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MAY 2025

SKIN INC.®

The Choice for Serious Spa Professionals & Owners



NEUROCOSMETICS:
The Future of Feel-Good Skin

PLANT EXOSOMES
for Transformative
Skin Care

MASSAGE TIPS FOR COMPROMISED CLIENTS

Allured business media

ZEMITS®: RESULTS EVERYONE LOVES

QDC LASER HAIR REMOVAL TECHNOLOGY: PRECISION & SAFETY FOR FITZPATRICK IV SKIN

Zemits Quidion QDC Technology (Quick Dynamic Control) revolutionizes diode laser performance with precise pulse control and advanced cooling. It delivers targeted energy to follicles, enhancing efficacy while protecting darker skin tones like Fitzpatrick IV from overheating.

Its consistent pulse shape and energy stabilization ensure uniform power output, reducing hot spots and improving treatment safety.

THE INTEGRATED COOLING SYSTEM MAINTAINS SKIN COMFORT, MINIMIZING IRRITATION.

Providers using Zemits Quidion QDC Technology benefit from superior results, safety, and client satisfaction, making it ideal for Fitzpatrick IV and melanin-rich skin types.

Tetiana Vasyliuk is the founder of "Laser Time Studios" in Europe and Austin, Texas, USA. With over ten years of experience, Tetiana has successfully treated over 2,000 clients, providing them with a long-lasting solution to unwanted hair. Her individualized approach ensures optimal results by considering skin type, hair structure, and unique physiological factors for every client.



"Before integrating the Zemits Quidion Diode Laser into my practice, I faced challenges with inconsistent results and patient discomfort. Now, with QDC Technology, everything has changed. My clients experience faster, safer, and more effective treatments with no irritation and long-term smoothness.

Thanks to Zemits, my laser business has transformed — I can now deliver premium-level treatments with outstanding client satisfaction and retention."

TETIANA VASYLIUK

Laser Hair Removal Specialist, Austin, TX

CLINICAL EXCELLENCE IN FITZPATRICK IV LASER HAIR REMOVAL:

Courtesy of Tetiana Vasyliuk & Zemits QuiDion QDC Diode Laser

CASE 1: Eliminating Stubborn Hair Growth on the Chin



Client: Female, 37 y.o.

Fitzpatrick Skin Type IV

Treatment Area: Chin

Concerns: Excessive hair growth, requiring frequent shaving, leading to irritation

Treatment Plan:

8 sessions performed at 4-6 week intervals

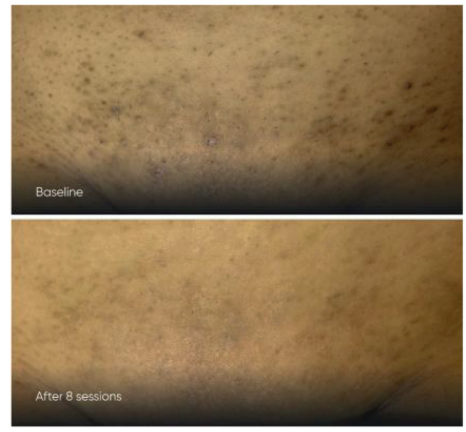
Recommended maintenance:

Personalized skincare routine with moisturizers and SPF protection to maintain results.

Results:

- Hair was successfully removed, eliminating the need for daily shaving.
- The client reported no post-treatment irritation.

CASE 2: Resolving Ingrown Hairs and Folliculitis in the Bikini Area



Client: Female, 35 y.o.

Fitzpatrick Skin Type IV

Treatment Area: Brazilian

Concerns: Chronic ingrown hairs, folliculitis, and inflammation

8 sessions performed at 4-8 week intervals

Recommended maintenance:

One session every 6-8 months to prevent regrowth.

Results:

- Significant reduction in inflammation and complete resolution of ingrown hairs after three sessions.
- Skin texture improved, becoming smoother and more even-toned.

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We have beautiful skin down to a science

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SKIN INC.®
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The Event for Serious Spa Professionals & Owners

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Shop here!

On My Radar

A Growing Market & a Revived Mission



KITTY LIN
Managing Editor
clin@allured.com

SKIN INC.'S MANAGING EDITOR KITTY LIN SHARES WHAT'S ON HER MIND THIS MONTH.

Hello everyone, I'm Kitty Lin, the incoming Managing Editor of *Skin Inc.* While I may be new to this role, I'm no stranger to the Allured family of beauty media. My background spans marketing, content creation, and more, and I'm excited to bring that experience to this new chapter.

Empowering Spa and Wellness Professionals

I'm joining *Skin Inc.* at an exciting time, as the brand continues to evolve into the ultimate resource for spa and wellness professionals. By merging expertise in skin care with a focus on holistic wellness, *Skin Inc.* is redefining what it means to support the industry.

