilator and may make you feel hot, red, itchy and prickly for about 10 minutes. However, it increases nutrients transported to the skin, removes wastes and can help clear up difficult skin conditions such as acne. *Caution:* Niacin should be avoided by those with rosacea, couperose conditions and very thin sensitive skin.

Other important nutrients: Zinc, which prevents sebaceous glands from becoming enlarged, and flaxseed oil, which helps the body to better metabolize fats.

Facial masks to use when dealing with acne can be made of cooked oatmeal, grated raw potato or tomato. Apply witch hazel or aloe vera as a toner after cleansing.

Where you feel a pimple about to erupt, rather than squeeze it, try applying spirits of camphor, essential oil of lavender or tea tree oil four or five times daily to help dry it up and perhaps prevent eruption. If you do get an eruption and are prone to scarring, use a salve which includes vitamin E, calendula and comfrey.

Avoid excessive exfoliation, which can stimulate oil glands that are already overactive.

If the skin is bumpy, especially on the arms, dry-brush skin massaging and daily doses of flaxseed oil should help.

It is always helpful to consider any emotional implications such as low self-esteem or feeling "picked on" during childhood. Process these feelings if they are valid in a safe, positive and effective way, under the guidance of a therapist.

Boils

Boils, also known as furuncles, are a sign of excess heat or infection in the body. These tender, pus-filled, painful areas can be caused by food sensitivity, poor hygiene, a

weakened immune system and/or a toxic condition in any organ. Avoid meat, sugar and spicy, oily foods. Eat lots of garlic and drink more water and teas made from red clover, stillingia, burdock and echinacea. It is always important to get a sense of what the boil may indicate. Is it over a particular organ that may be trying to discharge an abundance of toxins? For example, a boil on the chest may indicate toxins in the lungs.

Apply a hot ginger tea compress to the boil or soak the afflicted area in a hot Epsom salt solution (1/2 cup of salt to 1 quart of hot water). Then apply some red clay mixed with apple cider vinegar or an albi plaster (available in health food stores). Leave it on until it dries. Do this several times a day. After the boil breaks, apply echinacea extract to the area several times daily. Some boils indicate a staph infection. Take echinacea tincture internally several times a day to help prevent spreading of the infection.

Rest and, if possible, elevate the site of infection so that it is above the heart.

Blackheads

Gently massaging baking soda into the skin helps sebum to escape. A gentle scrub of almond meal or cornmeal with a complexion brush can also be used. If one is going to attempt to squeeze out a blackhead (even though this shouldn't be done), the best time is after doing a facial steam or have applied a hot wet compress to the area. This is to ensure that the pores are soft and open. With clean cotton or tissue, squeeze upward and outward. If it doesn't come out easily, stop, or irritation can occur, leaving you with a bigger problem. Afterwards, apply some essential oil of lavender, tea tree oil or distilled witch hazel.

Cuperose Skin

This manifests as delicate skin with a reddish color due to broken blood vessels. The causes may range from fragile capillaries, excess heat or inflammation in the liver or kidneys, the spleen not being able to govern the movement of the blood, a heart imbalance, use of steroidal creams, sun damage, hyperthyroidism or excess levels of estrogen. It often occurs around the nose at first and is more noticeable in people with thin transparent skin. It is important to avoid alcohol, caffeine and hot, spicy foods as they can aggravate the condition.

Take a supplement of vitamin C with 500 mg bioflavonoids to help strengthen the capillaries. Drink horsetail tea to encourage skin elasticity. A warm (not hot) compress of chamomile, horsetail and white oak bark tea can be applied to help strengthen and reduce inflammation. Avoid facial steams, abrasive cleansing such as scrubs, saunas as well as very hot baths or extremely cold water. Minimize sun exposure.

Cuperose Skin Formula

- 1 oz. jojoba oil
- 1/4 oz. rose hip oil
- 10 drops borage seed oil
- 10 drops evening primrose oil
- 4 drops neroli oil
- 3 drops rose oil
- 5 drops chamomile oil
- 2 drops geranium oil

Blend and apply to affected areas.

As an alternative, add 15 drops of any of the following essential oils to 1 ounce of vegetable oil and gently massage it into the area of broken capillaries: bay, chamomile, cypress, lemon, peppermint, rose or rosemary.

Eczema and Psoriasis

As these two conditions tend to move around, change and spread, they are often considered "wind invasion" in Oriental medicine. Psoriasis involves rapidly growing cells that come to the skin's surface before they are fully mature. People who suffer from psoriasis tend to always be on the run, moving rapidly, like their skin growth. Foods to avoid include dairy products, citrus, tomatoes, peanut butter, fried foods and hydrogenated oils. Is stress making you want to claw out of your skin? Then look at what can be done to mellow your lifestyle. Exposure to chemicals can also affect the skin in a negative way.

Psoriasis manifests as skin patches that may be red, thickened and covered with silvery scales. It is considered more stubborn than eczema. New skin grows about five times faster than old skin can be shed. It usually doesn't itch. Eczema is characterized by dry rashy areas that do itch. In both cases it is helpful to cool the blood and skin.

A tea or extract of burdock root, raw dandelion root, Oregon grape root and yellow dock root taken three times daily would be excellent for both conditions.

Other approaches include taking 1 to 3 tablespoons of flaxseed oil daily or 3 tablespoons of freshly ground flaxseeds. An alternative is 6 capsules daily of evening primrose oil. Avoid skin contact with chemicals. Dry cleaning fluid, bubble baths and cleaning products can all contribute to skin problems. Avoid wearing nylon, suede, wool or synthetic fibers. It may be helpful to put 1 cup apple cider vinegar in the final rinse of a wash load to neutralize possible irritants.

Add 1 pound of baking soda, 1 cup of apple cider vinegar or 2 handfuls of oatmeal tied into a cloth into the bathtub.

A folk remedy for either condition is to apply raw potato juice (made from a juicer) to the affected area.

If more infants were breast-fed, there would probably

be fewer cases of eczema and psoriasis. However, even nursing babies could be allergic to a food the mom is consuming. Check it out and eliminate the possible culprits. Children with eczema may benefit from extra cuddling at night before bed. Massage is also a good way to soothe tension from the body.

Vitamins A, C, E and zinc may also be helpful. Look for salves to apply topically that include aloe vera, burdock, calendula, chickweed, comfrey, echinacea, goldenseal, plantain and St. John's wort.

Swimming in the ocean may be helpful for both eczema and psoriasis.

Enlarged Pores

If the lungs and spleen are weak, the pores are more likely to be enlarged. There are several folk remedies that can give temporary relief to enlarged pores. Grind almonds into a powder to use as a gentle scrub. A facial mask of honey or puréed fresh tomato can be left on for 20 minutes, then rinsed off. Try applying buttermilk, aloe vera juice, witch hazel or cucumber juice to the skin after cleansing as a toner.

Freckles

Though freckles do have their charm, skin likely to freckle usually belongs to those deficient in vitamins A and E. Topical applications of buttermilk, yogurt or elderflower water have been traditionally used to fade freckles. Minimize sun exposure.

Impetigo

Impetigo manifests as honey-colored runny sores on the skin that itch; it is caused by staphylococcus or streptococcus bacteria. The face and extremities are the body parts most often affected. It is most epidemic in the summer or in the tropics.

Practice impeccable hygiene. Change the bedding daily for two weeks. Use only disposable tissues. Get some early morning sunlight and air exposure on the lesions. Avoid long sun exposure though, as it can make scarring more likely. Use separate washcloths and towels, as others in the household can easily become infected. Keep the fingernails cut very short to prevent scratching and spreading the infection.

Avoid eating fruit, juice and sugary foods. Drink lots of pure water. Do eat foods such as sea vegetables, millet and rye.

Chaparral, echinacea, myrrh or propolis tincture can be applied topically. Internally use infection-fighting herbs such as echinacea. Blood-purifying herbs such as red clover, dandelion root and yellow dock can also be used. Vitamin E can be taken internally to prevent scarring. Also use supplements of vitamins A, D, E, C and zinc to strengthen the defenses of the skin.

Liver Spots

Age spots are changes in the skin's pigmentation aggravated by nutritional deficiencies and sun exposure. Especially important are the B complex vitamins, particularly folic acid and niacin. Eat foods high in superoxide dismutase such as nutritional yeast or use it as a supplement. Other helpful supplements include the antioxidants beta carotene, vitamins C and E, zinc, glutathione, cystine and

pycnogenol. Protect the skin from the sun, even if it means wearing a hat and cotton gloves. Lemon juice, chamomile tea, yogurt, buttermilk and elder flower water all have a lightening effect when applied regularly to the skin.

Rashes

If at all possible, figure out the cause of the rash. Have you been eating lots of tomatoes, citrus fruits, mangoes or strawberries lately? They can often cause rashes. Have you used a new skin product such as a lotion or bubble bath? Perhaps a new detergent, fabric softener or suntan lotion has made its way into your life. Is stress at a very high level right now? Consider the options and change whatever you suspect may be a cause.

Eat a bland diet featuring grains and vegetables (except tomatoes), and avoid hot spicy foods like ginger and cayenne. Drink teas like calendula, chamomile, Oregon grape root, plantain and yellow dock. Soak in the bathtub with a couple of handfuls of oatmeal tied into a face cloth. Pat the soothing oatmeal mucilage on the affected skin or aloe vera juice or cooled chamomile tea.

Rosacea

Rosacea is characterized by excessive redness, oiliness, enlarged pores and even lumpy swellings. It tends to develop over a few years and is caused by vasodilation. Staph infection can also be an underlying cause. Sufferers tend to be anxious; suppressing emotions can worsen the condition. Rosacea tends to develop during middle age or after.

Avoid eating very hot foods (both temperature-wise and also vasodilating foods such as chilis, salsas and horserad-

ish). Avoid refined carbohydrates and sugar, which can fuel an underlying yeast overgrowth condition. Sugar excess also contributes to toughening the skin's collagen protein fibers, and thus aging. Avoid histamines such as those in red wine, beer, gin, vodka, bourbon and champagne as well as tryamine-rich foods such as aged cheese, pickled and smoked foods. Avoid MSG, organ meats, citrus fruits and tomatoes. Coffee, black tea and cola drinks should also be avoided.

Emphasize calming and cooling foods such as burdock root, carrots, cucumbers, dandelion greens, potatoes, turnips, winter squash, mung beans, brown rice and millet. Drink plenty of water. Aloe vera can be taken in a shot glass ten minutes before each meal. Use a yeast-free vitamin B complex. A supplement of hydrochloric acid can also be helpful as many people with rosacea are low in this digestive aid.

