

SKIN DEEP HEALTH

Skin, the largest of our organs, is sadly also the most ignored one. For most of us, skin care includes a daily bath and the use of some cosmetics whose advertisement has convinced us of its efficacy. However, the skin needs more to withstand all the external pollutants and internal stressors and yet remain soft, smooth and supple for an entire lifetime. Your skin is, in many ways your health barometer and a vibrant complexion indicates health and vitality. Take care of this wonderful protective covering right now, so that it can protect you from diseases in the future. Skin is your body's first defence against disease and infection, and it protects your internal organs from injuries. It also regulates body temperature and prevents fluid losses, as well as helps your body remove excess water and salt. Nourishing and nurturing it will ensure that you do not fall prey to minor, but irritating problems like rashes, ringworms or eczema and even major ones like skin cancer. Here is what you can do to get more comfortable in your skin.

Feed the skin

Priya Khanna, Mumbai-based nutritionist says, "Like all the other organs, the skin too benefits from eating good, wholesome food and drinking about 12-14 glasses of water each day." Toxins in our blood lead to pale, dull-looking skin. A nutritious diet, devoid of MSG, preservatives and free radicals, naturally leads to glowing, fresh younger-looking skin. She suggests a wonderful meal plan that works wonders on the skin and the entire body as well:

Breakfast:

A bowl of cereal with milk. Juicy fruits
Mid-morning:

GIVE THE GLOSSY ADS A MISS.

DELVE INTO YOUR KITCHEN

AND DISCOVER THE AMAZING

PROPERTIES OF HUMBLE

INGREDIENTS. CONCOCT YOUR

OWN LOTIONS AND SEE THE

RADIANCE AND GLOW THEY

BESTOW ON YOUR SKIN

by Megha Bajaj

A handful of nuts and dry fruits

Lunch:

Stir-fried vegetables of your choice. Include a range of colours – red, green, yellow etc. Eat with bread/ rice/ pasta/ roti. Cook veggies in light olive oil. Olive oil has fatty acids that are good for the body and skin.

Alternatively

Whole grain sandwich with mixed vegetable/ fish stuffing.

Evening snack:

A bowl of mixed fruit with a low-fat yoghurt topping

Alternatively

A big bowl of vegetable salad (carrots/ radish/ capsicum/ French beans)

Dinner:

Roasted/grilled/steamed fish or paneer/mixed lentils. One portion of rice/ roti/ pasta/ bread. Finally, a salad with lots of leafy greens like spinach and lettuce added to other vegetables of your choice. Drizzle a dressing of extra virgin olive oil, lemon and salt.

It may be a little difficult to follow this regime on all days but even if you could make it a part of your life at least once a week – maybe on a Saturday or Sunday, the benefits will start showing up within a few weeks itself.

Skin needs exercise too!

"For a fit body you need a combination of all three – cardiovascular exercise, weight training as well as a regimen that takes care of the flexibility of your body. However, for good skin, all you need is cardiovascular training," shares Parikshit Somani, a young physical trainer. He explains that during a cardiovascular workout, the heart and lungs pump oxygen rich blood vigorously to all parts of the body. This increased circulation is what gives you the 'flushed' look during a workout. The result is a soft, rosy glow if this form of exercise is made a part of your weekly routine. "Just three days a week, 45 minutes per session will do wonders for your skin!" assures Parikshit.

Going skin deep

Louise Hay, renowned author and healer, believes that for every physical ailment that we experience, there is first a mental and emotional cause. Skin, she believes is an organ that protects our individuality – and whenever we feel our identity is under threat, we develop skin problems. For example, most teenagers, when undergoing an identity crisis during adolescence break out into acne or pimples. Some men start developing warts as they approach retirement. Women develop rashes during pregnancy when they grapple with various issues connected to motherhood. Louise suggests a simple, short affirmation that will

help heal almost all skin problems. Look in the mirror, and say to yourself, "I love and accept myself. I feel safe being me. All is well." Millions of people worldwide have benefitted in a myriad of ways with these simple affirmations. Try it!

Hydrate your skin

Bhavna Shah, a beauty expert and acupressure therapist, suggests a simple but effective

way of thoroughly cleaning the skin. She says, "While having a bath, alternate the water temperature from hot to cold a few times for a natural clean up." She explains that hot water opens the skin pores and cold water closes them. Alternate opening and closing of the pores ensures that every bit of toxins caught in the skin pores is released. It also does wonders for the elasticity of skin. A simple technique for cleaner, fresher,

younger looking skin within days!

Meditation works wonders

Recent studies reveal that stress is one of the major causes for several skin problems. Since meditation is a deeply calming and healing therapy – it is recommended by many for a younger and fresher looking skin. This explains why most monks and gurus have such radiant, smooth complexions – untouched by age or stress. Try meditation, not just for the skin, but also for benefits in every aspect of your personality.

