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FEBRUARY 2023

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MASK METHODS

Getting Creative in the Treatment Room

Physical Vs. Chemical
The Latest in Sunscreen Technologies

Protocols in Practice
Skin Hydration

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Eyes that POP with a daily drop!

INDICATION

Upneeq® (oxymetazoline hydrochloride ophthalmic solution), 0.1% is indicated for the treatment of acquired blepharoptosis in adults.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

- Ptosis may be associated with neurologic or orbital diseases such as stroke and/or cerebral aneurysm, Horner syndrome, myasthenia gravis, external ophthalmoplegia, orbital infection and orbital masses. Consideration should be given to these conditions in the presence of acquired ptosis with decreased levator muscle function and/or other neurologic signs.
- Alpha-adrenergic agonists as a class may impact blood pressure. Advise Upneeq patients with cardiovascular disease, orthostatic hypotension, and/or uncontrolled hypertension or hypotension to seek medical care if their condition worsens.
- Use Upneeq with caution in patients with cerebral or coronary insufficiency or Sjögren's syndrome. Advise patients to seek medical care if signs and symptoms of potentiation of vascular insufficiency develop.
- Upneeq may increase the risk of angle closure glaucoma in patients with untreated narrow-angle glaucoma. Advise patients to seek immediate medical care if signs and symptoms of acute narrow-angle glaucoma develop.
- Patients should not touch the tip of the single patient-use container to their eye or to any surface, in order to avoid eye injury or contamination of the solution.

UPNEEQ®
(oxymetazoline hydrochloride ophthalmic solution), 0.1%

The only FDA-approved prescription eyedrop proven to lift upper eyelids in adults with acquired blepharoptosis (low-lying lids)[1]

Examples of positive results after the first dose of Upneeq



Request FREE samples for your patients.

Images are of actual patients. Individual results may vary.
Average upper eyelid lift with Upneeq in clinical trials was 1 mm.[2]

ADVERSE REACTIONS

Adverse reactions that occurred in 1-5% of subjects treated with Upneeq were punctate keratitis, conjunctival hyperemia, dry eye, blurred vision, instillation site pain, eye irritation, and headache.

DRUG INTERACTIONS

- Alpha-adrenergic agonists, as a class, may impact blood pressure. Caution in using drugs such as beta blockers, anti-hypertensives, and/or cardiac glycosides is advised. Caution should also be exercised in patients receiving alpha adrenergic receptor antagonists such as in the treatment of cardiovascular disease, or benign prostatic hypertrophy.
- Caution is advised in patients taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors which can affect the metabolism and uptake of circulating amines.

To report SUSPECTED ADVERSE REACTIONS or product complaints, contact RVL Pharmaceuticals at 1-877-482-3788. You may also report SUSPECTED ADVERSE REACTIONS to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or www.fda.gov/medwatch.

Please see next page for Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information.

References: 1. Upneeq® (oxymetazoline hydrochloride ophthalmic solution), 0.1%. [Prescribing Information]. RVL Pharmaceuticals, Inc; 2022. **2.** Data on file. RVL Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

RVL PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

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*Survey results from an independent 8-week consumer study including 152 participants.
Model is actual RevitaLash® Advanced Pro user with natural lashes, no mascara. RevitaLash® Advanced Pro not available in CA. ©2023 Athena Cosmetics, Inc.

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The Event for Serious Spa Professionals & Owners

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On My Radar

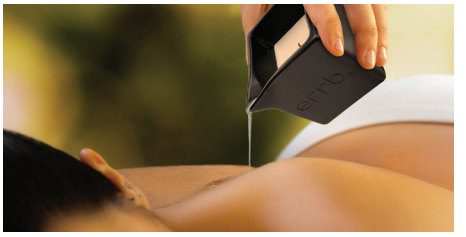


MAGGIE WALKER
Associate Managing Editor
mwalker@allured.com

Mood Boosters

SKIN INC. ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR, MAGGIE WALKER, SHARES WHAT'S ON HER MIND THIS MONTH.

This time of year becomes particularly hard for many people; the cold weather, ending of the holidays and cloudy skies makes for a gloomy time of year. This is exactly the time where I start to break out all of my mood boosting and aromatherapy tricks to keep these dreary feelings at bay. I have gathered some of my favorite ways to boost my mood and the products that help with that in the list below.





1 Vitamin D Lamps

Vitamin D lamps are a great way to bring back that source of vitamin D while the sun is hidden behind clouds. The Saltability Cube Crafted Salt Lamp is a perfect option for this, as it's made out of 100% pure Himalayan salt hand-mined in the Himalayan Mountains. The lamp gives a rosy glow, and the warmed salt releases negative ions into the air for natural air purifying benefits.
www.saltability.com

2 Bath Time

Taking a bath is a great way to relieve stress and enhance your mood. The KM Herbal Blue Chamomile Bath Salts is an excellent product that has a cooling blend of tansy and citrus essential oils to soothe muscle fatigue and calm the mind and spirit. The hydrotherapeutic bath salts help to relax, cleanse and refresh the body.
https://kmherbals.com



3 Candlelit Massages

Candle light always seems to add an ambiance to any event, but the errbshop's CBD-Infused Candles bring a whole new meaning to this concept. These candles melt into a massage oil that can be used during treatments to help ignite the mind, body and spirit. Perfect for boosting any bad mood.
https://errbshop.com

4 Vagus Nerve Care

The Vagus nerve activates the body's relaxation response and helps regulate stress. Osea's Vagus Nerve Oil is the perfect skin care product to help promote a sense of well-being by massaging the essential oil infused product along the vagus nerve, which calms and relaxes the body.
https://oseamalibu.com





5 Gemstone Skin Care

Gemstone's being infused in skin care really popped off in 2021, and for good reason. Gemstone-infused skin care has a multitude of benefits for the skin, mind and body. Éminence Organic Skin Care's Camellia Glow Solid Face Oil uses pink tourmaline gemstones and marula oil to soften and deeply hydrate the skin to reveal a healthy glow.
https://eminenceorganics.com

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NEW PRODUCTS

Highlighting the very latest in skin care products and equipment



RX3 Restoring Serum

Green II Gold

www.greeniigold.com

RX3 Restoring Serum combines hemp-derived CBDermaPRO Complex with clinically-proven botanicals to reduce redness, soothe irritation, rehydrate and restore skin's protective barrier.

PHA Refining Solution

Ultraceuticals

www.ultraceuticals.com

This mild, hydrating peel is designed for first-time peel users to gently rejuvenate the skin.





Organic Pure Stone Crop & Mango Gel Cleanser

Shira Esthetics

www.shiraesthetics.com

The foaming cleanser is infused with natural fruit acids and enzymes to help remove dirt and impurities from pores without drying out the skin.



Clearderma Moisturizer

Face Reality Skincare

www.facerealityskincare.com

Clearderma Moisturizer offers potent antioxidant support and contains soothing properties.

Custom Massage Candles

Coco La Vie

www.shopcocolavie.com

Custom Massage Candles are available with a range of jars, lids, boxes and scents, so that spas can create their own branded retail offerings.





Moor Spa Blemish Gel

Universal Companies

www.universalcompanies.com

Moor Spa Blemish Gel is a unique spot treatment that combines soothing elm bark with the purifying effects of pure more extract.

ProCorrective Clear-Control Mask

Pevonia

www.pevoniapro.com

Highly antiseptic, this mask proactively infuses the skin with tea tree oil and rosemary extracts to control bacterial growth, while niacinamide supports the removal of toxins through improved circulation and tissue oxygenation.





Hard Wax Microbeads

Nova Wax

www.nova-wax.com

The beads are designed to nourish sensitive skin with ingredients like mineral oil, which does not clog pores and helps moisture retention.



Men's Skin Provision

DefenAge

www.defenage.com

Men's Skin Provision is an easy-to-use skin care system that is formulated directly to the unique needs of men's skin.

PM Perfect - Advanced Recovery Night Repair Retinol Serum

BelleCôte Paris

www.bellecoteparis.com

The overnight serum is formulated with a proprietary blend of stabilized pure retinol (2.5%), wrinkle-resisting antioxidants and skin repairing ingredients.





UV Luminous Broad-Spectrum SPF 41

EltaMD

www.eltamd.com

The SPF uses antioxidants such as linoleic acid and vitamin E to protect the skin from free radicals and diminish UV-related signs of aging.



Probiotic Enzyme Mask

VivaLaCara Spa Products

www.vivalacara.com

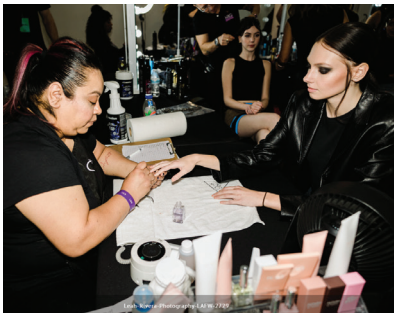
The is a gentle gommage exfoliant that features papaya enzymes, prebiotics and a probiotic complex to balance the skin microbiome and help skin achieve a healthier, radiant and more youthful appearance.

For more detailed descriptions of each product shown and for additional products, log on to *www.SkinInc.com/products*.

HAPPENINGS

Industry news from skin care facilities, suppliers and professionals

INDUSTRY AWARDS



Prevention Named the Official Disinfectant of 2022 LA Fashion Week
Prevention Disinfectants by Virox Technologies Inc. was the official disinfectant for beauty professionals at 2022 LA Fashion Week. The one-minute disinfectant was close at hand for beauty professionals at workstations and backstage to ensure safety and quick turnarounds between models.



Beauty Changes Lives Announces "Diversity in Esthetics" Scholarship Winners
PCA Skin and Beauty Changes Lives have announced the Summer 2022 "Diversity in Esthetics" Student Scholarship winners. The awards were created in 2022 with the purpose of increasing the representation of diverse esthetics professionals.

PROMOTIONS & APPOINTMENTS



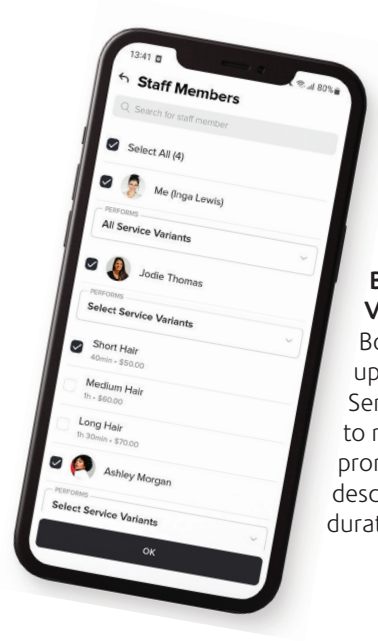
Michael G. Tompkins Joins LaFlore Live Probiotic Skincare as Board Advisor
LaFlore Live Probiotic Skincare has announced that spa industry veteran Michael G. Tompkins is a board advisor. Tompkins is a talented visionary in luxury hospitality and will provide insightful executive leadership, authoritative knowledge of the spa and health care industries.

PRODUCT ADVANCEMENTS



FDA Clears the Accure Laser System for the Treatment of Acne Vulgaris
Accure Acne announced its FDA clearance for its Accure Laser System to treat mild to severe inflammatory acne vulgaris. The Accure Laser System builds upon the selectivity of the 1726 nm laser wavelength, adding technology that precisely controls thermal gradient depth.

RESEARCH & TOOLS



Booksy Introduces Service Variants Feature
Booksy has launched an updated feature, Booksy Service Variants, designed to make it simpler to list and promote different services, descriptions, prices and durations of services.

Photos courtesy of companies featured.

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AFTER EIGHT WEEKS



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CALMING THE SKIN

BY TIFFANY ANDERSEN CLEAN COSMECEUTICALS®

How do you calm and refresh skin after laser treatments and chemical peels?

One way is by using multiple facial modalities and a brand new Kiwi Biocellulose Masque specifically developed for just that purpose. Most sheet masks are developed to stay on the skin for 5-10 minutes to help increase hydration in the skin. However, if your sheet mask is not made from biocellulose fibers, you are not achieving the full benefits of occluding the skin with a sheet mask.