Avoid using any type of scrub, very hot water to bathe or wash the face, hot tubs or the sauna. Use only tepid water in cleansing. Avoid sun exposure and use sunscreen when out of doors. Also avoid exposure to hot ovens and open fires. Do gentle exercise such as yoga and swimming in cool water but avoid practices that cause overheating such as running and intense aerobics.

Herbs to use internally and topically include aloe vera, burdock and chamomile. Tea tree oil can be applied directly to painful inflamed areas.

Scars

New scars are easier to minimize than older scars. Avoid sun exposure, which can cause a scar to become more permanently marked on the skin. Take vitamin E internally. Use a salve containing vitamin E, aloe vera, calendula, plaintain and castor oil.

Shingles

Shingles, or herpes zoster, is a hot, inflamed condition. The word shingles is derived from the Latin word for girdle as it can spread up the body. Shingles is a virus that can cause pain along the nerves, eruptions and crust formation in the skin. Attacks have been known to last from a week in younger folks to two months in older people.

The pain of shingles is due to the swelling of the blisters; however, pain may persist even after the blisters heal since the nerves have been irritated.

Drink plenty of beet juice and eat beets. Herbs to use internally include echinacea, licorice, lomatium, Saint John's wort and yellow dock.

Use acidophilus to help the growth of friendly microorganisms.

Salves used topically that are helpful for herpes will often help shingles, which is a related virus. Chicken pox is also a related virus, and those exposed to chicken pox sometimes develop shingles. A beneficial salve for shingles will often contain herbs such as lysine, calendula, tea tree and St. John's wort. Peppermint essential oil can be applied topically to numb the pain. Black walnut tincture can be taken orally. Lobelia tincture in small doses can be used internally and topically. Take 1/3 of a dropperful in a bit of water 3 times daily. A folk remedy is to apply apple cider vinegar or aloe vera juice or try a paste of baking soda and apple cider vinegar, a charcoal compress or a paste of Epsom salts and water. Oatmeal baths can also relieve pain.

Drink two cups of diluted celery juice daily (unless pregnant). Use vitamins A and C to help fight infection and a B-complex to help with stress.

Vitiligo

This skin condition is also known as leukoderma. It is characterized by white patches on the skin with a dark border. It is believed that the skin isn't producing enough of the skin pigment melanin and that the skin's pigment is disappearing.

Eat fish containing friendly fats such as salmon. Vitamin B complex, especially PABA and pantothenic acid, are helpful in preventing progression. Manganese and zinc are also useful. Add tablets of kelp or eat sea vegetables to nourish the thyroid gland, if a thyroid deficiency is suspected. Use essential fatty acids such as the oils of flax, borage or evening primrose. The herb khella has been found to stimulate melanin synthesis when used orally and topically in about one-third of the cases.

Topically, try tea tree oil, garlic oil or ginger as a compress.

Warts

Warts are caused by viruses. Louise Hay, author of *Love Your Body*, says that one common cause of warts is "little expressions of anger and hatred." Forgive the past and protect yourself with thoughts of joy and peace.

Cut down on animal protein foods for awhile. Eat more apples, asparagus, avocados, barley, carrots, cucumbers, garlic, millet, onions and seaweed.

Take homeopathic thuja 30c, four pellets under the tongue four times daily.

Some of the most effective folk remedies for warts include applying cedar leaf oil, the fresh juice of dandelion stem or flower, fresh fig latex, garlic oil, lavender oil, thuja oil, tea tree oil, fresh milkweed sap, fresh celandine juice, papaya peel, sundew sap or taping on a compress

of the inside of a banana peel. It may take a couple of weeks for the wart to disappear. It's okay to file the wart down with an emery board if you file gently. Mayapple tincture can carefully be applied to a wart, but avoid touching any other part of the skin as this plant is somewhat toxic and will irritate the surrounding skin. This is best done by a competent health practitioner.

Soak plantar warts in hot salt water. The banana peel treatment can be used even when wearing shoes and socks. Vitamin E oil by itself or a paste of vitamin C and water can be applied to plantar warts. A podiatrist colleague tells me she uses hypnosis as a way of getting clients' warts to vanish. A practitioner of Oriental medicine can burn cones of moxa close to or on the warts to help them dissipate. Magic has even been used to help eliminate warts. Consider drawing a picture of the body complete with warts and then throwing the drawing into a fire.

If you like this book, buy it!

The Secret of Youthful Skin

It is best to sleep on your back, as sleeping with the face all crunched up can cause creases which may lead to permanent lines. Also, elevate your head slightly with a pillow so fluids don't collect in the face, causing puffiness. If the pillow is too high, the neck will bend and the face curl towards the chest and impair breathing. There are special pillows designed to support the neck and keep you sleeping on the back that are very comfortable. See Resources.

As we age, our skin loses water. Facial acupressure is a great way to destress your face and improve circulation, thus encouraging a more beautiful visage.

Use flaxseed oil as a regular supplement. Lecithin helps to encourage the plumping of withered skin. Make sure to get adequate protein. Avoid squinting and frowning as this will emboss unnecessary lines into your face. What we think affects how we look. It is a known fact that anger can redden the skin, fear can whiten it and joy can make you radiant. Be a channel of love, compassion and kindness.

Exercise increases the skin's temperature, improves circulation and helps to increase collagen production. It also delivers oxygen and nutrients to the skin. Get aerobic exercise several times a week. For rough scaly skin eat silica-rich foods like oats and bran and also tie a handful of either or both into a washcloth and use it to wash the skin.

If your skin is scaly, take a tablespoon of flaxseed oil daily and two tablespoons of lecithin.

The Lips

Cracked skin around the lip area can indicate a need for the B vitamins. Remember to moisturize the upper lip area. An exercise to prevent lines forming around the mouth and nose is to curl the lips around the teeth, press the lips together, then blow out hard. Honey can be used as a moisturizer on the lips. Rub a cut strawberry or raspberry over the lips to moisturize, gently color and give delicious kisses.

The Neck

The neck is one of the first parts of the body to show aging. Remember to moisturize it using light oils, tapping gently to prevent a double chin. When moisturizing the neck use gentle upward strokes, starting from the base of the neck and working to the chin point. Practice gentle neck stretches by dropping the chin to one shoulder and then making a half-circle across the front of the body to the opposite shoulder. Reverse. You can also drop your chin down to your collarbone, then up to the ceiling, bringing your hands to the base of the skull to provide support.

Around the Eyes

The skin around the eye area is very thin and thus is one of the first areas to show signs of aging. Even if you have oily skin, the eye area still needs moisturizing. When touching the eye area to moisturize, the best way is to

gently press the skin, rolling the finger gently, working from the inner corner of the eye out. When cleansing makeup from the delicate eye area, use a cotton ball moistened with almond oil.

If you want to tighten the eye area after cleansing, apply a light coating of buttermilk.

Puffy eyes can be caused by a food allergy, crying or exhaustion. Drinking nettle tea on a regular basis, avoiding allergens and getting enough rest are essential.

Home remedies for puffy eyes include lying down (on a slant board if possible) with a thin slice of raw peeled potato, melon, apple, or cucumber over each eye. Cooled moistened tea bags are another option. Use chamomile, cornflower, elderflower, eyebright, marshmallow root and/ or black tea. To make a compress to reduce puffiness in the under eye area, make a tea of any of the preceding herbs, strain and chill. Soak a small clean cloth in the chilled brew and lie down and relax with the compress over the eyes. Or use a cooled used tea bag over each eye.

At night, apply a bit of castor oil to the eyelashes to encourage their growth.

Eyestrain causes squinting and thus eye wrinkles. If you have to read or study for long periods of time, focus on a distant point once every hour. Gaze out the window or look at a pretty picture on the wall. Don't rub your eyes; exercising them is a much better idea. Try this exercise to firm puffiness: open the eyes wide, then squeeze them shut tightly. Repeat several times.

Sun Sensibility

Staying out of the sun altogether is the easiest way to avoid sun damage. Of course small amounts of sunshine are essential and can prevent vitamin D deficiency and promote healing and skin growth. Sunbathing can cause

premature aging of the skin and even cancer. If you do chose to lie in the sun, the hours between 9 and 10 a.m. and 3 and 5 p.m. will expose you to less intense rays of ultraviolet burning rays. Fair skin is more sun-sensitive than dark skin, but the sun's rays penetrate into the lower dermis so that even those with very dark skin still need to protect their skin.

Do wear a hat with a wide brim and protective clothing. Be aware that some medications such as tetracycline, antihistamines, antidepressants, hormones and birth control pills can increase photosensitivity. Even natural substances can increase sun sensitivity such as essential oils made from citrus fruits, including bergamot and neroli and Saint John's wort. High altitude exposure is more intense as are the reflected rays of sand and snow.

Do apply a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 and reapply if you will be swimming or sweating. Green coffee beans and black walnut are two botanicals with some natural sunscreens activity. Shea butter works as a mild sunscreen and helps to hold moisture within the skin. However do not get a false sense of security from wearing sunscreen; it is still best to minimize sun exposure in order to prevent cancer.

Eat plenty of foods rich in natural antioxidants such as sweet potatoes, winter squash and carrots which are high in beta-carotene. Taking a supplement of 1,000 mg PABA (a B vitamin) can help prevent damage on a cellular level. Drink plenty of water.

If sunburn does occur, topical soothers include essential oil of lavender, aloe vera juice, compresses of strong black tea, cucumber slices, potato juice, yogurt or a cup of apple cider vinegar added to the bath. To sunburned lips apply a compress of equal parts milk and water.

Facial Exercises

Facial exercises can increase circulation to the face and make us look and feel more vital. The best time to do facial exercises is before bed, but doing them when very tense can also be beneficial. Remember to breathe when doing these and all exercises. As you exhale, visualize facial tensions melting.

Avoid resting the face in the hands or pressing your face into the telephone.

Always lubricate the skin well before performing facial exercises. Don't wrinkle or stretch the skin; practice pressing.

To prevent and remedy forehead lines look straight ahead while raising the eyebrows as high as possible. Repeat several times.

To prevent mouth area lines, make an exaggerated smile with the mouth closed. Relax lips. Puff out the cheeks with air and move the air from side to side, then slowly blow it out. Repeat several times.

To reduce a double chin, open the mouth wide and thrust the lower lip outwards and upwards, trying to touch the nose. Repeat several times.

Try "The Lion." Sit upright and open your eyes and mouth wide while extending the tongue toward the chin. Hold for a count of seven and repeat six more times.

Fill the mouth with air so that the cheeks puff out. Roll the air around in the mouth. After 20 seconds, let the air out with a pop. Repeat two more times.

Practice light tapping of the face.