Positive strokes

Personally, for me, massage is the best form of caring for the skin. What a feeling it is to lie passively and allow a masseuse to apply warm oil to the entire expanse of the skin. To allow her expert hands to knead every muscle, loosen every bit of tightness and just feel the skin relax and rejuvenate. There are Kairali Ayurvedic Centres all across the country and one can experience the magic of ayurvedic massage at one's convenience. A special massage called Navarakizhi is extremely popular for its value to the skin. Shares Bina, a worker at Kairali Resort, Kerala, "The body is massaged with small linen bags (bundles) filled with cooked Navara rice, which is cooked in cow's milk along with a special herbal mixture. These bags are dipped in the same mixture and applied over the whole body of the patient. The bags are not too hot or too cold. After wiping the body with a dry towel, the medicated oil is applied again. This treatment is to be continued for 14 days for specific skin conditions, although the benefits of a single session too are innumerable. It is one of the most excellent forms of treatments to impart lustre to the skin and nourishment for the body through the skin." Sounds tempting? Go ahead, pamper yourself! ☺

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Mail us at editor@lifepositive.net*

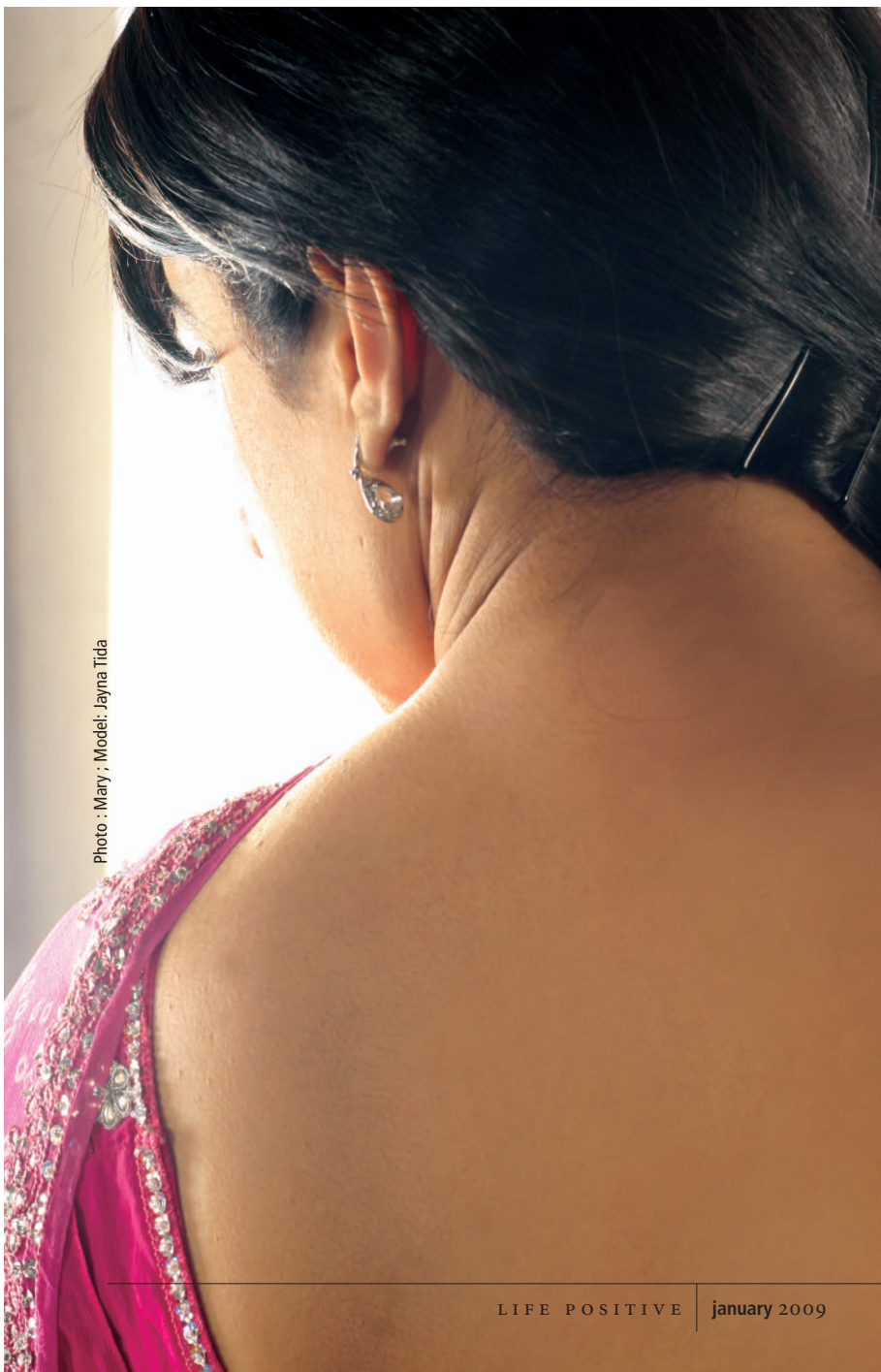


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