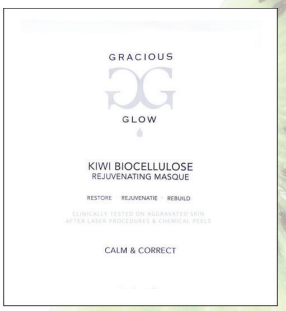


Biocellulose, an all-natural fiber tightly woven to withstand tearing, is the premium material of choice for any sheet mask.

Biocellulose masks push moisture into the skin through extremely hydrophilic cellulose fabric.



Biocellulose fibers can hold moisture up to 100 times their dry weight. This makes an excellent vehicle for infusing restorative elements into the skin, like the kiwi extract and peptides we use in our new Kiwi Biocellulose Masque.



When creating the Kiwi Biocellulose Masque for my Gracious Glow Clean Cosmeceutical™ collection, I was looking for ingredients known for helping restore the skin after lasers, chemical peels and other controlled trauma. Vitamin K is often the go-to ingredient to help restore that natural moisture barrier once it is compromised. Kiwi is loaded with vitamin K, which contains approximately 40 mcg of vitamin K (phylloquinone) per 100g. Kiwi is also packed with vitamin C and E, folate and potassium, all of which are excellent for skin restoration.

MEDISPA™

In one randomized controlled trial, thirty patients used 1% vitamin K cream after a treatment of high-frequency electrocautery. The conclusion suggests that vitamin K significantly reduces ($P < 0.05$) healing time in patients.

Study Reference: PMID: 31142943 PMID: PMC6533928 DOI: 10.4103/ijp.iJP_183_18.

We combine the kiwi extract with amino acid peptides and the building blocks of life to help increase collagen and elastin in the skin.

How can we increase the amazing benefits of kiwi extract and a peptide-infused biocellulose masque? We can use high power energy modalites directly over the top of the biocellulose masque. However, not just any biocellulose masque will work. I specifically designed my Kiwi Biocellulose Masque to be tissue thin so high-energy will seamlessly penetrate the masque without breaking conductivity.

Using a hot wand modality will assist in opening the pores and stimulating collagen while the cold setting will close the pores, calm the skin and reduce inflammatory conditions.



HOT WAND opens pores for extractions.

COLD WAND closes pores down and calms the skin.

Using ULTRASOUND increases protein synthesis to strengthen the skin.



Each of these modalities is easily delivered by the Medispa, a seven-in-one facial aesthetic device created by Medicreations. Medicreations is a top-of-class FDA-cleared technology manufacturing facility in the USA. The Medispa comes with a two year warranty and is the only facial aesthetic device that combines toxicology certified and clinically proven Clean Cosmeceuticals™ with its modalities.

Please scan the QR Code to learn more about the Medispa facial aesthetic device.

Article written by Tiffany Andersen CEO and National Educator for Tiffany Andersen Clean Cosmeceuticals®, overseeing the company's strategic growth and product formulations using first-to-market ingredients.

tiffanyandersen.com/medispa/





The Future of Medicine is Bright

By: Callie Luna

The future of medicine is bright, and no one knows this better than Sheila Barbarino, MD. As one of the leading cosmetic surgeons in the industry, Dr. Barbarino is highly decorated and awarded; she has published over a dozen papers and has led multiple research studies. She is the President of the Cosmetic Surgery Foundation, President of the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery, and Diplomate of the American Board of Ophthalmology. Her livelihood is Oculofacial Plastic Surgery, specializing in facelifts, liposuction, BBL, and offering several noninvasive procedures.

"I always had an affinity to the face and always loved surgery - that's why I went into ocular facial surgery." Says the doctor as she recounts her journey to becoming a cosmetic surgeon. Working within that industry, she saw her patient's need for aesthetic liposuction and breast augmentation surgeries. As the shift of medicine started changing to noninvasive procedures, Dr. Barbarino began to offer alternative options at her practice. As a surgeon, Dr. Barbarino would rather guarantee her patients' success instead of experimenting with unconfirmed results.

"Recently, LED has become a big forefront in aesthetic medicine; it is a modality we have heard a lot about. It's just not something we routinely used until now," Dr. Barbarino stated when talking about her experience including noninvasive procedures in her practice. Dr. Barbarino explained that while she has offered many non-surgical weight loss procedures in the past, they either did not work consistently or did not provide her patients with the results they or she expected to see. It was through multiple trials and errors that eventually led Dr. Barbarino to UltraSlim®. Dr. Barbarino was ecstatic to bring UltraSlim® in her office to use in conjunction with other services.

> ***"I use UltraSlim in my office for a post-procedure reduction of swelling, bruising, and inflammation. I use it after every single procedure that I do, including surgery as well as injectables. It significantly reduces downtime, and patients heal much faster."***

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UltraSlim is an FDA Cleared medical red light device indicated for three types of use: **Immediate Fat Reduction, Skin Revitalization, and the Reduction of Pain and Inflammation.** The results that proceed with the use of UltraSlim are immediate, as it stimulates the body's natural process of lipid metabolism.

"UltraSlim is a front-runner in the future of medicine. There are quite a few people I know that have a chronic cough and inflammation in their lungs; with UltraSlim, you know they felt so much better," states Dr. Barbarino. "I have a friend that had ankle surgery and had a huge cast. She was super swollen for weeks and had a gnarly scar. We put her under the UltraSlim, and the swelling has decreased significantly - the scars look much better. I think it's wonderful that it takes care of everything. It really is the Swiss Army Knife of medicine."





Patients Loss after a series of UltraSlim® treatments.



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Physical vs. Chemical

The Great Debate in Sunscreen Technologies

By Sam Dhatt, DermaQuest, Contributing R&D Chemists Suchita Mahalle, MD, Sree Nalabolu and Nipun Krishan

While healthy skin is certainly a beauty benchmark, the skin itself performs so many essential tasks for our bodies to keep us healthy. This protective armor shields against bacterial infections, prevents moisture loss, regulates body temperature, produces vitamin D and reduces harmful ultraviolet (UV) damage. Though a huge asset to our body, our skin is also vulnerable to a wide range of environmental elements that cause damage including UV and infrared radiation, pollution and high-energy visible light (i.e. blue light). All of these contribute to free-radical damage or reactive oxygen species (ROS), causing DNA damage and photoaging.

Enter sunscreen. This superhero skin care product is celebrated for its ability to prevent trauma to the skin, which shows up as: sunburn, premature aging, fine lines, wrinkles, age spots, hyperpigmentation, rosacea, acne flares and photo carcinogenesis (pre-cancerous mutations). But, when it comes to sunscreen there has always been the question of which is best: chemical or physical formulations. Let's dive a little deeper into where the differences lie.

Skin Damage

Some of the major external factors that cause skin damage include:

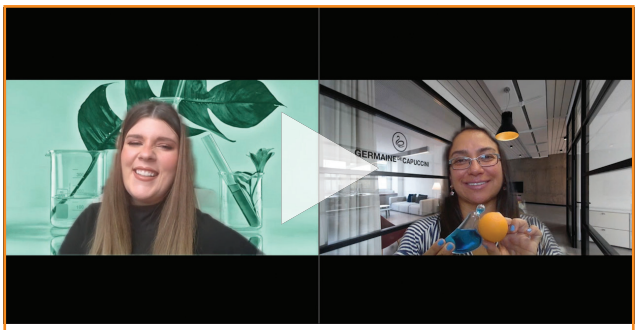
- **Ultraviolet radiation.** This is caused by exposure to UVA and UVB rays (aging and burning rays). Long-term exposure releases matrix metalloproteinases, notorious enzymes that collectively degrade collagen and elastic fibers causing DNA damage by depleting the extracellular matrix (ECM). This inadvertently causes loss of structure revealed in the form of fine lines and wrinkles, sagging skin due to loss of elasticity, loss of plumpness, rough skin texture and age spots.
- **Infrared radiation.** This comes from the sun's heat, as well as tanning beds, and it causes inflammation like an increase in melanocyte activity that contributes to hyperpigmentation and sunspots. Infrared radiation can also accelerate and worsen skin conditions like melasma, chloasma, rosacea and acne.
- **Environmental pollution.** Exposure to air pollution or airborne particles such as smog and smoke increases the generation of reactive oxygen species, causing inflammation that shows up as erythema (redness), irritation or dehydration, making the skin sensitive or sensitized.
- **High-energy visible (HEV) light spectrum.** Excessive and long-term exposure to blue light, which is emitted from familiar electrical devices like TV screens, computer screens, smart phones and tablets, produces damaging free radicals such as nitric oxide. These free radicals disrupt the skin's microbiome causing inflammation and imbalance, which can be corrected by topical antioxidants, anti-inflammatories and prebiotics to restore skin homeostasis.

Sun Care Technologies

The good news is that consistent use of sunscreen is known to significantly reduce the development of disorders and diseases of the skin such as actinic keratosis, basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma. Continuous research efforts to improve the technology that drives sun care innovations are rapidly making great advancements. New developments include the microencapsulation of chemical sunscreen ingredients using inert Tetraethoxysilane Polymers to improve stability, reduce systematic absorption, increase efficacy and diminish allergic reactions. An example of this is EnviroScreen Technology, which is an encapsulating process that provides mineral-based, chemical free, novel coating technology combining zinc oxide, titanium dioxide and iron oxides with proprietary blends of antioxidants, hydrators and vitamins.

There is also a technology incorporating Silicone Elastomer blends, which boasts multiple features and benefits that is on the rise. This technology provides benefits to sunscreen formulas including: the ability to reduce fine lines and wrinkles, boost SPF, provide scar protection, penetrate faster, provide a more uniform application and deliver film-forming capabilities. It is also compatablie with physical and chemical sunscreen formulations.

Gone are the days when high sun protection factor was the order of the day, or when sunscreen was only applied at the beach or during outdoor recreation. We know that daily, incidental exposure drives the lionshare of sun damage. Sourcing high-quality, raw materials that have been tested for efficacy, absorption, protection levels and spreadability are important to effectively protect the skin.



VIDEO Sponsored Video Germaine de Capuccini

*Check out this video in your **February 2023 Digital Magazine** at **www.SkinInc.com/DM** to view this exclusive video.*

Choosing the Right Formulation

The FDA has approved 16 active UV filter ingredients for organic and in-organic sunscreens. UV filters are the component that provides sunscreen with their desired protection factor (SPF). The SPF of a sunscreen is predominantly based on blocking UVB rays. It does not measure the effectiveness against blocking UVA rays, which can penetrate below the dermis causing cellular damage.

Innovations incorporate broad spectrum UVA and UVB filters, which are classified in three different wavelengths: longest (UVA1), intermediate (UVA2) and shortest (UVB). Sunscreen formulations are now sophisticated enough to use high-tech ingredients like iron oxide, InfraGuard, antioxidants and peptides to provide effective protection and promote healthy barrier function, leaving the integrity of the skin intact and youthful.

InfraGuard. This ingredient is the synergistic combination of tara tannins and sunflower sprouts. Tara is a South American native plant; it's a free radical scavenger rich in pyrogallic acid and modest amounts of catechin derivatives. They offer powerful photo protection with anti-inflammatory benefits. Sunflower sprouts are rich in vitamins A, D, E and B Complex including Folate. They also contain high levels of potassium, calcium, magnesium and iron. This formidable combination delivers comprehensive protection against oxidative stress caused by UV and infrared light exposure, damage caused by pollution and degradation of collagen and elastin. Studies on the benefits of InfraGuard show an improvement in the quality and density of the skin. These restorative ingredients work to keep the skin balanced.

Micronized Zinc Oxide. This is known to be safer than nanoparticles because the size of the particles are larger than nanoparticles, therefore less irritating. It warms up with the heat of the body and blends in better on the skin, especially in darker Fitzpatrick skin types IV-VI, without the white cast associated with physical sunscreens.

Micronized zinc oxide also provides better and more effective UV protection.

Iron Oxides. In physical sunscreen, iron oxides protect the skin against visible light and UVA radiation and enhance the absorption of these external factors. Iron oxide is excellent for protecting the skin against hyperpigmentation. The incorporation of iron oxides increases the efficacy of multi-functional coated mineral actives.