Massaging the Face

Before applying any oil preparation, it is good to gently open the pores with a warm water steam. Practice this at least once a week. When applying a mask or moisturizer, simply press the substance into the skin, remembering the area under the chin, the neck and back of neck. Use your fingertips and start at the base of the neck. Leave the juices and/or food on for 10 minutes, then rinse without soap, using lukewarm water. End with ice water to close the pores and firm the skin. Apply moisturizer last. The oil can be tapped gently into the skin using the backs of the hands.

The Hair

Hair can add to our beauty, our individuality, keep our heads warm and protect from the elements and injury.

Since hair doesn't contain any nerves, it is considered nonliving tissue. One of the main components of hair is the fibrous protein, keratin, which is made of 18 amino acids. Keratin is in a doublehelix formation. A single strand of hair can last from two to four years. The average scalp has a total of 100,000 hairs. Below the scalp is the funnel-shaped hair follicle containing a sebaceous gland that makes the oily substance, sebum. It is the follicle's shape that determines whether the hair will be straight or curly. At the end of the follicle is a bulb known as the papilla. It is through this opening that hair receives nutrients through the bloodstream. Each hair has a medulla or hollow inner core and a cuticle which is an outer protective layer. The health of the hair can be a reflection of one's general state of vitality. It is normal to lose about 75 hairs a day. Most hair tends to be thicker in the summer and to fall out more in autumn. About 90 percent of the hair is growing (anagen phase) and 10 percent is at the resting stage (telogen phase). When new hair pushes out the old hair this is the catagen phase.

Hair usually grows one half-inch per month; it grows the fastest between the ages of 15 and 30. After age 50 hair growth will slow down somewhat. In the average lifetime, hair will grow about 25 feet. When hair grows, new cells overlap the older cells.

In Oriental medicine, the health of the hair is a reflection of the strength of the kidneys as well as the blood.

Taking better care of one's health will eventually show up in the hair, but it may take several months for the benefits to show, since hair grows slowly.

When possible, try not to wash hair daily as it can be drying. On days that you don't have to be "on," consider wearing your hair up or in a braid to give it a rest. If you must wash hair daily, at least use a very mild shampoo. Avoid excessive heat such as sitting close to a fire or being in the sun without a hat. Hair dryers, hot rollers and curling irons are also damaging to hair. Chemical processes such as colors and perms can dry the hair when used repeatedly. Rubber bands are particularly damaging to the hair. It is better to use coated hair ties. Hair needs to breathe, so it is best to avoid wearing tight hats, bands and wigs that prevent circulation to the scalp. Smoking and lack of exercise can also impair circulation to the scalp.

It is helpful to brush the hair before washing it; always use natural bristles. Plastic bristles don't distribute or absorb oil and are more likely to create static. Start at the ends and work up, brushing a few inches higher after every few strokes. Hold the hair while brushing to avoid tugging at the scalp. To give hair more body, brush hair while bending over. Brushing hair helps to distribute the scalp's oils to the full length of the hair and increase circulation to the scalp. Brushing gives hair fullness and halos the face. Avoid brushing hair when it is wet as wet hair has weaker hydrogen bonds and is more likely to break, except during a conditioning treatment. Many people find it relaxing to brush their hair before bed.

Scalp massages are wonderfully relaxing; they stimulate the sebaceous glands and improve circulation. Before washing, dip your fingertips into a mixture of olive or sesame oil with a few drops of rosemary oil added. Make small circular motions, using only the pads of the fingers for one minute in each place. Work from the hairline to

the sides, then over the crown to the base of the neck, the way the blood flows to the heart. Bending the head forward while massaging the scalp is especially beneficial. It is good to brush with the opposite hand of the side you are working on to stimulate the brain and scalp. Another scalp treat is to gently knock on the skull (without any oils) using the knuckles of both hands until you feel like stopping. You can also take a large handful of hair and gently tug on it to strengthen the hair and scalp.

When washing the hair, it is helpful to prerinse the hair first and let it be simply wet for about half a minute. Pour the shampoo (and later the conditioner) from the bottle into the palm of the hand and work up a lather by rubbing the hands together before applying it to the scalp. A bit of warm water can be added to the shampoo so that it is less concentrated. Do not apply a big glob of concentrated shampoo to one place on the scalp as it can be difficult to distribute. Massage the shampoo into the scalp. Rinse with warm water for longer than you think is necessary. End with a final rinse of cool water to close the outer covering of the hair.

Conditioners lubricate the hair shaft, help curb breakage and tangling. It is most important to apply conditioners to the ends of our hair. There are many excellent natural hair conditioners on the market. However, our kitchens also provide many options such as mashed avocado, honey, mayonnaise, milk power mixed with water and olive oil. An easy formula combines 1 egg yolk, 1/4 cup yogurt and 1/2 teaspoon of kelp. Shea butter also makes a wonderful conditioner.

While your hair is soaking up conditioner, gently detangle your hair by combing from the ends up with a wide-toothed comb without rough edges to disperse the formula throughout your hair. Cover with a disposable shower cap and leave on the hair for 10 to 20 minutes. If possible, spend this time in a sauna; otherwise just relax in the tub. Shampoo. Then rinse out completely. Always wash hair

in warm water and rinse with cool. The cool rinse will help close the hair cuticle (outer protective layer), making it flatter and better able to reflect light.

For dry lifeless hair a simple conditioner can be made with two egg yolks mixed with plain yogurt. Rinse with tepid water to avoid "cooking" the eggs.

After rinsing out the conditioner, you can help restore the hair's acid mantle by following with a rinse made of 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar for brunettes or lemon juice for blondes. Pat and blot the hair dry without rubbing.

Hair care experts say it is good to switch shampoo and conditioner brands to avoid the build-up of residue. Over-shampooing can create a rebound effect, causing the scalp to produce more oil. Do your best to select biodegradable hair care products. Many are available in bulk, making it possible to simply refill your own bottles.

My grandmother always said that if you want your hair to grow faster, cut it when the moon is waxing (getting bigger). Even if you want long hair, trimming it will help it look healthier by removing split ends.

Since hair is made of protein, make sure you are getting an adequate amount of this important nutrient. However, excessive protein can aggravate hair loss, according to Carl Pfeiffer, Ph.D., M.D. and Michael Colgan, M.D. of the Brain-Bio Institute in Princeton, New Jersey. Foods for healthy hair include almonds, dark green leafy vegetables, pumpkin, sesame and sunflower seeds, barley, buckwheat, millet, oats (good for hair loss due to illness), rice, rye and yogurt. Eating seaweed is said to keep hair healthy and dark, especially arame, hiziki, kombu and wakame. I'll never forget the time my teacher, Rebecca Wood, cut all the hair off a Barbie Doll and glued hiziki seaweed on in its place so we would never forget that "hiziki is for hair." Also beneficial for the hair are the sulfur-rich vegetables garlic and onions.

Hair that turns gray prematurely is said to be due to kidney deficiency. Good foods for keeping hair its youthful

color include beets, black sesame seeds, liver, blackstrap molasses, mulberries, nutritional yeast, rice polish, wheat germ, wheatgrass and yogurt. Reducing stress is also helpful. Nutritional deficiencies can contribute to premature gray hair.

Teas to drink for healthy hair include alfalfa, burdock root, horsetail, nettles and oatstraw. The Chinese herb Ho Shou Wu translates into English as, "Mr. Wu's hair stays black." In America this herb is known as Foti. It is used in Asia to help keep hair from turning gray. Vegetable juices that promote healthy hair include beet, carrot and spinach with a bit of onion added. Always dilute vegetable juices 50 percent with water as they are very concentrated.

Vitamin A deficiency can lead to a dry flaky scalp as well as hair loss. Vitamin B complex helps us deal with stress, curb hair loss and aids in the regulation of oil gland production. Especially important are PABA and inositol, which help protect the hair follicles. PABA also helps maintain hair color, as do biotin, folic acid and pantothenic acid, all part of the B complex. Lack of vitamin C may make hair more likely to break. Vitamin C also helps circulation to the scalp. Vitamin E increases the body's utilization of oxygen and thus improves circulation to the scalp. Include some essential fatty acids in the diet such as flaxseed oil to help balance both dry and oily scalp. Silica helps to nourish hair as well as skin and nails. Hair contains a high concentration of zinc; therefore its supplementation can also be helpful. Cysteine is a component of hair that promotes the formation of keratin.

Hair Loss

Hair loss can occur from stress, disease, chemotherapy, drugs (beta-blockers, ulcer medicines, anti-hypertensives, cholesterol-lowering) excessive dryness, thyroid defi-

ciency, fungal infections, nutritional deficiencies and genetic tendencies. Sudden shock has been known to lead to rapid balding.

In male-pattern balding the hair recedes at the front of the scalp on either side or spreads out from the top. One frequent cause of male balding is excessive production of the hormones androgen and testosterone. Both of these hormones can cause the hair follicle to shrink. As far as genetic tendencies go, hair loss patterns typically follow the maternal rather than paternal side.

Two of the leading types of hair loss in women are *alopecia areata* and the less common, chronic *telogen effluvium* (CTE). Alopecia is thought to be an autoimmune condition in which the body's immune system attacks itself. CTE is suspected to be caused by the hair follicles failing to move through their normal phases. In female baldness, the hair usually will diminish at the center and front of the scalp. This is more common at menopause but can occur much earlier. Birth control pills or hormones have sometimes been a factor in hair loss as excessive estrogen will suppress the thyroid and hypothyroid. High levels of copper, which can be the result of copper pipes or cookware, is another possible factor in women's hair loss. Women often lose hair after giving birth but not during pregnancy. Hair loss after childbirth will usually reverse after about six months. Other factors that can contribute to hair loss include physical injury, excessive weight loss, ringworm, psoriasis, seborrhea, syphilis, and anesthesia. Avoid a diet high in fat and sugar. Minimize alcohol consumption. Soybeans help to block the formation of DHT (dihydrotestosterone), a hormone associated with hair loss.

One approach that may be helpful for alopecia is supplementation with the essential fatty acids. In addition, drink a quart of nettles, oatstraw and horsetail tea daily.

Spend about 20 minutes daily lying on a slant board to allow increased blood flow to the scalp or consider yoga

postures like the shoulder or headstand. Be aware that these more advanced poses should not be attempted on your own. Find a yoga class that suits your needs with an instructor that can guide you.

Wear the hair loose whenever possible to avoid pulling at the scalp. The circular scalp massage mentioned earlier in this chapter is also helpful.

Super Hair Smoothie

Whirl the following ingredients in a blender. Drink and enjoy. It's delicious and has all the nutrients needed for a radiant head of hair.