There are many sunscreen options on the market from aerosol sprays to gels to creams and lotions. Thanks to technological advancements, darker skin tones can enjoy the benefits of sunscreen without the white cast.

Physical vs. Chemical

The main distinction between physical and chemical sunscreens is that the mechanism of physical sunscreen creates a protective barrier on the surface of the skin to block, reflect and deflect UV rays.

PHYSICAL SUNSCREEN. Physical sunscreens are recommended for all skin types, especially for those with pre-existing conditions like rosacea, acne, eczema, all types of pigmentation and sensitive skin. Physical sunscreens are the preferred option, and they are excellent for post-procedure care to immediately protect the skin following facial treatments, waxing, chemical peels and laser resurfacing. Sunscreens that do not contain nanoparticles are classified as reef safe.

Physical sunscreens that contain the synergistic combination of micronized zinc oxide, titanium dioxide and iron oxide are recommended to better protect the skin as opposed to chemical sunscreens.

The advantage of a physical sunscreen is that it provides immediate protection, making it an excellent feature for those on the go! Active minerals such as micronized zinc oxide and titanium dioxide with the incorporation of iron oxide offer maximum physical protection.

CHEMICAL SUNSCREEN. A chemical sunscreen containing actives like oxybenzone, octisalate, homosalate, avobenzone and octocrylene, absorbs UV rays and then diffuses them. The heat from this process tends to trigger skin conditions such as rosacea, acne, hyperpigmentation and other sensitivities. Chemical sunscreens must be applied 15-20 minutes prior to sun exposure. They also tend to be more emollient, providing extra moisture to dry, balanced and combination skin types. Chemical sunscreens are not recommended for oily skin that is prone to acne and breakouts, sensitive skin, rosacea, eczema and all types of pigmentation. They are contraindicated for pregnant and lactating women as well.

Sunscreen Application Tips:

- Apply sunscreen both indoors and outdoors for extended protection.
- Fitzpatrick skin types IV-VI need to wear sunscreen as well.
- For optimum protection, sunscreen must be reapplied every 90 minutes.
- You still need to wear sunscreen in the winter and when it's cloudy.

Sun Care in the Spa

Whether a brand manufactures or a consumer uses a chemical sunscreen is a subjective choice. Product availability is also impacted by distribution in certain regions of the world. Places like Hawaii have banned chemical sunscreens with oxybenzone or octinoxate, as they are said to harm coral reefs. Consumers are required to provide a medical prescription as proof that the use of sunscreens with these ingredients is to specifically prevent sunburn. Allergies to sunscreen are not as common as sensitivities and reactions. Skin care professionals are encouraged to conduct a patch test prior to making a sunscreen recommendation. It is also important to educate clients on the proper use of sun care as to when and how they should apply it (See **Sunscreen Application Tips Sidebar**).

Sunscreen formulations are uniquely curated to possess specific features and benefits based on key active ingredients desired by a brand. So, when it comes to determining which sunscreen is best for the consumer, the answer is whichever one is most appealing to them, whether physical or chemical, as regular compliance is what makes a sunscreen effective. Skin care professionals exist to educate and guide clients and patients on the best option for their skin type, tone and conditions.



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7 Ways to Get Creative with Masks

By Leah Lynch, Beautique

Sometimes the dark winter months can bring not only a little dip in your mood, but a little dip in your profits as well. As clients begin to hibernate and snow days drain your schedule, it's a great time to get creative with add-on services.

Gaps in the day can get you yawning big time when the days start to end before 5 PM. Sometimes, we are inclined to just move our last client up and head home. However, if you can get savvy in recommending additional services to your clients, you can fill that gap, solidify your client relationships and keep the steam in your engine!

Working Smarter

Working hard during these slower times to get new clients can cause some serious frustrations. Try instead to wow your existing client base with some new and exciting things to try while they are already in for services with you. Working smarter not harder is always the goal, especially during slower months (See **Customer Retention vs. Acquisiton Costs Sidebar)**.

Not having new things to offer your clients every so often can also be one of the major reasons that client's stray. We often get caught up in our small talk or catching up on drama with clients when they arrive, that we can miss the opportunity to do what we are really there to do; make money. Make sure to take a moment to say, "I don't want to forget to tell you I have some extra time today if you wanted to try this fun new service." Don't think of it as "selling," as you're just offering, and realize that by not offering, you may eventually lose that client.

So, that means that having these new offerings to share this winter could not only boost profits, but boost rapport with your clients and create loyalty through anticipation for future bright ideas.

Even if you are a lash or brow artist and don't provide full facials, masks can still work for you and be easy. You don't need to have a quiet. dark facial room with all the bells and whistles; you just need a chair or bed, a bowl, spatula and water.



1 Hydrojelly Masks

One of the ways that we get creative with the gaps that we have in our schedule at my salon and spa is by utilizing the new Hydrojelly mask craze. These masks are highly customizable. You can mix them up easily and they peel off without any difficult removal.

My only tip is that it does take a bit of time to get used to the proper mixing ratios for the best consistency. These masks are thick and soft when you first add water and slowly harden into a mailable jelly that can be lifted easily away. That said, if you don't get it where it needs to go quick, you'll have a big lump in your bowl and wasted dollars in your trash.

Make sure to get thick, clean edges on your mask or you will have dry bits that are hard to remove, that get stuck on the skin and can even pull and cause pain when removed. You may want to double check after you remove the mask that there are no dry edges or mask bits stuck anywhere.

If you are trying to cover a larger area, you should mix up and apply one section at a time to get the best spread. For larger areas, you would want the mask a bit thinner to cover the area, but still thicker at the edge for easy lift off.

Also, be careful not to rinse this mask down your drains. Scrape all of your dried mask into the trash before washing your bowl, or risk some expensive cog removals.

2 Sheet Masks

Sheet masks are also trending and are great for retail. They fly off the shelf and also are a great revenue boost. Stock masks for a few different skin types so you are sure to have something for everyone.

Customer Retention vs. Acquisition Costs[1]

- It can cost up to five times more to attract a new client than it does to retain an existing one.
- Increasing customer retention by 5% can increase profits from 25-95%.
- The success rate of selling to a customer you already have is 60-70%, while the success rate of selling to a new customer is 5-20%.

3 Post Wax

One way I love to get creative with masks at my salon and spa is to mix a small amount of mask with icy cool water and apply it around the eyebrows after waxing, tinting or lamination services. This mask method instantly cools and soothes redness and turns a brow wax into a spa experience. This is also a great time to say "You should try a full facial one day!"

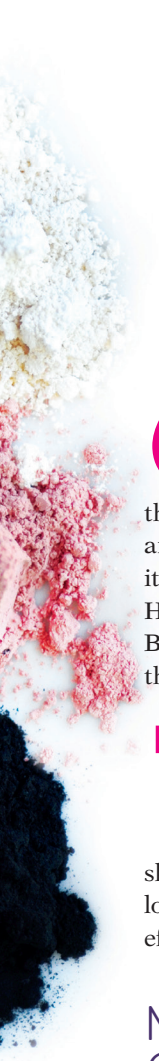
Our Brazilian waxing clients are loving the option of a mask application after their waxing service. It cools and soothes the skin, creating a soft hydrated finish that will help with ingrown hairs and papillary rashes. This is such a welcome luxury after a Brazilian wax. Use a tissue over the mask and a towel over the tissue for privacy; maybe even do a hand massage while they relax with the mask on. The cooling and soothing benefits of treatment masks can also be great for post chest and back waxing.

4 Lash Mask

Try applying a hydrojelly mask and either let dry or place a tissue across the forehead and complete an eyelash extension service. You could even apply before a lash lift and tint. Your clients are coming in regularly for their lashes, they should definitely be getting waxing and skin care from you as well.

5 Hand Masks

Bring back the paraffin and warm mitts this winter, but substitute with a hydrojelly. Place a tissue below the hand, as the mask will run between the fingers. Then, place another tissue over the hand or use a plastic bag and finally place the hand in a warm mitt. This tried-and-true add-on service just got a major upgrade revival.



6 Booty Facials

The booty facial is gaining in popularity, and when you bring on a trendy new service like this, you're sure to get an initial push of local clients and maybe even friends who are going to want to give it a try. Try a cleansing, microdermabrasion, serum, Hydrojelly mask and then matte cream application as a Booty Facial protocol. Lots of hot towels are a must for this treatment as well.

7 Mask Massage

After your mask has dried, use cool jade rollers or ice rollers to softly massage the skin for a blissful, relaxing experience! I personally love the way this feels, and it's an incredibly simple yet effective way to add luxury to any mask service.

Marketing Your Creativity

Get creative and have fun with it! Create buzz with some fun marketing photos and a service promotion. One idea is to try using the red PLLA Hydrojelly and shaping the mask into a heart shape after a Brazilian wax, and use the photo to promote Brazilian waxing for Valentine's Day.

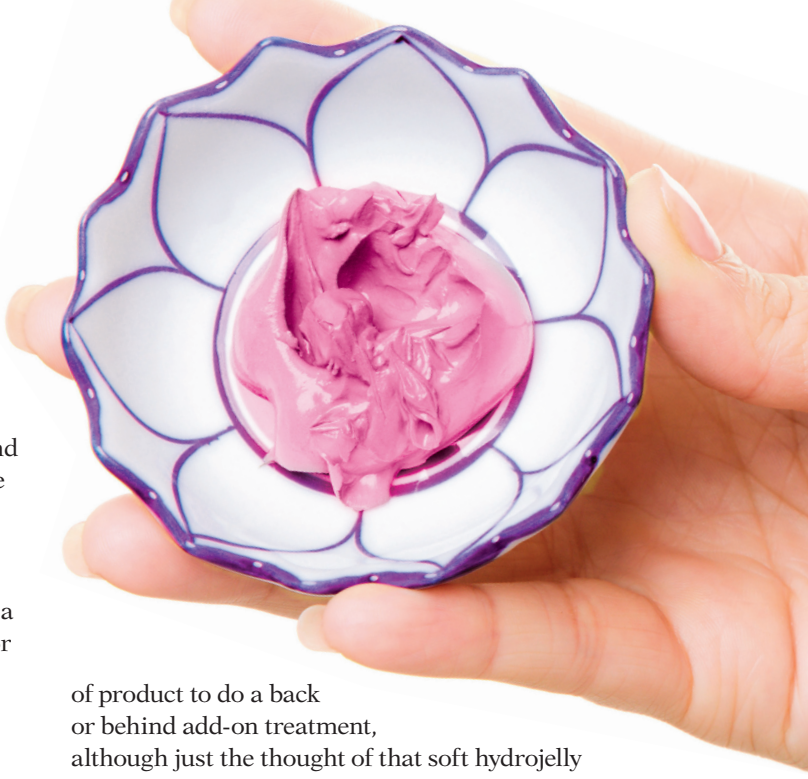
Vista print is a great place to make some flyers or posters that you can use to inform clients of these new services or specials, or as a way to get the conversation going.

If you're shy and hate selling in person, try email, or try one of the new text messaging services. I send out text messages in the morning to all clients about a gap in the day and make them a special offer. "Try the new CBD finishing mask with your brow wax today for only $10."

Price Point

Now let's talk pricing.

Because some of these services could be easily added with not a lot of extra time, the add-on charges could be minimal. For example, $10-$15 for lip, brow or eye area add-ons. However, for larger services like chest and back, you would have to make sure to be charging appropriately for the amount of product necessary. It would be a lot of product to do a back or behind add-on treatment, although just the thought of that soft hydrojelly being spread to perfection sounds way worth it.



Well Worth It

It's the special touches that will get your clients talking about your services and recommending them to friends. "My brow artist puts on this cooling mask and used jade rollers after my brow wax, you should try her." The woman at the table next to them is going to be leaning in to say she wants to try it too.

Let's face it, we're all replaceable. Clients have a choice in their services, but it's what you do, the way you do it and your uniqueness that will make you indispensable, and will get your clients looking forward to the next beauty surprise!

REFERENCE:

1. *https://www.outboundengine.com/blog/customer-retention-marketing-vs-customer-acquisition-marketing/*

(All websites accessed Dec. 23, 2022)



Leah Lynch is an award-winning lash artist, master trainer, industry speaker, lash competition judge and the owner of Beautique. She is also the creator of Lash Mastery Academy, where lash artists can take their career to the next level by utilizing Lynch's advanced materials, manuals and curriculums to become a trainer in their area. *lashmasteryonline.com*

Behind the Sheet Mask

Read about sheet mask innovations in your February Digital Magazine.





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8 Methods to Increase Retail Sales

By Lisa S. Jenks, MD, Genesis MedSpa

Retail sales are a critical portion of any aesthetic business. The first, and most important, reason is that getting your clients to use good products will improve the overall results they get from the services you are providing. A large contributing factor to the health of a person's skin is what they put on it twice daily at home. So, the appearance and health of their skin depend greatly on you getting them on high quality products. The second reason is that we are all in this business to make money and retail is a proven way to do just that.

1 Educating vs. Selling

The easiest way to increase product sales is to not act as or regard yourself as a "salesperson." Your clients should instead think of you as an educator and problem solver. You are the expert on skin conditions and what can best improve them. When you truly believe this, it comes across to your customers and they don't feel pressured to buy. Instead, they feel as though you are offering a solution to a problem they have.

Consider having all new clients complete a cosmetic questionnaire. All existing clients should then update the form yearly. The questionnaire lists all the skin conditions that you can improve such as acne, dark spots, wrinkles, dry skin, oily skin, etc. Clients check the box next to anything that they are concerned about. This questionnaire provides a simple way to approach clients about buying products. For example, if a client has checked that they are concerned about the oiliness of their skin, the provider can comfortably talk to them about getting started on a retinol. They appreciate that their esthetician is paying attention to what they have expressed, and don't feel as though the provider is just "trying to sell them something."



Don't forget to switch up product displays.

2 Timely Follow Ups

Following up with your clients after they have purchased a product is important. If a person has problems after starting a new product, they will often abandon it. If you have the chance to identify the problem and resolve it, this will increase the likelihood that they end up liking the product and purchasing it again. For example, if you sold a cleanser containing alpha-hydroxy acids to a client and they are using it twice daily, but then decide they don't like it because it's drying their skin out, they are likely to stop using it. However, if you follow-up (either with a phone call soon after the purchase or at their next visit) and explain that they may only be able to use that cleanser several times a week, you may turn this product into one of their new favorites.

3 Product Promotion

It can be fun to have some events designed to promote your products. A "lunch and learn" that either features a new product or focuses upon a class of products (i.e. anti-aging) can be a fun event. You can provide box lunches and have an information session, during which clients can sample the products you are highlighting. Offering free samples as well as discounts that are available only that day to anyone who attends, can be an incentive for people to be there, as well as to purchase that day.

Another event idea is hosting a "peel party," during which clients move between four to five stations. Various stations offer a deep cleansing, a mild lactic peel, a chance to sample the featured products and a makeup application. You can charge a fee to attend the party and that money can be used towardsany purchases. Serving snacks and beverages ensures that the clients who attend have fun, feel pampered, and hopefully, leave with purchases.

It can be a good idea to add a "free" product to any service packages that you sell. For example, when a client purchases a series of IPL treatments, perhaps the price includes a skin-lightening product. You can increase the IPL package price to cover your cost for this product, but the client thinks they are getting something for free, which they always appreciate. When you do this, two things are accomplished. First, if you choose an appropriate product for the service, your clients will likely get better overall results. Second, it introduces them to good quality products, which ideally, they will then continue to buy from you.

4 Tactful Testing

Having a product testing area is important because clients (especially women) like to feel and smell a product before they buy. This does not have to be a large area, but should be a place where you can take a customer and apply small amounts of products to their skin. Consider offering free product consultations in which clients can sit down with an esthetician for 20-30 minutes and come up with a complete skin care regimen. They may not choose or be able to buy all the products that are recommended that day, but they will have a plan and will be less likely to grab a product off the grocery store shelf.

Consider creating product "prescription pads" on which providers can write their suggestions for a client's regimen. If done in duplicate, the client can keep one copy and one copy can be placed in their chart. Again, this allows them to feel as though you are giving them solutions to problems and coming up with a customized plan to improve their skin.

Jar Deconstructed: Monk's Pepper

Read all about the amazing benefits of Monk's Pepper in February's Digital Magazine.



5 Purposeful Displays

Interesting and well-lit product displays are important. Don't forget to switch up the displays at least once a quarter. If the shelves look the same month after month, customers tend to stop paying attention. However, if a client walks in and the shelves are different than when they visited last time, their brain will take notice and they will be more inclined to stop and look. Consider putting "talkers," or small cards with one to two sentences explaining who the product works for, on the shelves. Be sure that you offer enough products to appeal to different skin types, age groups andt budgets.

6 Market on Social

Clients like to know what their providers are using. Your social media posts should sometimes feature your staff sharing their favorite products. One employee who loves outdoor activities can post about the tinted sunscreen that doesn't come off easily. Another staff member can post about the moisturizer that helps get them through dry winters. Clients identify with these issues and feel "safer" about purchasing products that they know their providers use.

You should blog about the products you sell. In the blog, explain what the product is and why it works. Blogs can be longer than Facebook or Instagram posts, so you can go into more detail for those clients that like to know a bit more about the products.



Video content is a very popular way to market yourself on social media.

7 Creative Sales

When you have sales on products, consider not discounting, but doing a "gift with purchase." If you do these correctly, you won't lose as much money as when you give a straight discount. In addition, you will be introducing the client to another product. For example, if I discount a $150 product 15%, I will sell it for $127.50. If that product cost me $75, my profit will be $52.50. However, if I don't discount it, but instead offer a "gift with purchase" that costs me $25 (value to client of $50), then my profit on the combination is $75 and I've hopefully gotten the client hooked on another product that they will purchase in the future.

8 Proper Training

Regular training sessions for all your staff are important for increasing product sales. Considering closing for an hour once a month and having a product training meeting. It's important for all staff to be involved in this because all staff should be able to answer client's questions about products and recommend products for clients. During this hour each month, choose four to five products and refresh all staff about them. Having product sales goals can also be a fun way to encourage your team to increase sales, and the prizes don't have to be big. The fun of working together as a team and tracking your goals can be very satisfying and fun.

Utilize your product reps. They can help with training and will sometimes provide free products for staff if goals are achieved.

Bottom Line

Product sales are important, both for your business' bottom line and for your clients' results. Maximizing your sales will benefit everyone, and with some planning and organization, you can make it happen for your business.



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Behind the Sheet Mask

By Annet King, Bio-Therapeutics

For those of us who have spent a substantial amount of time in this wonderful industry (a span of over 30 years in my case), you will recall how tough it was to retail a traditional face mask to your clients back in the day. It was always the hardest sell, as clients would tell you that they didn't have time for a mask, and quite frankly, they didn't appreciate the skin benefits and would rather spend their money on a daily cleanser or moisturizer. Fast forward to 2023, and here we are with consumers eating up the idea of a novel remedy that purges pores, sets like a cool fruity blancmange, delivers superpowers while we sleep or provides the answer to all our skin woes in a handy, travel friendly sheet. My, how times have changed!



Consider eye and lip masks as other varying options of sheet masks.

The Rise of Masks

Without a doubt, K Beauty, celebrities, influencers, user generated content on social media and social selling have contributed to the popularity and rise of the facial mask category. No longer viewed as a luxury, masks are accepted by the mainstream as a core part of a skin care regimen, and the rapid sales growth across all markets testifies to vastly expanded adoption into a weekly self-care routine (See **Mask Stats Breakdown Sidebar**).

The growth in popularity of masks, however, has led to a proliferation of frivolous options sporting fancy packaging and odd, artificial ingredients]. While these fads may catch the consumer's eye, the results on the skin are always lackluster, and, worse, can often lead to skin issues rather than solving them.

A prime example of a mask that could do more harm than good was the collaboration between Oscar Mayer and Seoul Mamas launching the first ever bologna-inspired face mask. In September 2021, Kao Corporation released a sheet mask called Smile Performer. It was designed to bring back a smile on the face using tightening cotton by-products to lift the jowls and cheeks into a snatched tight grin.[4] These are just some examples of masks that were geared toward catching the consumer's eye and not actually providing skin care benefits.

Mask Stats Breakdown

To appreciate the mask category boom, ponder over some of these stats;

- The skin mask category is predicted to grow to $50.91 billion globally by 2025, with sheet masks reaching $713.8 million by 2021.[1,2]
- In 2021, the value of global sheet face mask market stood at $320.5 million. The global market is predicted to expand 8.5% CAGR during the forecast period, from 2022 to 2031.[2]
- Sales of beauty facial masks accounted for nearly 4.3% of the global skin care industry at the end of 2021.[3]
- Clay masks account for a 40.3% share of global sales.[3]

Mask Innovations

So, what are some of the unique professional innovations we are seeing in this category? One example would be hyaluronic delivery gel masks. The skin can lose several ounces of moisture per day. Without constant rehydration and protection, the skin becomes dehydrated and visible lines and crepiness becomes more noticeable. Over time, this lack of critical hydration can also lead to degradation of the skin's barrier function, and a die-off on the skin's valuable microbiome.

As we age, the amount of natural hyaluronic acid (HA) in the skin also declines, contributing to dryness. Hyaluronic gel masks are humectant-rich and suitable for all skin types, and are supercharged with glycosaminoglycans for the ultimate skin hydration. Glycosaminoglycans (GAGs) are a protein and sugar molecule that helps keep skin hydrated by attracting water from the surrounding atmosphere and the lower layers of the epidermis.[5]

Hyaluronic acid can also bind up to one thousand times its own weight in moisture to the skin, delivering intense hydration. According to the National Institute of Health, HA is most abundant in the skin, accounting for 50% of the total body's amount of HA, however it does decline rapidly as we age.[6]

Hyaluronic Delivery Gel Masks

Spa professionals will want to look for anatomically optimized, hyaluronic acid gel sheets made from marine algae. These contour to the face effortlessly, optimizing ingredient delivery and enhancing the performance of the strategic serums layered beneath, while providing a flash cooling and calming effect. These types of gel substrate masks come pre-made and packaged individually to allow for ease of application and removal for the spa professional and client at home (See **Hyaluronic Gel Mask Protocol Sidebar**).

Key Ingredients

Hyaluronic acid. These masks will use hyaluronic acid as well as its derivatives for hydration boosting purposes.

Licorice extract. This may be found to help boost skin luminosity and balance tone.

Arbutin. This is another ingredient great for boosting skin luminosity and balancing skin tone.

Sargasso algae. This helps to revitalize the skin's appearance.

Copper. This can be used to support skin health and gives the mask a pronounced blue hue.

Peptides. These help to support skin health, while reducing the appearance of premature aging.

Skullcap, gotu kola and peony root. This has been used for centuries in traditional Eastern herbal preparations to help nourish and calm the skin while providing supreme antioxidant support.

Extra Tips

- Some clear versions of these masks can be used under LED for intensified skin results (always make sure to check compatibility with your supplier).
- Cool quartz or jade rollers are very popular and can be rolled over these types of masks.
- Retail these to all your customers for home and travel use.
- Look for eye and neck versions to add to your retail line up. Eye masks are incredibly popular for soothing, smoothing and de-puffing, and make superb gifts for everyone.
- Cut up and adapt for use on the back of the hands in your professional services.

Hyaluronic Gel Mask Protocol

Begin treatment after you cleanse, exfoliate and perform specific treatment modalities on your client.

Step 1. (Optional) Apply appropriate serum(s) for your client's skin.

Step 2. Gently place in your own hands, then carefully and slowly remove your hands to apply gradually onto the client's face from the center.

Step 3. Leave the mask on for up to 20 minutes.

Optional: While the mask is sitting, perform your touch technique on hands, shoulders or feet.

Step 4. Remove the mask and follow with a moisturizer or sunscreen.