- 1 cup apple juice
- 1/2 ripe banana
- 1 cup organic low-fat yogurt
- 1 Tbsp. Nutritional yeast
- 1 Tbsp. lecithin
- 1/2 cup raw pumpkin seeds
- 1/2 tsp. bee pollen
- 1/2 tsp. sea kelp
- 1 Tbsp. blackstrap molasses

If the hair roots are still alive, a folk remedy suggests rubbing a clove of garlic over the scalp before bed (preferably when sleeping alone!) Shampoo and condition in the morning.

I personally know of three men who have told me the following remedy worked for them for stopping hair loss. Buff your fingernails against each other in a circular motion. Do this five minutes at a time, three times daily. This sure beats biting your nails and is also said to help slow down hair loss and graying. Get rid of negative thought patterns. Rather than saying, "I'm losing all my hair," try "I'm taking better care of myself. My hair will grow thick." If all else fails, baldness itself can be beautiful and it is wise to accept this. To preserve the hair that you

have, don't shampoo every day as it causes more hair to be lost.

Other folk remedies to stimulate hair growth and stop hair loss include 1) apply fresh stinging nettles to the balding area of the scalp by lightly beating them on the head. Be aware that this can cause a rash and irritation that lasts up to 24 hours, yet it might be very helpful. 2) Rub fresh peeled ginger dipped in brandy over the balding area. 3) Mix castor oil with equal amounts of fresh onion juice, apply to your scalp and leave on overnight. Do this for two consecutive weeks. 4) Apply a tincture of cayenne to the balding area of the scalp (keeping it away from the eyes and mouth).

Exposing your hair to the chemicals used to bleach, dye, perm and straighten it will compromise the health of your hair and can leave you more prone to breakage and split ends. Recently a hair dye marketed for men was found to contain lead which can lead to nervous system disorders. Pregnant women should be especially careful of exposing themselves to such chemicals, but so should everyone else.

Dandruff

Simple dandruff (pityriasis) manifests as dry flaky scalp. Dandruff can occur from an excessively dry or oily scalp condition. Good hygiene and nutrition are the best remedies. Seborrheic dermatitis results from overactive sebaceous glands. This produces more oil and can range from small scaly dandruff to large patches. Stress, trauma and illness will worsen cases of dandruff.

It is normal to experience some flaking of the scalp, yet if dandruff is excessive it is a good idea to eliminate refined sugars from the diet. Also minimize dairy products and high-fat and fried foods. Make sure you are not experiencing a sensitivity to some hair product you are using color, perm, shampoo, spray and so forth.

Supplement with one tablespoon flaxseed oil daily to help both dry and oily hair.

Make a rinse for your hair with some of the herbs listed on page 50 under Herbal Hair Care that benefit dandruff. Add 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar to the hair rinse tea.

Dry Hair

Dry hair is often caused by a lack of sebum in the hair follicles as well as hair shafts lacking in moisture. Stress can be a contributing factor. Be sure to include some essential fatty acids in the diet such as freshly ground flaxseeds or fresh pressed flaxseed oil. Be sure to protect your hair from the sun and bathing in waters containing salt or chemicals. Use the hot oil treatment described earlier, including the scalp massage, then cover the scalp with a plastic shower cap and cover the head with a warm towel or go sit in a sauna for 20 minutes if you have access to one.

Oily Hair

Also aggravated by stress, oily hair also can be brought on by excessive conditioning. Eat a diet that is low in fat. Use products that contain tea tree oil.

Split Ends

This condition is called *scissura pilorum* and occurs when hair splits at the ends when individual cell layers separate from the older parts of the hair. Avoid sun damage, blow dryers, electric curling implements and chlorinated pools.

Herbal Hair Care

Any of the following herbs can be made into a tea to use as a hair rinse by bringing 1 quart of water to a boil and adding 4 heaping teaspoons of your choice of herbs. Stir, cover and let sit 1 hour. Strain into a large plastic squeeze bottle. Add 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar. You can use these herbs as a rinse by pouring the strained tea slowly over your hair. Don't rinse it out. Just let the rinse dry and enjoy the subtle radiance it produces.

Balding: Honey, nettle, rosemary, sage.

Blond hair: Calendula, chamomile, lemon juice, lemon peel, mullein flower, orange flower.

Dandruff: Artichoke leaves, celery seed, eucalyptus, lavender, nettle, peppermint, rosemary, sage, tea tree, thyme.

Dark hair (and to help keep it dark): Black tea, clove (use just a small amount or your head will feel numb), elder berries, henna, jaborandi, nettle, rosemary, sage, green walnut hulls.

Dry hair: Chamomile, comfrey, elder blossoms, marshmallow root, nettle, red clover, rosemary.

Gray hair: Elderberry, rosemary, sage.

Oily hair: Calendula, horsetail, lavender, lemon balm, lemon grass, nettle, peppermint, rosemary, sage, witch hazel, yarrow.

Red hair: Beet powder, ginger, henna (avoid, if getting a perm soon), hibiscus flowers, paprika, Red Zinger tea.

Scalp irritation: Calendula, chamomile, comfrey.

You can create a final rinse for your hair with any of the above tea rinses or simply add 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar or lemon juice to 3 cups of warm water. Avoid lemon or chemically processed hair as it is drying.

Jojoba oil is a liquid wax derived from the jojoba bean. It is an excellent ingredient in shampoos, conditioners and treatments and is often used for dandruff and hair loss. Jojoba helps to dissolve imbedded sebum in the scalp.

If for some reason you can't wash your hair (camping, lack of water, or illness), simply massage a bit of arrowroot powder into the scalp.

Leave it in a few minutes so it can absorb oils and then brush it out.

Aromatherapy for Fragrant and Healthy Hair

Every time you wash your hair brush, dry the brush and apply one or two drops of essential oil of rosemary. This herb is good for mental alertness, makes your hair shine and will cause you to smile whenever you brush your hair. Other favorite essential oils to use include lavender and sandalwood. You can also put one or two drops of essential oil into the palm of your hand and rub gently into the ends of your hair.

Another way to use essential oils for hair care is to put one drop of oil into the amount of shampoo that you squeeze out for one washing. Four drops of your choice of essential oil can be added to one pint of herbal tea rinse to which two tablespoons apple cider vinegar have been added.

You can also make a scalp treatment oil with two ounces jojoba oil and a quarter teaspoon essential oil. Massage just a small amount into the scalp. Wrap your head in a towel. Leave it on while you sit in the sauna, the tub or lie on a slant board. Relax and take in the nurturing fragrance.

Remember, essential oils must be used diluted. Never apply them directly to your scalp as this could cause irritation.

Some essential oils to choose from include the following.

Blonde: Lemon, eucalyptus.

Dandruff: Cedarwood, clary sage, lemon, patchouli, pine, rosemary, sage, tea tree.

Dark hair: Geranium and rosemary oil.

Dry hair: Cedarwood, clary sage, lavender, palmarosa, rosemary, rosewood, sage, sandalwood.

Balding, falling hair: Basil, cedarwood, clary sage, eucalyptus, juniper, lavender, orange, peppermint, rosemary, sage, ylang-ylang.

Normal hair: Chamomile, lavender, rosemary, ylang-ylang.

Oily hair: Bergamot, cedarwood, clary sage, lemon, lemongrass, patchouli, rosemary, sage, ylang-ylang.

Styling

Avoid wearing the hair in a tight constrictive style which can impair circulation, weaken hair, and cause headaches.

When I noticed that my teenaged daughters were spending outrageous amounts on hair care products, we tried making a few of our own. Here are some of our more successful items.

Aloe vera gel can be used as a styling gel. Its high zinc content is beneficial for hair. It also can tighten the scalp and curb excessive oil production.

Flaxseed tea or flat beer can be used as a setting lotion or styling solution. The natural sugars and protein they contain help to thicken the hair. You can use pipe cleaners to set hair.

To make a hair spray, boil the juice of two lemons with two cups of water until the amount is reduced by half. Strain. Cool and pour into a spray bottle. Add two tablespoons of vodka as a preservative.

For hair spray buildup (less likely from natural brands), add one tablespoon of baking soda to the amount of shampoo you put in the palm of your hand. Use this only when needed.

If you, or more likely your kids, get chewing gum stuck in your hair, massage some peanut butter into the area and then shampoo out.

Rinse the hair well after swimming to rinse out salt and also algicides. If your hair turns green from chlorine,

dissolve six aspirins into a pint of warm water. Massage into the scalp and then shampoo it out. This is not a truly natural remedy, but neither is swimming in a chlorinated pool. A rinse with tomato juice will also help prevent the garish greenness. To get orange color out of the hair, such as from iron-rich water, add 1/3 cup of lime juice to the rinse water.

If you like this book, buy it!

Natural Hand Care

The skin on the backs of the hands is especially thin and also most likely to show age. Protect the hands from chemicals by wearing gloves when doing house-cleaning. Before gardening, scratch your nails into a bar of soap to help keep the dirt out. Wash the hands in warm water rather than hot, which can damage growing cells. Be sure to dry the hands thoroughly, even between the fingers, where fungi and chapping can occur. Keep a bottle of natural lotion next to the sink as a reminder to use it after washing and drying the hands. During the cold months, wear gloves or mittens to prevent chapping. Avoid using your nails as tools.

Massage the hands as well as exercising them. Shake the hands vigorously to increase circulation and bring nutrients to the nails. Make a tight fist and then gradually open the hands, stretching the fingers out wide. Consider buying a set of Chinese hand balls available at many health food stores to squeeze into the palms. Another exercise is to press the hands together as if praying, only harder. Relax. Repeat 10 times. Separate and stretch the fingers 10 times. Take a rubber band and take turns placing it around the thumb and each individual finger as you stretch the fingers wide.

You can exfoliate the hands by massaging them with sugar and a bit of almond oil or some powdered oatmeal (run through the blender). Rinse well. On occasion, soak your hands in warm herbal tea such as calendula, chamomile or fennel.

See also Liver Spots, page 29.

The Nails

Nails are made of keratin, which is a fibrous protein produced by cells at the base of the nail underneath the cuticle. Like the epidermis of the skin and hair, they consist primarily of protein cells. Nails grow about half an inch every four months, quicker in summer than in winter and more so between the ages of 18 and 28 as well as during pregnancy and when the body is in a state of healing. The nails on your dominant hand tend to grow faster than those on the hand you use less often. An adult nail can take eight to nine months to grow, whereas a child's nail can take only three to four months. Fingernails grow about twice as fast as those on the toes.

Foods to nourish the hands and nails include adequate protein such as that found in beans, organic eggs, yogurt and seafood. To nourish the nails from the inside out drink three daily cups of horsetail tea which is rich in the mineral silica. If you collect the herb yourself, be sure to gather it in the springtime as it can be irritating to the kidneys if collected later in the year. If the nails are very brittle, include three tablespoons of ground flaxseeds or one tablespoon fresh pressed flaxseed oil daily in your regime.