Hyaluronic Repair Masque

Infused Sheet Mask Protocols

Begin treatment after you cleanse, exfoliate and perform specific treatment modalities on your client.

Step 1. With clean hands, remove the mask from package and apply to the face.

Step 2. Allow the mask to sit for 10-15 minutes.

Step 3. (Optional**)** Perform microcurrent technology to infuse the key ingredients into the skin. Or, use AIR or oxygen domes above the mask.

Step 4. Remove the mask and follow with desired serums, moisturizer and sunscreen.

Ingredient Infused Sheet Masks

Saturated pre-packaged biodegradable sheet masks make a wonderful option. The mask's tightly woven material adheres to the skin exceptionally well, has excellent absorption properties, and is comfortable and soothing. The mask material acts as a base for serum solutions, allowing an extended time and thorough delivery to the skin. They are also a no mess, no fuss way to mask the skin with no extra prep, mixing or clean up time. With a myriad of options available for every skin condition, they are equally as popular with the client for home use as the skin professional in the treatment room.

Look for super saturated formulations with anatomically optimized fabric, sometimes made from plant cellulose. These contour the face, optimize ingredient delivery and enhancing performance of the strategic serums layered beneath the mask (See **Infused Sheet Mask Protocol Sideba**r).

Extra Tips

- As these are packed individually, these sheet masks make for a perfect addition to gym and toiletry bags and even luggage carry on. They are quite the travel companion with some people using them on long haul flights. So, don't be shy to advertise them as such in your retail space.
- Some sheet masks have handy ear loops that allow for the mask to stay in place for the wearer. This makes for a fantastic extra selling point, as you can mask as you go about your chores and activities.

Sheet Masks for Skin Types

When using these masks, here are some key ingredients to use based on your client's skin condition:

- ***Dry skin with signs of aging***. Collagen, elastin, phytosterols, phyllanthus embilica extract
- ***Oily, blemished skin.*** Aloe, witch hazel, menthol, licorice, lactobacillus, papaya ferment extract, salicylic acid
- ***Dehydrated skin.*** Indian gooseberry, glutamic acid, vitamin E, licorice and asiaticoside from centella asiatica.
- ***Uneven skin tone and dull skin.*** Ascorbic acid, licorice, arbutin, vitamin c, niacin, arginine and pat extract.

Happy Masking

Whatever you select and choose to carry in your skin center or spa, make sure you have tried them yourself before you stock your shelves and cupboards. With so many varieties available at various price points, you must believe in what you use and sell. Clients are buying these by the boatload, so make sure they are buying them from you and supporting your business. The impulse purchase at the department or grocery store is not where they will find "the good stuff" that, as we all know, requires a conversation with a pro like you. Happy masking!

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Annet King is vice president of global education for Elemis, where she develops the brand's global education and establishes its Education Hubs and Training Academies across the United States.

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SAFE SUN CARE for Pregnant Clients

By Denis K. Dudley, MD, FRCS(C) and Sharyn A. Laughlin, MD, FRCP(C)

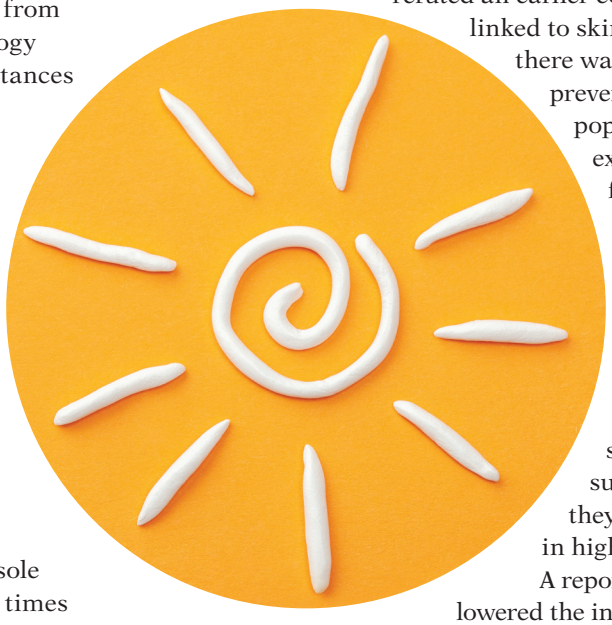
The risk of human toxicity for any xenobiotic begins with bioavailability from percutaneous absorption and with placental transfer to the fetus, the most vulnerable human. The FDA confirmed that 12 Soluble Organic UV Filters (SOUVF) used in sunscreens are all bioavailable to every human. Benefit Risk Assessment (BRA) is the cornerstone of clinical medicine, public health, cosmesis and life in general, yet it was never done until recently for sunscreens.[1] Label claims are largely based on the assumption that sunscreens prevent sunburn and by extrapolation skin cancer, but this was never validated by the necessary research trials looking at the BRA equation versus adverse effects.

The scientific literature persuasively establishes that 12 SOUVF are neither safe nor effective. The FDA affirmed in February of 2019 that 12 petrochemical UV filters lack evidence to be considered Generally Regarded As Safe or Effective (GRASE), and in September of 2021 denoted them as "Marketed Unapproved Drugs."[2] These petrochemicals include avobenzone (the solitary UVA1 filter), oxybenzone, homosalate, octisalate, octocrylene, octinoxate and six others. Some of these ingredients have been used in sunscreens and cosmetics for more than 50 years. The FDA also confirmed in 25 years of published science that SOUVF permeate skin and are bioavailable to humans.[3] They designated two Insoluble Inorganic (mineral) UV Filters as GRASE.[2]

It is advisable that every person stringently avoid SOUVF sunscreens, based on a BRA equation showing virtually no benefits and only risks. They are absolutely contraindicated in couples trying to conceive and during pregnancy. A few dermatologists recently admitted that only mineral sunscreens should be used by women of childbearing age and who are pregnant.[4]

Sunscreen Science

Studies spanning over 25 years confirm warnings about the human danger posed by cutaneous absorption of oxybenzone from sunscreens.[5] Basic physiology instructs that topical substances with a molecular weight (MW) less than 500 Daltons (G/mol) will enter human blood.[6] All 12 SOUVF have a MW of less than 300 Daltons and their lipophilic nature ensures cell contamination of humans, including those in the brain and fetus. Insoluble UV filters, including zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, bemotrizinol and bisoctrisole are hundreds to thousand times larger than the threshold for percutaneous absorption, and are never bioavailable through intact human skin.[1]



SOUVF share structural and functional properties with human estrogen, pesticides (e.g. DDT) and known hormone disruptors (e.g. phthalates). They also share their potential to cause endocrine nervous disruption (END) and genotoxic or mutagenic effects. The principle of isoform function instructs that chemicals with similar structure bind to the same endocrine or cellular receptors, causing similar effects in humans.[7] Since oxybenzone, octinoxate and homosalate are known endocrine disruptors, then all 12 SOUVF are likely to cause END effects.[8,9,10] The Endocrine Society recently designated four SOUVF as endocrine disruptors and recommend the use of mineral UV filters.

Sunscreen and Skin Cancer

In 1973, Emmett questioned sunscreen efficacy showing there was merely inference, but no evidence that by preventing sunburn, they prevented skin cancer.[11] Since then, many studies show no evidence that sunscreens prevent skin cancer, including reports from the WHO, EPA and IARC or The International Agency for Research on Cancer.[1]

An extensive meta-analysis from 2018 calculated Odds-Ratio over time to analyze the association between skin cancer risk and sunscreen use. Data refuted an earlier concern that sunscreen use was linked to skin cancer, but again confirmed there was no evidence that sunscreen use prevented skin cancer in the general population.[12] Even dermatologists express skepticism with a similar finding and posed the question: Could it be that the nearly universal recommendation of dermatologists and professional societies to use sunscreen to prevent skin cancer is unfounded?[13] Another contemporary meta-analysis showed no conclusive evidence that sunscreens prevented melanoma and they have no effect on melanoma risk in higher Fitzpatrick skin types.[14,15]

A report from 2011 showed sunscreens lowered the incidence of melanoma by 50% and squamous cell carcinoma by 40%, and has been mostly used by regulators and physicians to advance the claim that sunscreens prevent skin cancer.[16] The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews selected 482 randomized controlled trials, and found that only the Australian study was suitable for inclusion, but cautioned that the evidence was of low quality and required confirmation.[17] The 50% reduction (3% to 1.5%) was deemed questionable based on the study's small numbers and a selection and funding bias.[18]

After 2012, despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the FDA and others still allow sunscreen labels to say "sunscreens prevent skin cancer" or "sunscreens prevent sunburn." Yet, in their 2019 Bulletin, the FDA declared 12 SOUVF to lack the evidence to be called GRASE, limiting that categorization to mineral UV Filters.[2]

Despite a global effort at prevention, the unrelenting rise in skin cancer rates is evidence of a "failure to protect" by typical sunscreens, explained in a recent review.[19] Sunscreen use is the weakest link in any protection strategy for reasons including lack of efficacy and poor compliance by consumers. A scientific explanation is that SOUVF sunscreens provide UVB-BIASED protection, where up to 10 times more UVA than UVB reaches skin, regardless of the SPF.[1] They mostly prevent sunburn from their skewed UVB filtering. UVA is now proven by modern science to be the main driver of skin cancer.[20]

IARC data from 1955-2015 in six developed countries (including the U.S.) showed the main risk factors for melanoma appear to be light hair color, especially red and white hair, UVA damage, low cutaneous vitamin D3 levels and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) residing in the squamous cells of the skin and acting as an oncogene and carcinogen.[21] There was no apparent risk from UVB exposure or sunburn. The primary role of UVA irradiation with no sunscreen in the genesis of melanoma was emphasized. Contrary to popular opinion, melanoma may occur equally to indoor and outdoor workers.[21]

Sunscreen and Pregnancy

Proof of safety is necessary to meet The Precautionary Principle and Medicine's First Rule, "First Do No Harm."[1] Proving something is harmless is different from proof of safety. Both require decades of inter-generational study to detect epigenetic harm, leaving millions of newborns at risk of their safety from SOUFV in the meantime (See **General Principles of Avoiding SOUVF Sidebar**).

It is improbable that safety data unavailable after 70 years will ever be provided, especially for the fetus. There are hundreds of studies on human toxicity. One review captures 453 studies on the human and environmental risks of SOUVF exposure. It quotes studies confirming that SOUVF are found in: 95.8% of male and female Americans aged 6–70, 100% of pregnant people, 98% of non-pregnant American women, in the breast milk of 85.2% of European women, as well as in blood, urine, amniotic fluid, placenta, fetal cord blood, semen, ovarian follicular fluid and adipose tissue.[22]

Another review of 85 scientific papers in humans and lower species concluded that SOUVF cause END and are toxic in several ways.[8] Others exemplify hundreds of peer-reviewed papers linking SOUVF to diverse human toxicity.[9,23] Fetal exposure is linked to placental trophoblast toxicity risking possible miscarriage, preeclampsia, growth defects, birth defects (Spina Bifida, Hirschsprung's Disease), disorders in birth weight and endometriosis or uterine cancer in adult life.

Childhood and adolescent exposure are linked to disorders of puberty, and adult exposure is linked to infertility for both sexes, fibroids, metabolic syndrome, obesity, polycystic ovarian disease and various cancers (See **Figure 1**). Many papers showing the adverse effects of SOUVF exposure end by suggesting more research is needed. Randomized controlled trials for definitive answers are scarce and are not ethical or feasible to address serious and irreversible harm.