The word manicure is derived from the Latin word *mani*, meaning hand. To nourish the nails from the inside, eat more oatmeal and include sea vegetables in the diet. To make the nails stronger, soak them in warm olive, sesame or wheat germ oil with 4 drops of essential oil of lemon for ten minutes.

After soaking the nails, with the nails still oily, buff the nails with a piece of chamois leather in one direction. Spend about one minute on each nail. Never cut the cuticle, which protects the nails by sealing off the opening between the skin and nail. The best time to trim the nails is when they are wet. After clipping, file gently with an emery board with a "down and away" stroke, filing in one direction from front to back.

Nail and Hand Salve

Rub this on the nails, cuticles and hands. This formula will keep three or four months without refrigeration.

- 2 Tbsp. beeswax
- 2 Tbsp. cocoa butter
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. anhydrous lanolin
- 20 drops essential oil of geranium or rosemary

Warm all of the ingredients, except for the essential oil, in a double boiler or small saucepan until the wax has melted. Remove from the heat, pour the mixture into a small glass jar and allow it to cool a bit without putting the lid on. Then add the essential oil. Give it a stir. Put the lid on when it is completely cool.

Herbs for Skin, Hair and Nails

Alfalfa

(*Medicago sativa*)

The above ground portion of this herb is used for its anti-inflammatory, nutritive and tonic properties. Use as a tea internally to treat itchy skin. In cosmetics alfalfa is included in facial steams for normal skin, as a soothing bath herb and a strengthening hair rinse due to its high protein content. It is also included in poultices to treat wounds. Alfalfa is rich in chlorophyll, which promotes wound healing, is naturally deodorizing and helps prevent infection. Some people may exhibit sensitivity to this plant and should avoid it.

Aloe vera

(*Aloe vera*)

Known for the gelatinous substance in its leaves, aloe is appreciated for its cooling and healing qualities and is reputed to have been one of Cleopatra's beauty secrets. Aloe is useful as an anti-inflammatory, antifungal, demulcent, emollient and rejuvenative. It is used topically to treat conditions such as acne, boils, burns, dandruff, eczema, herpes, insect bites, poison ivy and oak, psoriasis, ringworm, scars, sunburn and wounds. It is found in lotions, moisturizers, salves, soaps, sprays, toners, shampoos and conditioners.

Anise seeds

(*Pimpinella anisum*)

An anti-inflammatory agent as well as a mild stimulant, anise has a pleasant licorice-like aroma. It is often included

in facial steams to open the pores and is often featured in facial cleansers, soaps, colognes and toners. It is also used in hair rinses and to flavor toothpastes and mouthwashes. Both the herb and essential oil are used.

Annatto

(*Bixa orellana*)

A native of the American tropics, the seeds of annatto are coated with a fleshy orange covering that yields a dye, which is why this plant is commonly referred to as "Lipstick tree." It is one of the few natural dyes still used in commercial cosmetics. It is also included as a coloring agent in rouges and hair rinses.

Basil

(*Ocimum basilicum*)

Basil leaves are used for their antiseptic and circulatory stimulating properties. They are used topically as an insect repellent and to treat acne, insect bites and ringworm. The juice of the fresh plant is applied to fungal infections on the skin. Fresh and dried basil are included in salves and poultices. Basil is added to facial steams, cleansers, toners and hair rinses and its essential oil is used in soaps and perfumes. In hair products it adds a delightful scent, improves hair growth and tames tangles. It also makes an excellent energizing bath herb. Both the herb and essential oil are used.

Bay

(*Laurus nobilis*)

Bay leaves are valued for their antifungal, antiseptic and stimulating properties. Bay leaf is included in facial steams. When used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses, they help treat dandruff. Bay is used as a bath herb for sore muscles and joints. Use bay leaf tea or 7 drops of the essential oil diluted in a pan of warm water as a soak for nail fungus. The essential oil is used in perfumes and aftershaves.

Birch

(*Betula alba*)

The leaf buds, leaves, inner bark and sap of birch are valued for their analgesic, antiseptic, astringent and stimulant properties. Birch is incorporated into salves, washes, poultices, cleansers and toners for acne, bruises, eczema, psoriasis and wounds. It is an excellent bath herb for rashes and other skin eruptions. It is also used in facial steams in the treatment of acne and is considered softening to the skin. Birch is included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses to promote hair growth and to treat dandruff. It is included in toothpastes and in toothache gel remedies for pain. Birch essential oil smells just like wintergreen oil for which it is often substituted.

Burdock

(*Arctium lappa*)

Burdock root is antifungal, anti-inflammatory, demulcent and is often added to facial steams, cleansers, lotions, toners, salves and is used as a bath herb, especially for the treatment of oily and acne-prone skin. Burdock is also added to shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses and is especially beneficial for dandruff. Burdock is used both internally and externally for skin conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis.

Calendula

(*Calendula officinalis*)

The beautiful yellow flowers of calendula are used for their antifungal, antiseptic, astringent and vulnerary properties. Calendula, when used both internally and externally, helps to increase peripheral circulation. A common ingredient in cosmetics, it is used in facial steams, cleansers, lotions, moisturizers, soaps and salves. An old saying is "Where calendula is applied, no pus will form." Calendula soothes burns and sunburn. It is gentle enough to use in products such as eye creams as well as in baby care products and can even help cradle cap and diaper rash. As a bath herb, calendula is used for dry skin. Calendula is used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses, especially

for blondes. It is also used internally to improve skin conditions such as acne, boils, eczema and psoriasis.

Chamomile

(*Matricaria recutita*)

The flowers of German chamomile are used for their anti-inflammatory and vulnerary properties. Chamomile actually helps wound healing by promoting tissue granulation and epithelialization. Often used in dry skin care formulas and to relax facial tension, chamomile is also added to cleansers, lotions, facial masks, soaps, salves, eye creams and is used as a relaxing bath herb. It helps to cleanse the pores, clear acne and reduce puffiness. It is a favorite for blondes and used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. Chamomile is used in massage oils for sore muscles and to promote relaxation.

Cinnamon

(*Cinnamomun cassia, C. zeylanicum*)

The bark of the cinnamon tree is valued for its antifungal, aromatic and astringent properties. Cinnamon is used in facial scrubs, soaps, cleansers, masks and motions. Its pungent sweet smell makes it desirable in perfumes and aftershaves. Also considered an aphrodisiac, essential oil of cinnamon is included in massage oils for lovers. Excellent for brunettes and to prevent baldness, it is included in shampoos and hair rinses. In toothpastes and mouthwashes, cinnamon helps to freshen the breath. When used internally for a period of time, cinnamon helps to promote a rosy complexion.

Clary sage

(*Salvia sclarea*)

The flowers and leaves of clary sage are used for their aromatic and astringent properties. It is used for mature as well as acne-prone skin in cleansers, soaps and toners. As a bath herb clary sage helps to relieve muscle tension and cramps as well as hormonally related concerns of premenstrual syndrome and menopause. For the hair, it is used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses to relieve

dandruff and promote hair growth. The essential oil is included in perfumes, soaps and powders.

Cleavers

(*Galium aparine*)

The above-ground portion of cleavers is primarily used internally as a tea, tincture or in capsules to improve skin conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis. It is an excellent lymphatic and kidney cleanser traditionally used in the spring as a blood purifying agent. A compress or poultice of cleavers may be used to treat burns, sunburn, psoriasis and wounds. Cleavers may also be used as a facial wash for acne, eczema, psoriasis, freckles and loose sagging skin.

Cloves

(*Eugenia aromatica*)

The dried flower buds of cloves are used for their antiseptic, aromatic and astringent properties. Clove is included in skin preparations such as soaps, toners, lotions, perfumes, powders and aftershaves. Because it is also antifungal, it is used in salves to treat athlete's foot. It is used for brunettes and redheads in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. It is also used to flavor toothpastes and freshen the breath. The essential oil is included in perfumes for its sensuous scent.

Comfrey

(*Symphytum officinale*)

The leaves and flowers of comfrey are used topically for their emollient and regenerative properties. Comfrey contains allantoin, which stimulates new cell growth. Excellent for dry skin, comfrey is included in soaps, lotions, moisturizers, salves and as a bath herb. It is one of the most favored herbs in the form of salves and poultices to treat wounds and abrasions as it is a cell proliferant. Excellent for dry hair, comfrey is used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses.

Coriander

(*Coriandrum sativum*)

Coriander seeds are used for their antifungal, aromatic and stimulating qualities. Coriander is used in lotions and as a bath herb for sore muscles and joints. It is also often used in perfumes, soaps, deodorants, toothpaste and aftershaves.

Cornflower

(*Centaurea sativum*, *C. cyanus*)

A gentle astringent, cornflower is also known as bachelor's button. It is useful in facial sprays, facial steams, toners and eye creams or compresses for puffy eyes. It is also used in antiwrinkle creams and lotions and in hair rinses for blond, gray and white hair.

Dandelion

(*Taraxacum officinale*)

The leaves, blossoms and roots of dandelion, which are nutritive and antifungal, are included in facial steams, masks and in washes or compresses for acne, eczema, psoriasis and wounds. Dandelion may be used in a mask for sallow skin and as a bath herb. The sap from the stem can be applied to warts to make them disappear. Drinking a tea of dandelion root is one of the best skin herbs to ensure beauty from the inside out as it helps to purify the blood by improving liver function. Dandelion root tea is a supreme internal remedy for acne, boils, eczema and psoriasis.

Echinacea

(*Echinacea purpurea*, *E. angustifolia*)

The root, leaves, flowers and seeds of echinacea are taken internally as a tea, tincture or in capsules to remedy skin conditions such as abscesses, acne, boils, eczema and especially skin conditions due to infections such as herpes, measles and scarlet fever. Echinacea is a powerful infection-fighting agent that helps to stimulate white blood cell production, interferon production and to make cells less susceptible to viral takeover by inhibiting hyaluronidase. It can also help regenerate cells that have been damaged.

Topically, echinacea is used in compresses, salves and poultices to treat infected wounds and insect bites. Applying the tincture directly to a potential pimple helps to dry it up more quickly.

Elder

(*Sambucus nigra*, *S. canadensis*)

Elder flowers have anti-inflammatory, emollient and mild astringent properties, and are used for both oily and dry skin in facial steams, cleansers, scrubs, lotions, moisturizers, soaps, toners and salves. Elder flower water is used as a toner and reputed to be one of the beauty secrets of many women. It makes a good aftershave tonic and has been used to lighten freckles, calm sunburn, reduce enlarged pores and reduce eye puffiness when used in a compress. It makes a relaxing bath herb. Elder benefits dry hair when used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. When used internally as a tea or tincture, elder helps to clean the pores from the inside.