General Principles of Avoiding SOUVF

Avoiding SOUVF at any age is important, but especially before conception and in pregnancy because:

- Bioavailability leads to the pollution of sunscreen users,
- People who never use a sunscreen are polluted through tap-water and the food-web.[18]
- Fetal life and infancy are vulnerable times in development and epigenetic programming of neuronal, metabolic, immune, renal, endocrine and reproductive systems.[7]
- The premise of a damage threshold is flawed particularly for the fetus, since the No Adverse Effect Level (NOAEL) is indeterminable.
- Animal models are unhelpful as U-shaped or inverted (non-monotonic) dose responses in humans ensure that undetectable levels of a SOUVF may cause more toxicity than high doses, dispelling the myth that "the dose makes the poison."[7]

Selecting an Ideal Sunscreen in Pregnancy

The Precautionary Principle asserts that in the regulation of food and drugs when there is a risk of harm, however minimal, scientific uncertainty must be resolved in favour of prevention or to err on the side of caution. Both mandates are only met if all

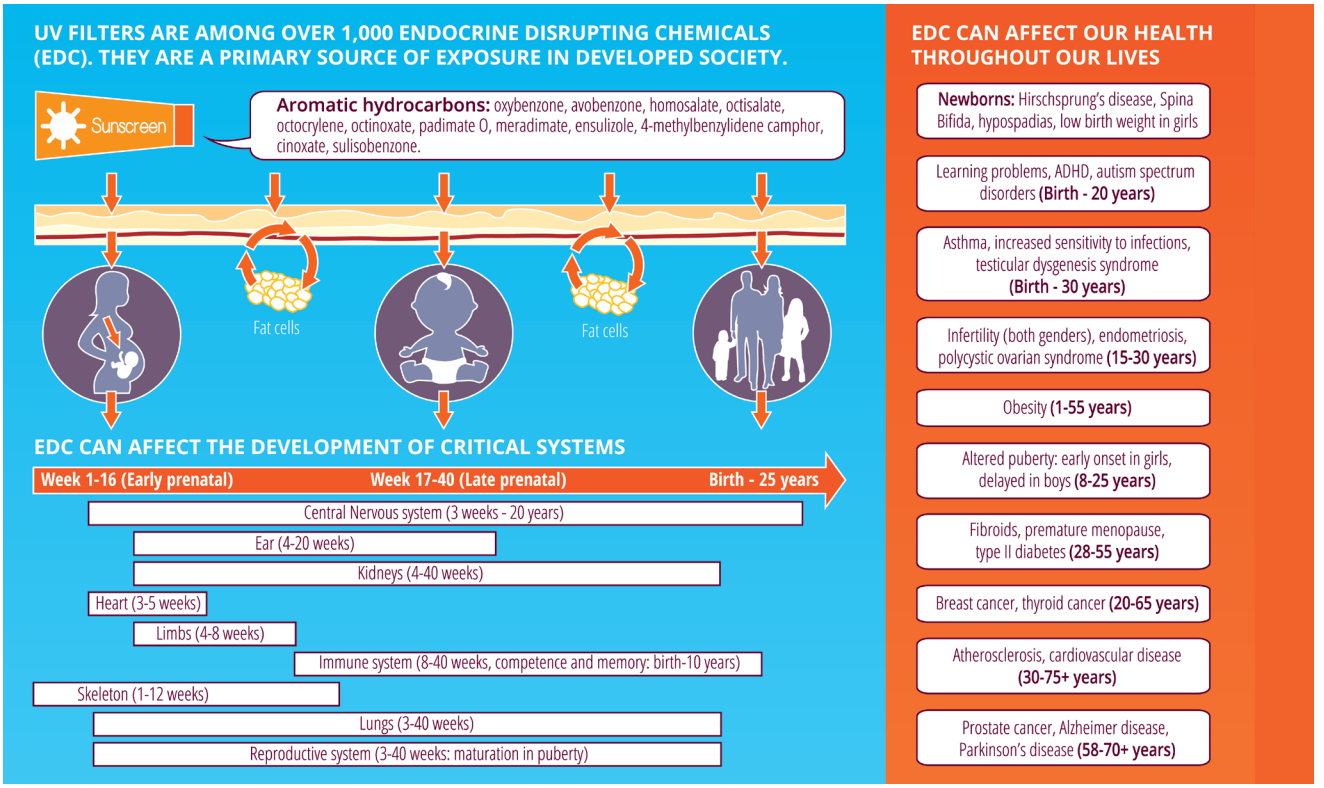


Figure 1: a powerful visual reinforcement of the serious adverse effects that span fetal life to adulthood.

consumers avoid SOUVF, especially in pregnancy. The Precautionary Principle and Medicine's First Rule are violated by their continued use. It is a disregard for fundamental principles of social and environmental justice.[18]

The selection of a mineral filter with no risk of bioavailability satisfies The Precautionary Principle and Medicine's First Rule.[1] Use a 25% zinc oxide sunscreen to obtain the high UVA protection required for prevention of skin cancer and photoaging, delivering benefit with no risk, to achieve the ideal BRA equation for mother and unborn child.[1]

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Sharyn A. Laughlin, MD, has her BSc in biology and has a Gold Medal in General Surgery. She is also a co-founder of The Sunscreen Company, and she is an assitant professor in the Division of Dermatology at the University of Ottawa. She started the first Canadian Fellowship Program for dermatologists in Cutaneous Laser Medicine & Surgery in 2000.

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PROTOCOLS IN PRACTICE
HYDRATING

ARCTIC LIGHT PROTOCOL DEEP HYDRATION ANTI-POLLUTION FACIAL

BELLECÔTE PARIS

This unique facial with a nourishing complex from pure glacial water provides hydration and nourishment.

Step 1. Using a circular motion, apply Marine Collagen Anti-Aging Cleanser and cleanse the skin.

Step 2. Tone and refresh the skin with the Marine Collagen Anti-Aging Toner.

Step 3. Reapply Marine Collagen Anti-Aging Cleanser (acts as a massage cream) with a few drops of any massage oil if needed, and massage skin for 10-12 min. under the steam.

Step 4. Without removing the cleanser, add Organic Seaweed Exfoliator and continue to massage for 1-2 min. in an upward circular motion. Gently remove everything from the skin with wet cotton pads or sponges.

Step 5. Here you can do microdermabrasion, dermaplaning, light chemical peel, skin scrubber or any other machine or type of technique for deeper exfoliation.

Step 6. If needed, provide a deep pore cleansing treatment. After this process, disinfect the skin using Azelaic Toner.

Step 7. Apply the BellEye with Arctic-Micro Algae, and perform a relaxing eye massage.

Step 8. Apply DNA Caviar Regenerating Mask with Arctic Micro-Algae for 10-12 min. Take time to massage the neck and shoulders for extra pampering.

Step 9. Remove the mask with a warm or hot towel.

Step 10. Apply a few drips of Wrinkle Erasing Serum to the face and neck. (Optional: you can penetrate with skin scrubber or ultrasonic machine.) Apply the Artic Light peel-off treatment.

Step 11. After removing the peel-off treatment, apply Ultra Lifting Day Cream or Day Light Moisturizer with Stem Cells and Triple Firming Neck Cream.

Step 12. Apply Double Sun Protection Cream SPF 30.

HYDRATION TREATMENT FACIAL

GUINOT USA

This hydrating facial incorporates innovate technology and techniques.

Step 1. Remove makeup from the eye area using Instant Eye Makeup remover. Continue by cleansing face, neck and décolleté using the Refreshing Cleaning Milk. Remove with hot towel.

Step 2. Apply Démaquillant Exfoliant and exfoliate face, neck and décolleté using circular movements. Remove with hot towel, apply toner and blot dry.

Step 3. Molecular energy with dynamic ionisation (Galvanic Current). Preset to level five and adjust level as needed.

Step 4. Apply Sérum Gel Anti-Rides Yeux to the eye contour area.

Step 5. Apply the ionized Hydration Gel to the client's face neck and décolleté. Move the electrodes according to the movement instructions. Repeat each movement twice.

Step 6. Remove the Gel with a hot towel and apply toning lotion and blot dry.

Step 7. Thermal energy with thermal electrode. Preset to level five and adjust level as needed.

Step 8. Apply Oxygénant Emulsion OZ2 on the face, neck and décolleté.

Step 9. Adjust the heat depending on the client's sensitivity.

Continue reading Steps 10-17 and other companies hydrating protocols in the Digital Magazine.

ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS FROM:

BIOELEMENTS
HYDRAFACIAL
NATURABISSE

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INDUSTRY INPUT
MASKS

TOP TIPS, TECHNIQUES AND ADVICE FOR MAKING THE MOST OUT OF MASKS IN YOUR SPA.

1 SHOWCASE MASKS UNIQUELY THROUGHOUT YOUR SPA

There are so many options to showcase masks in your spa that will result in a purchase. One option is to create an area where every guest that walks through the door can receive a complimentary skin analysis and based on the result, a sample mask can be given with a small card attached to it explaining when and how to apply and the benefits they will receive. If the guest brings back the empty sample and purchases that specific mask, they will receive 20% off a professional treatment or the product.

Another option is to set up a "mask refreshment area" in the relaxation lounge that showcases three masks that you want to promote. Invite guests to choose and then apply the mask to their hands for a complimentary hand treatment highlighting the versatility of each mask on different areas of the body. Their choice of mask can then be used in their facial treatment.

Don't forget to strategically place educational pieces around the spa that have catchy verbiage and images highlighting the benefits of masking at home and explaining how easy it can be incorporated into one's daily routine.

—Christine Dunn, Pevonia National Director of Education

2 SMOOTH MASKS INTO PLACE

I love hydrogel masks as they offer a better grip and shape to fit every face. To use, I recommend gently cleansing the skin before application to ensure all the ingredients can penetrate the skin and you don't trap in dirt or makeup. Use your fingers to smooth out air bubbles so that the mask is touching the skin in all areas. When finished, massage the remaining essence into the face and neck for maximum benefits.

—Janna Ronert, Founder of IMAGE Skincare

Keep reading top tips from industry experts on masks in the Digital Magazine.



Arctic Light Protocol Deep Hydration Anti-Pollution Facial

(Continued from Page 34)

BELLECÔTE PARIS

This unique facial with a nourishing complex from pure glacial water provides hydration and nourishment.

Step 10. Move the thermal electrode on the face, neck and décolleté.
Step 11. Remove with a hot towel, apply toner and blot dry.
Step 12. Apply Sérum Crème Modelage on the face, neck and décolleté.
Step 13. Perform massage for 10 minutes.
Step 14. Apply Anti-Fatigue Eye Mask to the eye contour area.
Step 15. Apply Mask Hydra Beaute (hydration mask) to face, neck and décolleté and leave for 10 minutes.
Step 16. Remove with hot towel, tone the skin and blot dry.
Step 17. Finish with Hydrazone Eye Cream, Hydra Summum Serum and Hydra Summum Cream.



Diamond Luminous Facial

NATURA BISSÉ

The professional Diamond Luminous treatment enhances luminosity and visibly fades dark spots.

Step 1. Perform inhalations and body alignment as a welcome ritual.

Step 2. Remove makeup from the eyes and lips with NB Ceutcal Eye & Lip Makeup Remover.

Step 3. Cleanse the skin with Diamond Luminous Expertise Rich Luxury Cleanse. Apply on the face, neck and décolleté using Natura Bissé Cleansing Maneuvers.

Step 4. Remove the product with the Natura Bissé cleansing sponges moistened in warm water.

Step 5. Apply Diamond Luminous Expertise Clarity Toning Lotion on dry skin.

Step 6. Apply Natura Bissé three-step peel Glyco 3 Peel for 15 min.

Step 7. Apply G3P phase 1. Leave on for 10 min. and do not remove.

Step 8. Apply G3P phase 2 (powder) and 3 (activator) to create an effervescent effect on the skin.

Step 9. Remove with warm water and Natura Bissé facial cleansing sponges.

Step 10. Apply the Diamond Luminous Expertise Brightening Concentrate with "eraser" technique focusing on pigmented areas, then apply the product on the face, neck and décolleté until completely absorbed (10 min.).

Step 11. Perform a balancing Shiatsu face massage for 8 min.

Step 12. Apply a thick layer of Diamond Luminous Perfecting Glowing Mask on the face, neck and décolleté.

Step 13. Remove with warm water after 15 min.

Step 14. Apply Diamond Luminous Expertise Clarity Toning Lotion with your hands on face, neck and décolleté.

Step 15. Apply a small amount of Diamond Experience Extreme Eye around the eyes and Diamond Cocoon Sheer Cream on the face, neck and décolleté for 5 min.

Step 16. Perform Final Body Alignment.