Eucalyptus

(*Eucalyptus globulus*)

The leaves and twigs of eucalyptus are appreciated for their antiseptic, aromatic and astringent properties. Eucalyptus is used in deodorants, salves, soaps and as a bath herb for sore muscles. It is helpful to decongest clogged sinuses, and is included in facial steams, chest rubs and massage oil or liniment for sore muscles. It makes an invigorating and decongesting bath herb, also benefiting sunburn. During the 1800s, eucalyptus oil was used by American doctors to disinfect surgical equipment and disinfect wounds. Eucalyptus is included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses to treat dandruff. It is included in mouthwashes for its breath-freshening qualities.

Fennel

(*Foeniculum vulgare*)

Fennel seeds are used for their anti-inflammatory and aromatic properties for mature skin in facial steams, cleansers, soaps, antiwrinkle creams and lotions. They help to calm

uneven colored blotchy skin. A cool fennel seed tea compress is used to reduce the puffiness of closed swollen eyes. Fennel is included in salves to heal bruises. The essential oil is used in perfume and to scent shampoos. Chewing a few fennel seeds after a meal helps to freshen the breath. The essential oil is often used in toothpastes and mouthwashes.

Frankincense

(*Boswellia carterii*)

The resin of this plant has a long tradition of use for its analgesic, aromatic, antiseptic and rejuvenative properties. It is used in facial steams, cleansers and toners for mature skin, acne, boils, scars and varicose veins. It is used as a salve or liniment to treat rheumatism, wounds and sports injuries and is also included in mouthwashes. Long used in perfumery, frankincense is still burned as an incense, even in hospitals, to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Geranium

(*Geranium species*)

The root and leaves of geranium are powerful astringents and are also anti-inflammatory and aromatic. Geranium is used in facial steams, toners, masks, antiwrinkle creams and soaps for mature as well as oily skin. Geranium is also used for oily hair in shampoos, conditioners and rinses. Scented geraniums (*Pelargonium* genus) are included in facial steams, bath mixtures, hair rinse perfumes and soaps for their aromatic and rejuvenative properties.

Gotu Kola

(*Centella asiatica*)

The above-ground portions of gotu kola are used for their rejuvenative properties. Gotu kola helps to strengthen connective tissue and collagen production. It promotes wound and scar healing by stimulating cellular mitosis. It is taken internally as a tea, tincture or in capsules to treat age spots, burns, dermatitis, eczema, leprosy, psoriasis and scars (even the keloid variety). Included in baths, salves, lotions

and moisturizers, gotu kola is used topically to help burns, eczema, psoriasis and in scalp oils to deter baldness.

Henna

(*Lawsonia alba*, *L. inermis*)

Henna flowers make a delicate perfume and facial wash. The leaves are popular as a hair colorant and have also been used to make temporary tattoos for decorating the palms of the hands and soles of the feet and for nail coloring. As a hair coloring, henna coats the hair shaft without penetrating it. It is used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. The flowers are included in massage oils for imparting suppleness to the limbs.

Hibiscus

(*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*)

The leaves and flowers of hibiscus are valued for their emollient properties. They are included in facial steams for dry skin. The flowers impart a reddish tint to the hair when used in a rinse.

Honeysuckle

(*Lonicera japonica*)

Native to Europe, Asia and the Americas, the flowers of honeysuckle are used in cosmetics for their antifungal, antiseptic, astringent and refrigerant qualities. Honeysuckle is included in lotions and moisturizers for its skin-softening and wrinkle-treatment properties and in washes and compresses to treat poison oak and ivy, rashes, sunburn and swelling.

Horsetail

(*Equisetum arvense*)

The above-ground portion of horsetail is used cosmetically for its nutritive properties. Used in facial steams, toners, lotions and bath herbs, it is excellent for oily skin and enlarged pores. It is also used in shampoo, conditioners and hair rinses for oily hair and dandruff as well as to strengthen fragile hair. Drinking horsetail tea regularly helps to strengthen the growth of hair and nails and prevent their brittleness.

Irish Moss

(*Chondrus crispus*)

The entire plant of Irish Moss, a seaweed, is used for its anti-inflammatory, demulcent and emollient properties and it is highly nutritive. It is included in lotions and moisturizers to soften the skin, moisturize dry skin and prevent wrinkles. It is also used to thicken cosmetics and as a binding agent in toothpaste. A compress or poultice of Irish Moss is used to soothe inflamed tissues.

Jasmine

(*Jasminum species*)

Considered an aphrodisiac, jasmine flowers provide one of the most delightful fragrances of all. They are included in facial sprays, eye creams, bath herbs, lotions, massage oil and eye creams, and benefit dry, mature and sensitive skin. Jasmine can be used in a compress for tired eyes. Jasmine essential oil is used to scent perfume, soap, shampoo, conditioner and hair rinse. Every week, wash your hair brush and then apply two or three drops of essential oil of jasmine to the brush for beautifully scented hair that is a pleasure to brush.

Kelp

(*Fucus vesiculosus*)

The entire kelp plant, which grows in the ocean, is valued for its detoxifying and nutritive properties. Kelp is used in masks, toners and lotions. It helps to soften the skin. Kelp stimulates the thyroid gland due to its high mineral content, especially iodine, and thus is used to help reduce cellulite and aid weight loss. For this reason, kelp is added to soaps, baths and thigh creams. For oily hair and to promote shine, kelp is included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. Using kelp internally in tablets or as an addition to food nourishes the hair and nails.

Khella

(*Ammi visagna*)

The fruit of khella is used internally as a tea, tincture and in capsules and topically in salves to treat vitiligo. Khella helps to stimulate the synthesis of melanin.

Lavender
(*Lavendula species*)

Lavender flowers are highly aromatic and antiseptic. Lavender is used in skin formulas as a facial steam, cleanser, toner and in lotions and soaps. The word lavender is actually derived from the Latin *lavare* meaning "to wash" as this herb has such a long tradition in cleansing. It helps treat conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis and benefits all types of skin. Lavender is cell regenerating and helps to prevent wrinkles and scarring when its essential oil is added to lotions and salves. It also helps to prevent infection. A drop or two of essential oil of lavender can be applied topically, undiluted, to dispel a pimple that is about to erupt. Lavender oil can also be applied to burns and sunburns and is one of the only essential oils that is used undiluted on the skin. It is an excellent bath herb that helps to lift the spirits after a difficult day. Misting oneself several times daily with lavender water helps to moisturize the skin and improve one's mood. Lavender is often included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses to impart a beautiful fragrance. A foot soak in lavender tea or water scented with the essential oil is great for tired achy feet. Lavender oil is included in massage oils for its emotionally uplifting and muscle-soothing properties. Lavender is an important perfume ingredient. Place a few drops of lavender oil on your hair brush after washing it to impart fragrance and stimulate hair growth.

Lemon balm
(*Melissa officinalis*)

Lemon balm was included in Carmelite Water, a popular toilet water used by men and women of culture in medieval Europe. The leaves are used in facial steams and toners for blemishes and as a rejuvenative agent. The leaves have also been used in compresses or poultices for boils, shingles and insect bites. Lemon balm makes a comforting bath herb, good for improving a bad mood. It is also included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses for its lovely lemon scent. When diluted, the essential oil

is used topically on herpes lesions. It is also included in perfumes and massage oils.

Lemongrass

(*Cymbopogon citratus*)

Lemongrass leaves are an important aromatic and antiseptic agent. Used for oily skin and acne or skin infections in the form of facial steams, cleansers, soaps and as a bath herb, lemongrass is excellent for oily hair, dandruff and blond hair and is used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. The essential oil (also known as citronella) is used in deodorants, perfumes and as an insect repellent as well as to treat ringworm.

Linden

(*Tilia platyphylla*, *T. cordata*, *T. europea*, *T. americana*)

Linden flowers are used cosmetically for their antiseptic and sedative qualities. They are included in facial waters, facial steams, masks, lotions, moisturizers, soaps and as a relaxing bath herb that leaves the skin smooth and soft. Linden also helps to heal blood vessel walls and is used to clear acne, freckles, rashes and wrinkles as well as to treat burns. Linden is included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses.

Marshmallow

(*Althea officinalis*)

Marshmallow root is used in beauty care for its anti-inflammatory and emollient properties. It is featured in dry skin treatments as a bath herb, facial steam, cleanser, moisturizer, lotion, soap, wrinkle cream and salve. It is particularly helpful for eczema, psoriasis, sunburn, windburn and wounds and is excellent for very sensitive skin. Marshmallow root is high in mucilaginous compounds which have a soothing healing quality upon the skin. Its soothing properties make it nourishing for dry hair and it is used in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses.

Meadowsweet

(*Filipendula ulmaria*)

Native to Europe, Asia and North America, meadowsweet

is also called queen of the meadow. Its above-ground portions are used for their analgesic, anti-inflammatory, aromatic and sedative properties. Meadowsweet is used as an eyewash for sore eyes and as a compress for rheumatism. The flowers are used in facial steams and facial water to clear and brighten the complexion; the oil from the buds is used in perfumery.

Mullein

(*Verbascum thapsus*)

Native to Europe and west Asia, mullein leaves are used for their astringent and emollient properties as a bath herb for sore muscles. The flowers have been used as a blond hair colorant. Mullein flower oil is used to treat bruises, sore muscles, hemorrhoids and ringworm. Mullein leaves have been used as a tonic in hair wash.

Myrrh

(*Commiphora myrrha*)

The resin extracted from this Middle Eastern shrub is valued for its analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antifungal, antiseptic, aromatic, rejuvenative and vulnerary properties. Used in anti-wrinkle creams and skin toners, myrrh is an important infection-fighting agent and is included in salves to treat acne, boils, eczema, impetigo, ringworm and varicose veins. It helps to promote tissue granulation and is widely used in dental products such as toothpastes and mouthwashes to treat halitosis, mouth sores, thrush, gingivitis, pyorrhea and cavities. Myrrh is used in soaps, as a fixative for perfumes to make them long-lasting, but it is probably best known as an incense. It is such a powerful preservative that it was used by the ancient Egyptians in the mummification process.

Neem

(*Azadirachta indica*)

A tree from India whose bark, twigs, leaf, roots, seeds and sap are all used for their antifungal and anti-inflammatory properties, neem is used in soaps, salves and lotions to treat skin conditions such as acne, athlete's foot, eczema, rashes, ringworm, scabies and wounds. It is also used in

hair products to treat dandruff and even head lice. When neem is added to skin and hair products, it has strong preservative properties which help to extend shelf life.

Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)

The above-ground portions of nettle are used for their astringent, nutritive and stimulating properties. Nettle is included in facial steams and cleansers, especially for oily skin, and is added to shampoos and conditioners to treat dandruff and hair loss. The growing plant can cause a stinging rash due to the presence of formic acid and histamine; however the dried or heated plant has no such effect. When used internally as a tea, tincture or in capsules nettle is an excellent herb to strengthen hair, skin and nails due to its high concentration of nutrients, including calcium, iron, silica and beta-carotene. It is used internally for the treatment of acne, boils and eczema and helps to improve circulation.

Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*)

Nutmeg kernels are used for their anti-inflammatory, aphrodisiac, astringent and circulatory stimulant properties. Nutmeg is incorporated into salves to treat eczema, ringworm and scars. The essential oil is used in lotions, soaps and perfumes and added to massage oils to soothe sore muscles. It is also a popular ingredient in aftershaves.

Oregon Grape (*Mahonia repens*)

The root and root bark of Oregon grape are primarily used internally as teas, tinctures or in capsules for their antiseptic properties to treat conditions such as acne, boils, eczema, herpes and impetigo. It is also made into a salve for itchy skin, boils, wounds and various skin infections.

Orris (*Iris florentina*)

Native to southern Europe, North Africa and India, the peeled rhizome of orris is used in cosmetics for its aro-

matic properties. The juice of the plant may fade freckles. The powdered root is used to make dry shampoos. The roots are also chewed as a breath freshener. The essential oil has a fragrance reminiscent of violets due to the presence of the ketone irone and is used to scent toothpastes, soaps and powders. Orris root is considered a fixative and helps other herbs to retain their scent when mixed with them. For this reason it is an important ingredient in sachets and potpourris.

Parsley

(*Petroselinum crispum*)

Parsley leaves are valued for their antioxidant, antiseptic and nutritive qualities. They are used in poultices to treat bruises, insect bites and sprains. Rubbed on the body they help to repel mosquitoes. Parsley is a welcome addition to facial steams for dry and oily skin as well as to lotions for soothing eczema and psoriasis. It can also be used in compresses to soothe tired eyes. Eating parsley on a regular basis helps to promote clear skin. It is included in hair rinses for dark hair and to treat dandruff. As a mouthwash it helps to freshen the breath. The essential oil from the seed is used in perfumery.

Patchouli

(*Pogostemon patchouli*)

Native to southeast Asia and well-loved for its scent, the leaves of patchouli are aged for at least 24 hours before being distilled. Fabrics, including rugs and shawls imported from India, are impregnated with the scent of patchouli as a moth deterrent. The essential oil is considered antifungal, antiseptic and rejuvenative. It is used in cleansers, moisturizers, soaps and salves to treat acne, athlete's foot, eczema and dry mature skin. It is also added to shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses for the treatment of dandruff.

Peppermint

(*Mentha piperita*)

Peppermint is a cooling and stimulating antiseptic which

helps to tighten the pores. Containing its own natural oils, it blesses us in baths, soaps, facial steams, masks, toners, aftershaves, and as a stimulating shampoo, hair conditioner and rinse. Peppermint is also used for its breath-freshening properties in toothpastes and mouthwashes.

Pine (*Pinus species*)

Aromatic and antiseptic, pine is valued as a bath herb for sore muscles, and is used in soaps, lotions, perfumes and aftershave. Pine helps to treat acne, eczema and psoriasis when used in soaps, lotions and salves. It can also bring boils to a head and is often incorporated into antidandruff shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses.

Plantain (*Plantago major*)

Native to Europe, plantain leaves are valued for their antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, astringent, demulcent, mucilaginous and refrigerant properties. Plantain helps to soothe inflammation and irritated tissues and is often used in salves to treat wounds and damaged skin. It can be used as a poultice and/or salve for boils, bee stings, hemorrhoids and poison ivy. Plantain can be boiled in milk, strained, cooled and applied to sunburn.

Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*)

Valued for its anti-inflammatory properties, red clover is included in facial steams, cleansers, lotions and moisturizers. It is also used as a bath herb for many conditions including acne, eczema, psoriasis as well as sun- and wind-damaged skin. It is included in lip balms for its soothing properties and in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses for dry or damaged hair. Red clover can also be taken internally to ease the same conditions.

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)

Its Latin name translates to "dew of the sea." The leaves are antiseptic, astringent, rejuvenative and stimulating and

are often included in facial steams, cleansers, masks, toners, lotions, moisturizers and soaps. As a bath herb, rosemary relaxes the muscles yet helps the mind to be alert. It is used in massage oils for sore muscles and cellulite as well as toothpastes, mouthwashes and insect repellents. When used on the skin, it helps to strengthen the capillaries and improve sluggish and mature skin. Rosemary is popular in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses to help darken gray hair, and for dandruff and hair loss. Adding a few drops of rosemary essential oil to a clean hairbrush helps to impart hair with a beautiful shine and fragrance and stimulates hair growth.

Rose (*Rosa species*)

Rose petals are used in body care for their antiseptic, aromatic, astringent, hydrating and soothing properties. Rose is beloved for its beautiful scent and as an ingredient in dry or mature skin products such as facial steams, cleansers, lotions, toners, lotions and moisturizers. It is also used as a bath herb. Rosewater has long been used as a toner and moisturizer by beauties to soothe sore complexions. Diluted, it can be applied to cottonballs and placed on closed eyes to reduce puffiness. Rose is considered a cell rejuvenator. For dry hair, roses are included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. Rosewater makes a lovely mouthwash. Pure essential oil of rose is one of the most wonderful and expensive scents and included in perfumery. It takes about 10,000 pounds of roses to make 1 pound of the essential oil or 30 roses to make 1 drop of oil.

Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)

The leaves and flowers of sage are antibacterial and are included in skin care products such as facial steams, cleansers, toners and soaps. They are also used as a bath herb. It is especially beneficial for acne and oily skin. Sage has been used as a wash and salve to treat eczema, psoriasis and poison oak and ivy and is very effective as an

antiperspirant when included in deodorants. It is a common ingredient in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses for oily or falling hair. It is also helpful for brunettes to darken gray hair. Sage helps to stimulate the scalp. It is also breath freshening when added to toothpastes and mouthwashes and it helps treat gingivitis.

Sandalwood (*Santalum album*)

Sandalwood is antiseptic, aphrodisiac and rejuvenative. It is used as a bath herb in soaps and aftershaves, and is often added to shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. It is a common ingredient in exotic perfume with a history of 4,000 years of use. In many tropical places, women mix essential oil of sandalwood with coconut oil and rub it into their hair for a beautiful shine and fragrance.

Sarsaparilla (*Smilax officinalis*)

Sarsaparilla is used internally for its alternative, diaphoretic and rejuvenative properties as a tea, tincture or in capsules to remedy skin conditions such as acne, age spots, eczema and psoriasis. It helps to reduce inflammation and binds with bacteria to carry them out of the body.

Soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*)

When mixed with water soapwort produces a foamy lather that can be used as a wash to clean the body and hair. It effectively helps to remove grease.

Star anise (*Illicium verum*)

Native to Southeast Asia, the fruit of star anise is the portion valued for its analgesic, aromatic and circulatory stimulating properties. The essential oil is used to scent hair products, soaps and perfumes. Chew a small piece after a meal to freshen your breath.

Tea Tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*)

The essential oil of tea tree is distilled from the leaves

and is excellent as an antifungal and antiseptic agent. The oil is added to facial steams, cleansers, soaps, toners, lotions, moisturizers, salves and bath preparations. It helps skin conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis as well as fungal infections such as diaper rash, jock itch, ringworm and athlete's foot. Tea tree oil is an excellent insect repellent and can deter mosquitoes, fleas, ticks and even scabies. It is also often an ingredient in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses to help prevent dandruff and even head lice. The oil is also effective when applied directly to warts. It has been used to protect the skin from radiation burns during cancer therapy. Tea tree oil is nonirritating and, along with lavender oil, is one of the few essential oils that can be applied directly to the skin without being diluted.

Thyme

(*Thymus vulgaris*)

The leaves and flowers of thyme are antiseptic, aromatic and stimulating. Thyme is so powerful that during World War I it was used to disinfect soldiers' wounds. Thyme is included in facial steams, masks, cleansers, toners, bath preparations, soaps, deodorants and aftershave products. It helps treat acne, eczema and psoriasis. The essential oil is added to massage oils for sore muscles and can be applied topically to warts. It is used in antifungal preparations such as salves and washes to deter athlete's foot, ringworm, scabies, crabs and lice. It is also included in antidandruff products such as shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses and helps keep the hair dark and silky. Thyme is used in mouthwashes for its antiseptic properties and to prevent plaque formation.

Tragacanth

(*Astragalus gummifer*)

Rich in mucilage and very demulcent, the gum-like resin of tragacanth is used as a thickening agent for lotions, moisturizers, hair styling gels, mascara and toothpastes. It also makes an excellent poultice for sunburned skin.

Vanilla
(*Vanilla planifolia*)

Native to tropical Central and South America, the cured seed pods of vanilla are valued in cosmetics for their aphrodisiac and aromatic qualities. Vanilla bean is often included in lotions, moisturizers and soaps as well as perfumes. Because the plant must be hand-pollinated (the bee whose job this was is now extinct due to pesticide use), vanilla is the second most expensive herb in the world.

Violet
(*Viola odorata*)

Violet leaves and flowers are antiseptic, astringent and demulcent. They are excellent for dry, normal and oily skin and are included in facial steams, cleansers, toners, lotions, moisturizers and in bath products. Used internally, violet can help clear the skin of acne, boils, eczema and psoriasis.

Walnut
(*Juglans nigra, J. regia*)

The outer rind of the unripe nut, leaves and inner bark are used for their alternative, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic and astringent properties. Walnut is used topically in salves to treat athlete's foot, eczema, fungal infections, herpes, impetigo and ringworm. The hulls are used in shampoos and conditioners as a colorant to darken hair.

White oak
(*Quercus alba*)

The bark of the white oak is used as well as the galls, which are growths produced in response to fungi or insects. White oak is rich in tannins, which causes its action to be very astringent. It is also very antiseptic. The tannins bind with protein in the tissues, making them impermeable to bacterial invasion and infection while fortifying their strength. White oak is used as a compress, poultice or salve for contact dermatitis, eczema, insect bites, ringworm and wounds. The galls are used as a coloring agent to darken the hair.