Custom Blend Facial

BIOELEMENTS

The Bioelements Custom Blend facial targets all skin types and concerns, with tailored exfoliation in three levels of Activity Tiers.

Step 1. Pre-heat steamer, then perform the Aromatherapy Breathing Signature Technique. Apply a few drops of a Bioelements Aromatherapist Oil in your hands, then cup them a few inches over client's nose as they take three deep breaths.

Step 2. Pre-cleanse skin with Sensitive Skin Cleansing Oil. Apply eye pads and perform Bioelements SkinReading.

Step 3. Apply Moisture Positive Cleanser under steam, and perform the Bioelements Cleansing Massage. Then, apply EnzymeTherapy with Softening Gel and brush across lips. Remove and blot skin with toner.

Step 4. Choose the Corrective Activity Tier for your client based on SkinReading (Max Tier featured here). Apply Triple Corrective Enzyme to face and neck. Exfoliate for 5 min. (no steam), then remove.

Step 5. Apply a skin sedation mask of Softening Gel and Emergency Soothing Powder; leave on for 5 min. Perform comedone removal if necessary.

Step 6. Blend up to six drops of an Aromatherapy Blend into a massage product and apply to face, neck and v-area. Perform a 10 min. Calming Acupressure Massage.

Step 7. Apply a Power Treatment of Softening Gel blended with one to three Custom Blends based on SkinReading and leave on.

Step 8. Apply a Power Mask of Ultra-Rich CremeTherapy blended with one to three Custom Blends. Leave on for 10 min. Remove and blot with toner.

Step 9. Finish with Crucial Moisture blended with one to three Custom Blends, and follow with a broad spectrum sunscreen if daytime.



Platinum Hydrafacial Treatment

HYDRAFACIAL

Hydrafacial's patented hydradermabrasion technology uniquely and effectively cleanses, extracts and hydrates.

Step 1. Start by using the Hydralight Handpiece tip to cleanse the skin's surface. This step deeply cleanses and softens skin to help loosen dead skin cells and prep for extractions.

Step 2. From here, the treatment is entirely customizable with 20 boosters and serums, designed with specific skin concerns in mind: Brightening, Firming and Restoring, Smoothing and Refining, Hydrating, Calming or Clarifying.

Step 3. Next, perform LED Light Therapy to enhance the treatment and promote healing.

Step 4. Lastly, saturate the skin with the multi-peptide and antioxidant blend that will improve skin hydration and elasticity while detoxifying and protecting it from environmental free-radicals.



3 MAGIC MASK MARKETING

The most effective way to market masks for your guests is by answering the 'why' behind their use. Why does the guest need to have a mask and what will the mask do for them? What are the key ingredients, and how do these ingredients work to target the guest's concerns? Masks should be introduced at home to boost a guest's home care routine. Whether it is to address lack of radiance, congestion, breakouts or dryness, masks are a wonderful way guests can treat their skin at home. The active ingredients are generally more potent, providing an additional surge of ingredients into the skin. Mask usage should be discussed during the consultation process, so the client can relax during their service. Dialogue could be, "Today I will be using a mask to address your breakouts, as it contains mandelic acid and salicylic acid to help deeply cleanse and exfoliate the skin. If you use this twice a week, your skin will appear less congested, soothed and more radiant."

—Tracey Beeby, Global Education Technical Training Manager of Ultraceuticals



4 ACTIVE MASKING INGREDIENTS

Because masks aren't used daily and are often rinsed off, they provide an opportunity to use highly active ingredients and concentrations. When formulating a mask, I love being able to dial up those skin-changing actives according to a specific skin need. Products with acids or enzymes can have visually noticeable results in a short period of time. But, when used too often, they can cause irritation. On the flip side, I love using plant extracts and natural ingredients that nourish the skin. Leave-on masks can provide moisture and help protect skin barrier from external elements, and are safe to use on skin daily.

—Joan Sutton, Co-founder of 707 Flora



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A Complete Guide to *Hydrating Masks*

By Kelly A. Dobos, Consulting Cosmetic Chemist

Consumers continue to embrace health and wellness trends as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, skin care in the form of face masks is re-emerging in spa and home treatments to cleanse, purify and hydratethe skin. Cosmetic chemists have also given the formulation of skin care face masks a makeover with innovative ingredients and creative new formulations that differentiate them from their predecessors.

Clay Masks

The first type of face masks we think of are clay mud packs that have been around since antiquity. Clays like kaolin, montmorillonite and bentonite are typically used at levels between ten to fifty percent in modern face mask formulations. Although, some products are one hundred percent solids that can be mixed with water just prior to use. One drawback of this method of preparation is that clays progressively hydrate, so you should only prepare as much as needed at the time, unlike preformulated clay masks which should have undergone stability studies to monitor changes over time. Clay minerals are comprised of negatively charged, layered silicates and positively charged metal ions. These platelets of clay swell when it is mixed with water. After application to the skin, the water evaporates as the mask dries, creating a tightening sensation and capillary action kicks in, pulling excess oil from the skin. You can easily see the oil spots emerge around pores as clay masks dry.

Types of Clay

Bentonite clay. This is an absorbent, swelling mask. Much like its description, this mask aids in absorbing dirt and oil.

Kaolin clay. This mineral has a chemical composition of $Al_2Si_2O_5(OH)_4$. These masks can help in preventing acne, hydrating the skin and controlling excess oil production. Montmorillonite clay. This type of clay is soft and forms from a water precipitate solution. This clay expands facial pores to extract excess debris from within them.

The oil absorption capacity of clays and other cosmetic powders is related to a property called specific surface area. Specific surface area increases with decreasing particle size. The specific surface area also increases if the particle has pores. A good example of a highly porous material used in face masks is activated charcoal, which is about two times more porous than regular charcoal, making it useful for binding impurities and sebum from oily complexions. Not all clay masks are formulated for oil absorption, the selection of mineral clays can be tailored to enhance skin moisturization.

Sea silt, also referred to as glacial clay, consists of fine mineral particles formed by the mechanical grinding of rocks by glaciers. Silts feel smooth and slippery when hydrated, not grainy or coarse. They have a larger particle size and lower specific surface area than the typical clays used in face masks, and they can help create an occlusive barrier that retains moisture during application. This type of clay is also gently abrasive when massaged into the skin, and it can also be incorporated into gel or cream-based cleansers that lightly exfoliate and remove excess sebum without drying.

Fruit Enzyme Masks

Our skin naturally sheds dead skin cells through a process called desquamation. Every 28-40 days, on average, a new skin cell is "born" in the deepest layer of the epidermis. The cell travels up through the epidermis until it reaches the uppermost layer of the skin; the stratum corneum. Once the cell reaches this layer, it is rough, dry, flaky — what we consider a "dead" skin cell.



Enzyme masks help to stimulate cell turnover, which in turn keeps skin moisturized.

New skin cells continue to arrive at the skin's surface as older cells are sloughed off, but as we age, this process slows. When the skin is dry, the innate enzymes which help loosen mature skin cells are not able to achieve their peak activity.

Stimulating the cell turn process has been investigated as a method for improving both skin moisturization and appearance. Enzymes like papain from papaya fruit and bromelain from pineapples can induce exfoliation by helping break down the proteins in dry, dead surface skin cells, and them into amino acids that can then be absorbed to promote skin renewal. Enzyme masks can also be far less irritating than other means of stimulating skin turnover like chemical and physical exfoliation.

Overnight Masks

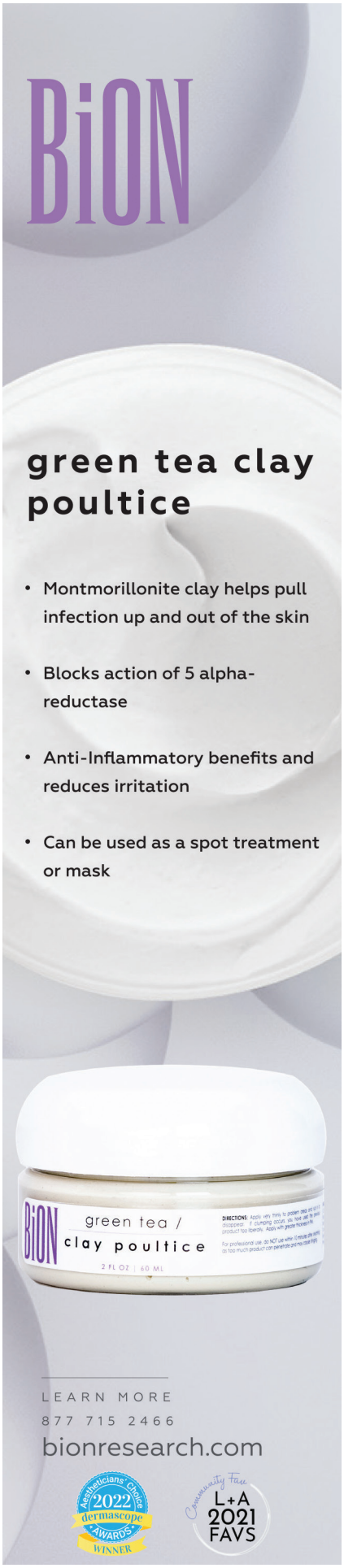
Overnight masks are often designed as soft gel-creams that deliver hydration to the skin all night long, reinforcing the skin barrier and restoring skin so it looks and feels fresh in the morning. These formulations typically do not need to be rinsed from the skin because they are fully absorbed into it by morning. Overnight masks also provide an opportunity to deliver higher levels of humectant ingredients and allow other efficacious ingredients sufficient time to penetrate the skin by taking advantage of changes in the skin that follow circadian rhythms.

The natural cycle of changes that occur in our mind and body over the course of a day are referred to as circadian rhythms. Circadian rhythms regulate sleep-wake pattens and are most effected by the changes between light and dark that occur within a roughly, 24 hour period. Our skin naturally participates in circadian rhythms, as studies have shown that permeability, water loss and repair of skin damaged by UV exposure all peak at night. Just as we can recommend adequate sleep to optimize overall health, the impact of circadian rhythms on skin may impact the effectiveness of topical skin care products.

Hydrating Ingredients

Cosmetic chemists often rely on three classes of ingredients to deliver moisturization in skin care products. Those ingredients are humectants, emollients and occlusives. However, new research is revealing innovative approaches to moisturize and revitalize the skin with vitamins and other efficacious ingredients. Just a few examples are discussed here.

Vitamin C. This ingredient is a potent antioxidant and a great addition to skin care treatments due to its benefits like boosting collagen and brightening skin tone. Vitamin C's antioxidant capacity aids in protecting the skin from UV and pollution-induced damaged that leads to an increase in skin dryness. Unfortunately, vitamin C as





Masks can be customized to provide exactly what the skin needs.

ascorbic acid is notoriously hard to stabilize once it is incorporated into water. Instead, choose products that contain vitamin C derivatives like tetrahexyldecyl ascorbate (an oil-soluble form) or magnesium ascorbyl phosphate (a water-soluble form) that are much more stable and don't lose potency over time. Combinations of vitamin C with vitamins A and E have a been shown to enhance the overall efficacy.

Niacinamide. This ingredient is a form of vitamin B3, another multitasking ingredient that can be incorporated into nighttime masks. Studies have shown that niacinamide improves skin barrier function by increasing the production of ceramides and other skin lipids that help the skin maintain optimum hydration. Other benefits of niacinamide include reducing hyperpigmentation, evening skin tone, diminishing fine lines and improving skin elasticity.

Vegan collagen. As indicated by the ingredient name Polypeptide-121 on product labels, this is an innovative bio-engineered collagen that can penetrate the skin. Both in vitro and clinical studies have demonstrated that the use of skin care products containing this ingredient boost collagen synthesis in fibroblasts, which are little cellular factories within the dermis that manufacture collagen and up-regulates elastin production. Collagen and elastin are the main structural proteins of the skin, strengthening and providing support from within.

Stay Hydrated

With new approaches to delivering hydration, through traditional clay mud packs to gel and cream formats, along with the incorporation of targeted ingredients, facial mask treatments can be customized for specific needs. From collagen boosting to pineapple-powered exfoliation, masks are now filled with science-backed ingredients that strengthen the skin's barrier and deliver enhanced moisturization benefits.