Witch hazel

(*Hamamelis virginia*)

The bark, twigs and leaves of witch hazel are valued for their anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, astringent, cleansing and styptic properties, and are used to treat acne, blemishes, bedsores, oily skin, insect bites, poison oak and ivy. A wash from the plant can be used to treat sunburn or as an aftershave. Distilled witch hazel which can be applied directly to the skin is commonly available at pharmacies. However, be careful of using the distilled form close to the eyes and mucous membranes as it contains rubbing alcohol, which can be an irritant. Witch hazel can also be used as a compress or salve to treat hemorrhoids and varicose veins. For treating dandruff and oily hair conditions, witch hazel is included in shampoos, conditioners and hair rinses. Witch hazel can also be used as a deodorant.

Wintergreen

(*Gaultheria procumbens*)

The leaves and essential oil of wintergreen are both used for their analgesic, antiseptic, aromatic, astringent and stimulant properties. The essential oil is used in massage oils to treat cellulite and also in salves and lotions to remedy muscle and joint soreness. It is also employed in soaps for its fresh zesty scent. Wintergreen is used in toothpastes and mouthwashes to freshen the breath.

Woodruff

(*Asperula odorata*)

The above-ground portions of woodruff are used cosmetically for their anti-inflammatory properties in facial steams and as a bath herb. A poultice of the bruised leaves can be used on boils and wounds. Its pleasant smell, when dried, is similar to freshly cut grass, vanilla and honey; thus it is included in perfumes and soaps as well as in insect repellents.

Yarrow

(*Achillea millefolium*)

Valued for its anti-inflammatory, antiseptic and astringent properties, the leaves and flowers of yarrow are useful for

oily skin in the form of facial steams, cleansers and toners. It is used as a bath herb to treat rashes, wounds and oily skin and in salves to treat eczema. It is also used in aftershaves. Yarrow is a powerful styptic, and a poultice of the fresh leaves will stop a wound from bleeding. Fresh yarrow can be rubbed on the skin to repel insects.

Yellow dock
(*Rumex crispus*)

Yellow dock root is used in teas, tinctures and capsules for its alterative, antiseptic and tonic properties. It aids the body's natural cleansing process. It is used internally to heal acne, boils, eczema and psoriasis and is employed topically in compresses, salves and poultices for treating eczema, hives, itchy skin and ringworm.

Ylang ylang
(*Cananga odorata*)

Native to Southeast Asia and Australia, ylang ylang means "flower of flowers." The flowers are used for their delightful fragrance. Ylang ylang is used in skin products such as cleansers, soaps, toners and moisturizers for oily and problem skin. It is also included in hair tonics, and the flowers can be rubbed directly on the hair if one is fortunate to live where the tree grows. This herb is popular in perfumery.

Yucca
(*Yucca species*)

Used for its anti-inflammatory properties, yucca root, when mixed with water, forms a lather, making it an excellent biodegradable cleansing ingredient in shampoos, cleansers and soaps. It is also helpful for treating dandruff and hair loss.

Simple Cosmetic Recipes

When making natural cosmetics it is imperative that you work with clean hands and utensils. Make small batches and refrigerate what isn't being used. Use your homemade products within a few weeks, then make a fresh batch. It is fun, inexpensive, empowering and you will know exactly what you are putting on your body. Plus you can avoid all the chemical additives in commercial products.

Yogurt Honey Cleansing Cream

- 1 cup of plain yogurt
- 5 Tbsp. elder flowers
- 3 Tbsp. honey

Simmer the elder flowers in yogurt at a very low simmer for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and leave the mixture to infuse for five hours. Then strain the flowers out of the yogurt and add the honey. Bottle and refrigerate. Apply to face and neck and remove with natural cotton. Good for all skin types.

Lemon Buttermilk Cleanser

- 4 Tbsp. fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 4 Tbsp. buttermilk

Mix the ingredients together and store in a jar in the refrigerator. Apply to face and neck and gently remove with natural cotton.

Oatmeal Cornmeal Almond Scrub

- 3 Tbsp. finely ground rolled oats
- 3 Tbsp. cornmeal
- 3 Tbsp. finely ground almonds
- 1 Tbsp. honey

Grind oats and almonds to a fine powder in a blender. Mix all the ingredients together and store in a jar with a lid. Put some of the mixture into the hands and add a bit of water (or yogurt). Use small circular massage strokes on the skin for 2 minutes. Rinse well.

Calendula Bran Scrub for Acne

- 5 Tbsp. calendula tea
- 2 Tbsp. bran
- 1 tsp. sea salt

Make a paste with the above ingredients and gently massage into the skin. Rinse with tepid water.

Mask for Oily Skin

- 2 Tbs. nutritional yeast
- 2 Tbs. beer

Mix together and apply to the skin. Leave on for 10 minutes, then rinse off.

Fruit Mask

- 1/2 of a ripe apricot, pear or peach
- 3 tsp. honey
- 1 tsp. plain yogurt

Mash the fruit with a fork and add the honey and yogurt. Apply to face and neck. Lie down (on a slant board if you have one) for 20 minutes and relax. Rinse, then apply toner and moisturizer.

Floral Toner for Dry Skin

- 8 Tbsp. rosewater
- 2 Tbsp. orangeflower water
- 2 Tbsp. witch hazel
- 4 drops essential oil of geranium

Put all of the ingredients into a spray bottle and shake well. Mist yourself occasionally with the toner during the day with eyes and mouth closed.

Rosemary Toner

- 3 Tbsp. dried rosemary
- 1 pint spring water
- 4 tsp. brandy

Simmer the rosemary in water for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let it steep an hour. Strain and add brandy. For all types of skin.

Herbal Toner

- 12 cups apple cider vinegar
- 1 oz. herbs (your choice)

Bring the vinegar to a boil and pour it over the herbs. Allow to steep for two weeks, shaking it daily. Before using, add 2 cups of water. I prefer to store this mixture in the refrigerator, removing a cup at a time to have handy for daily spritzing.

Facial Spritzer

- 1/2 cup spring water
- 1/2 cup aloe vera juice
- 20 drops essential oil (your choice)

Place in a mister bottle and spritz above your upturned face several times daily, allowing the cool, moistening fragrant water to fall upon the face and lift the spirits.

Mindy Green's Moisturizer

- 1 cup almond oil
- 1 cup water
- 3/4 oz. beeswax
- 30 to 50 drops of essential oil (your choice)

Grate the beeswax, add the oil and gently melt the two together in a double boiler. When the wax has melted allow it to cool for a few minutes, but not long enough for it to harden. Place the lid on the blender and remove the center ring. Pour the water into the blender using a wide-mouth funnel to reduce splattering. Turn the blender to high speed while slowly adding the oil and wax mixture. After about 3/4 of the oil has been added, the mixture will begin to harden. Turn the blender off and stir. Remove the stirring implement and restart the blender, adding the rest of the oil. Then add the essential oils. Don't over-blend. Put moisturizer into clean wide-mouth containers. Store any extra in the refrigerator.

Lip Balm

- 4 1/2 tsp. almond oil
- 1/2 tsp. vitamin E oil
- 2 tsp. grated beeswax
- 4 drops of essential oil such as peppermint

Warm the almond oil and vitamin E in a small saucepan over low heat. Add the beeswax and stir until melted. Pour the ingredients into a small container and cover with a tight lid when the ingredients have completely cooled.

Soapwort Shampoo

- 8 Tbsp. powdered soapwort
- 8 Tbsp. rosemary (for dark hair) or chamomile (for blonde hair)
- 2 quarts spring water

Bring the water to a boil, remove from the heat and add the herbs. Cover and allow to steep for 1/2 hour. Strain, bottle and label. Use about 1 cup for each shampoo. It is very conditioning.

Dry Shampoo

- 2 Tbsp. powdered orris root
- 2 Tbsp. arrowroot powder
- 3 drops essential oil of rosemary

Mix the ingredients with a fork to blend. Massage the mixture into the scalp and throughout the hair. Then, using a clean brush, bend over and carefully brush out the powder.

Yogurt Egg Conditioner

- 6 Tbsp. plain yogurt
- 1 egg
- 3 drops essential oil of rosemary or lavender

Whisk the ingredients together until blended. After washing the hair, massage the mixture into the hair and scalp for 3 minutes. Wrap the hair in a towel and leave in for 10 more minutes. Rinse with tepid water.

Avocado Deep Conditioner

- 1/2 ripe mashed avocado
- 1/2 teaspoon olive oil
- 2 egg yolks
- 3 drops essential oil of rosemary or lavender

Mix the ingredients together and massage them into the hair and scalp, concentrating on the ends. Leave on for 10 minutes, then rinse well. Excellent for dry and damaged hair.

Herbal Hair Rinse

- 1/2 cup nettles
- 1/2 cup rosemary (for brunettes) or chamomile (for blondes)
- 1 quart spring water
- 1 quart apple cider vinegar

Bring the herbs and water, covered, to a gentle simmer for about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow them to continue steeping for another two hours. Strain. Add the vinegar. Bottle. Store in the refrigerator, removing a cup or so after each shampoo. After the hair has been washed, conditioned and well-rinsed, pat the hair dry and apply the rinse slowly, trying to cover as much of the hair as possible. Do not rinse out. When the hair is dry, the vinegar smell will disappear. Excellent for dandruff, hair loss and just plain beautiful hair!

Resources

Most of the products listed in this book can be found in natural food stores; however, a few additional resources follow.

Herbs and Herb Supplies

Frontier Herb Cooperative
3021 78th Street, Box 299
Norway, Iowa 52101
319-227-7996

Supplies such as bottles, misters and salve containers are available from:

Lavender Lane
7337 Roseville Road
Sacramento, California 95842
916-334-4400

Essential Oils

Earth Essentials
P.O. Box 35214
Sarasota, Florida 34278
1-800-370-3220

Amrita Aromatherapy
1900 West Stone
Fairfield, Iowa 52556
1-800-410-9651

Herbal Teas

Fine herbal teas, including a wonderful tea to improve skin conditions called PuriTea, are available from:
UniTea Herbs
1705 14th Street, Suite 318
Boulder, Colorado 80302
1-800-UNITEAS

Miscellaneous

Therapeutic pillows are available from:
Tempur-Pedic Pillows
Brookstone Catalog
1-800-926-7000

BetterNeck Orthopedic Visco-Elastic Pillow
Self-Care Catalog
1-800-345-3371

Slant Boards
P.O. Box 1667
Newport Beach, California 92663
1-800-443-3917

Herbal Pharmacy CD Rom (for Windows 95)
300 herbs: topical and internal uses.
Call 303-442-4967

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Brigitte Mars, an herbalist and a nutritional consultant in Boulder, Colorado, has been working with natural medicines for nearly 30 years. The formulator of the popular "UniTea" line of herbal teas, she lectures nationally and hosts a weekly radio show on natural medicine. Her articles appear frequently in *Herbs for Health* and *The Herb Companion* and she is the author of the Good Herb Guide *Elder* and *The Herbal Pharmacy* CD Rom.

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