Kelly A. Dobos is a consultant cosmetic chemist and instructor of a course on color cosmetics at the University of Toledo. Kelly has 20 years of expertise in developing both skin care and color cosmetic formulations working for notable brands like Bonne Bell, Purell, and Jergens. She is part of the American Chemical Society's expert panel for public relations and serves as a subject matter expert for magazines like Allure and New Beauty.

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To read more about treating winter skin turn to Page 48.



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Monk's Pepper

By Rachel Grabenhofer and Katie Anderson

The word *monk* brings to mind an enlightened individual, high in the mountains, treading space and time in perfect balance. Monk's pepper (*Vitex agnus-castus*) offers several facets of this vision, promoting all-around wellness, hormonal balance and skin benefits, as will be detailed later in this article.

Monk's pepper is a shrub native to the Mediterranean region and has long been believed to be an anaphrodisiac, earning it the nickname of chaste berry or chaste tree.[1] The name vitex is derived from the Latin word *vieo*, meaning to tie up or to weave, while *agnus-castus* refers to chaste in both Greek and Latin.[1]

The herb has been dubbed *monk's pepper* for several additional reasons. For one, its dark brown and black fruits are the size of peppercorns and reportedly have a pepperish aroma and flavor.[2] In fact, some sources report the berries were dried and ground up for use as a weak substitute for pepper in Mediterranean spice mixtures.

Also, in the 6th century, monks undertaking vows of chastity were said to ingest the dried and ground berries for their perceived effects of reducing sexual desire.[3]

Monk's pepper has been known throughout history for its medicinal properties, being recognized and referenced in many health practices including ayurveda, Unani medicine, Chinese traditional medicine, Malay traditional medicine, European medicine and ancient Greek medicine.[4] According to the National Institutes of Health, chasteberry extracts were used to treat a variety of gynecological disorders and skin conditions such as rashes. Today, it is promoted as a dietary supplement

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for symptoms of premenstrual syndrome, breast pain associated with the menstrual cycle, infertility and other conditions.[5]

Active Constituents and Health Benefits

Monk's pepper berries contain numerous active constituents, according to *The American Family Physician (AFP)*: flavonoids including kaempferol; iridoid glycosides such as agnuside and aucubin; and the essential oils limonene, cineol, pinene and sabinene. Additionally present are diterpenoids, progestins and ketosteroids.[6, 7] Progesterone, hydroxyprogesterone, testosterone and androstenedione have also been isolated from the leaves and flowers of the herb, although only in trace amounts.[8] Several fatty acids have been identified as well.

The berries' therapeutic value is attributed primarily to effects on various hormones, especially prolactin and progesterone.[6-8] According to one molecular biologist, chasteberry increases dopamine activity in the brain, resulting in the reduction of prolactin release—and when too much prolactin circulates in the body, it can cause disturbances in the menstrual cycle, and deficiencies of estrogen in women and testosterone in men.[9]

Also, according to *AFP*, within the past 10 years, some high quality, double-blind randomized controlled clinicals have found that chasteberry can reduce some symptoms of PMS including breast pain or tenderness, edema, constipation, irritability, depression, anger and headaches. Additional studies have shown some efficacy for improving menstrual irregularities and fertility disorders. However, no clinical data reportedly exists to support claims for reducing sexual desire.[6]

Skin Benefits

For skin, several sources cite monk's pepper's ability to clear up hormonally induced acne. For example, in an article in *Allure*, board-certified dermatology Dennis Gross, M.D., explained the ingredient's function in his namesake brand pimple gel. "[It] stimulates the precursor to testosterone, [acting as] a lookalike compound with a weaker biological effect on sebum. … [This] blocks testosterone from binding with the androgen receptor in the first place to prevent sebum production."[10] He added that this effect regulates the quantity of oil produced, preventing it from becoming thicker and clogging pores, causing not only acne but also blackheads and whiteheads.

Thanks to its phytoconstituents, monk's pepper demonstrates strong antioxidant efficacy to protect against skin damage, as well as anti-inflammatory properties.[11, 12, 13] The ingredient also shows antibacterial properties.[14] A recent study published in *Chemistry and Biodiversity* explored ethanolic extracts of the seeds



and concluded, "*V. agnus-castus seed* can be suggested as a promising natural antioxidant and antibacterial candidate for the preservation of foods." In relation, work published in the *Fresenius Environmental Bulletin* found that the extracts of *V. agnus-castus* exhibited antibacterial activity against the mastitis-causing *Staphylococcus* aureus and coagulase-negative *Staphylococci* pathogens.[15]

One cosmetic ingredient supplier has also confirmed the anti-aging and radiance-boosting effects of a *V. agnus-castus extract*[a], which the company encapsulated in a double delivery system to control the release of phyto-endorphins. According to the supplier, the berries' phyto-endorphins bind to the μ-opiate receptor, stimulating the in vivo production of β-endorphins, or "happy molecules," and offering benefits for skin.[16]

The same company reports the ingredient also stimulates DHEA, the precursor for female estrogen and male testosterone, which tends to decrease during andropause and menopause and whose levels are directly related to skin's condition. In placebo-controlled clinical trials of women and men over 50, a cream incorporating the ingredient was shown to improve skin elasticity after 14 days of use. Further analysis of deeper skin layers revealed a boost in skin density, which, by adding cushion to skin, ultimately diminished wrinkles.[17]

In the Spa

You would be hard-pressed to find a facial or body treatment that highlights monk's pepper as one of its stars; however, the ingredient, along with its other aliases chaste tree and chasteberry, has certainly found its way into a number of professional skin care products.

After a peel, PCA Skin recommends chasteberry as part of its Après Peel Hydrating Balm. This soothing moisturizer is formulated with chasteberry fruit extract to hydrate the skin, while soy isoflavones and apricot kernel oil reduce the appearance of aging.

Chasteberry is used as an antioxidant source in Éminence's Eight Greens Youth Serum, where its bioflavanoids help to tighten and brighten the skin. The serum taps phytoestrogens from yucca to help reduce the appearance of age, while paprika invigorate and rejuvenates the skin.

[a] Densorphin (INCI: Maltodextrin (and) Water (*Aqua*) (and) *Vitex Agnus-Castus* Fruit Extract) is a product of Mibelle Biochemistry.



Monk's pepper shrub is native to the Mediterranean region.



This is a close-up of the exotic monk pepper berry from Peru.

Moor Spa taps more of the plant's female-specific benefits in its Balance Cream. Along with wild yam, chasteberry is formulated in the cream to help women reduce the symptoms of PMS, menopause, inflammation and osteoporosis. It is to be applied to the arms and inner thighs.

The acne benefits of chasteberry is highlighted by Prana SpaCeuticals in its BanAcne Recovery Lotion. The lightweight hydrator is said to balance blemish-prone skin while reducing irritation and redness. It also helps to prevent future breakouts.

You can find monk's pepper fighting acne in Dr. Dennis Gross Skincare's Acne Eliminating Gel. The ingredient is combined with 2% salicylic acid to reduce breakouts. Speaking on the ingredient, Dr. Gross noted, "Monk's pepper is one of the greatest breakthroughs for acne because it addresses one of the main causes of breakouts–sebum. Monk's pepper acts as a decoy, binding to testosterone receptors in the skin, to prevent a surge in oil (sebum) production."

Conclusions

Monk's pepper demonstrates biological activities that align with today's focus on feel-good beauty and self-care. It's just the right ingredient to spice up skin care and transcend daily stresses to skin.

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Rachel Grabenhofer is the managing scientific editor of *Cosmetics & Toiletries*, *Skin Inc.*'s sister brand for cosmetic chemists. She's a member of the Skin Microbiome Council and Society of Cosmetic Chemists, and for several years, led judging panels to honor the best ingredients in cosmetics.

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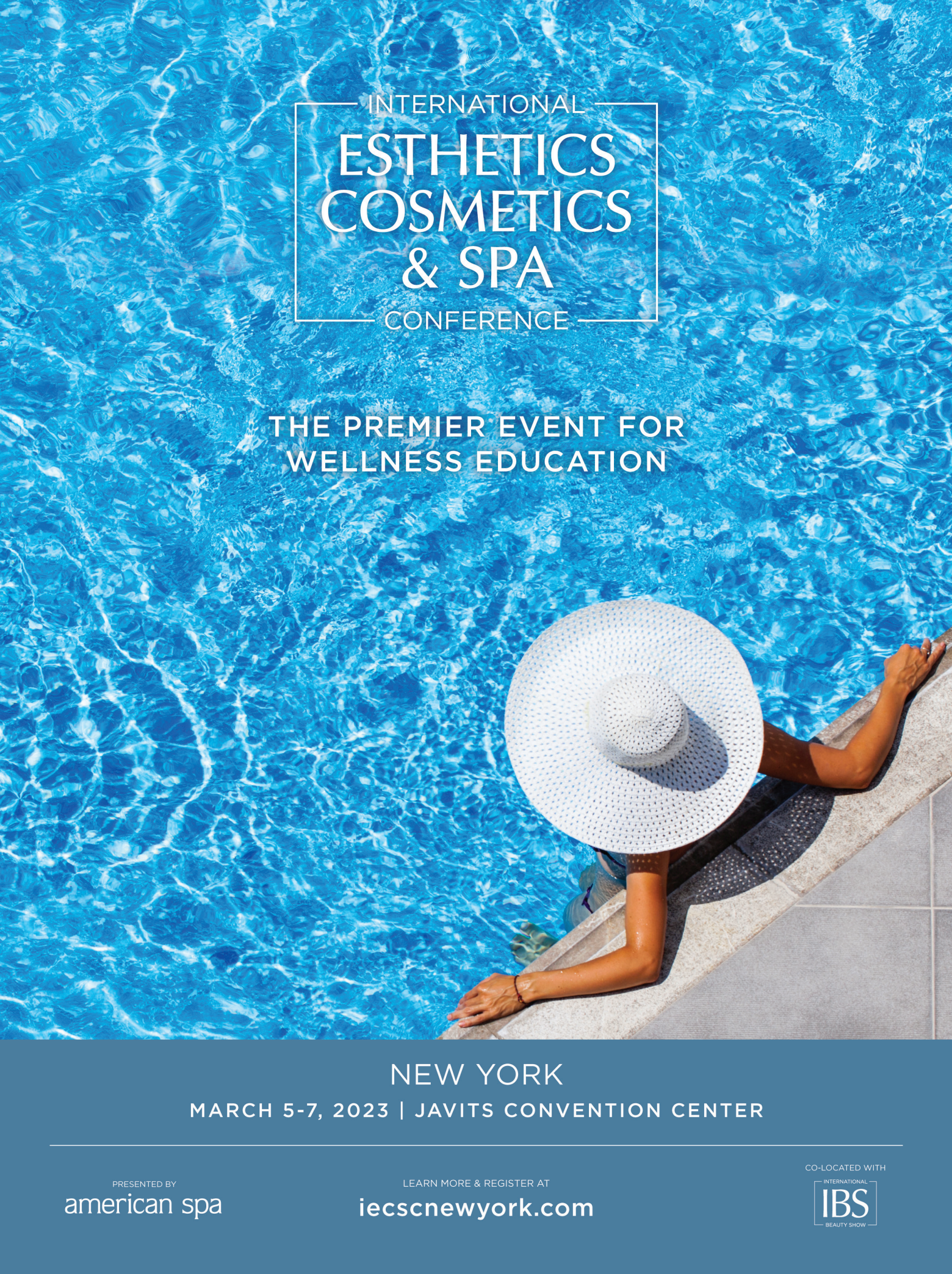
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Tip: Hands are very dry this time of year and most of your treatments can be adapted for other parts of the body!





Founder and owner of the San Francisco Institute of Esthetics and Cosmetology since 2002, **Deedee Crossett** is an industry pioneer for raising the bar of undergraduate education for cosmetologists and estheticians. She can be reached at *www.facebook.com/deedee.crossett* and Twitter @DeedeeCrossett.

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