Since 1988, *Skin Inc.* has been the go-to source for industry news and education. Today, it takes a more comprehensive approach, combining skin science, treatment techniques, business strategies and the latest trends with wellness protocols designed to empower professionals at every level.

Our mission is clear: to help spa and wellness practitioners build thriving businesses that promote healthier, stronger communities.

U.S. Spa Industry Achieves $22.5 Billion Revenue in 2024

This revived mission comes amid positive gains for the industry we love.

The U.S. spa industry closed 2024 on a high note, achieving year-end revenue of $22.5 billion—a 5.8% increase year-over-year. What's driving this impressive growth? According to new data from PwC and the ISPA Foundation, two key factors played a decisive role: a 3.1% rise in total spa visits and a 2.6% increase in revenue per visit. Despite only a 0.6% growth in the number of spa locations, these metrics reflect a thriving industry.

While spa location growth was modest, spas are reinvesting in their properties to enhance guest experiences. Approximately 30% of surveyed businesses reported renovating their retail spaces, while 25% updated their treatment rooms, according to Colin from PwC.

Employment within the spa sector also saw positive movement, growing by 1.6% to reach 376,200 workers as of January 2025. This growth was primarily fueled by an increase in part-time positions, even as the number of contract employees fell by 6.5% year-over-year.

"This year's rise in revenue and guest visits showcases the remarkable resilience and growth of the spa industry," said ISPA President Lynne McNees. "By responding to consumer demand for exceptional wellness experiences and prioritizing innovation and guest satisfaction, the industry has achieved consistent growth across all key indicators, continuing its recovery in the post-pandemic era."

Below is an overview of the key metrics from 2024 year-end:

- **Overall revenue:** Up 5.8%, from $21.3 billion in 2023 to $22.5 billion in 2024.
- **Total spa visits:** Increased by 3.1%, from 182 million in 2023 to 187 million in 2024—a surge of 5 million visits.
- **Spa locations:** Grew modestly by 0.6%, from 21,840 in 2023 to 21,980 in 2024.
- **Revenue per visit:** Up 2.6%, rising from $117.20 in 2023 to $120.30 in 2024.
- **Spa industry employment:** Expanded by 1.6%, from 370,100 workers in 2023 to 376,200 as of January 2025.

These findings highlight a flourishing industry that is steadily rebuilding while creating opportunities for businesses and professionals alike. As spas innovate and adapt, they remain at the forefront of delivering wellness experiences that resonate with today's consumers.

Serums for Around-the-Clock Lash Care

Clients' lashes are assaulted every day due to a number of factors that leave lashes looking brittle, dry, sparse and damaged. We may think of the obvious reasons for lash damage like the use of drying mascara and cosmetics, overuse of lash curlers, improper false lash removal or not cleansing the eye area from makeup overnight.





Your clients may also share some distress stories about abrasive lash glue that have wreaked havoc on their lash lines. To make this list even longer, there are physiological reasons for imperfect lashes due to medications, physical stress, skin conditions, illness, poor diet, or habits of rubbing the eye area too aggressively. And still more, there are environmental factors like cold and dry air, dust particles, UV rays, blue light, pollution and other environmental aggressors.

Just like your skin or scalp hair, lashes need daily care and topical ingredients to replace deficiencies in vitamins and minerals that our bodies and the environment deplete. Moisturizing ingredients are also required for daily topical application that can improve hair elasticity and durability and essentially reduce lash breakage.

RapidLash® has a daytime and a nighttime lash serum for around-the-clock care for your clients that effectively replenish the lashes with fundamental vitamins, minerals and moisturizing ingredients. The formulations are each comprised of a Hexatein® Complex that infuses the lashes with six key elements, bringing dull and damaged lash hair back to looking shiny, nourished, and healthy.

AM Care

RapidShield® Eyelash Daily Conditioner is a day-time lash conditioner that helps prime, protect and shield lashes from environmental aggressors while amplifying lash length and volume in just 2 weeks.*

RapidShield® is formulated with **Hexatein® 3** Complex:

- Sodium Hyaluronate a super hydrator, binds moisture onto lashes and helps improve lash elasticity
- Silk Amino Acids an excellent moisturizer and a conditioning agent helps promote silky, smooth, flawless lashes
- Apple Fruit Cell Extract a revolutionary ingredient from stem cells of a rare Swiss apple, helps rejuvenate the youthful appearance of lashes
- Biotin (Pro-vitamin B7 / Vitamin H / Coenzyme R), an essential factor in maintaining beautiful-looking, fabulous lashes
- Panthenol (Vitamin B5) helps coat the lashes and seal in moisture and nourishment for improved overall appearance
- Pumpkin Seed Extract, high in zinc, EFAs, amino acids, vitamins and phytosterols, helps enhance the appearance of lashes



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PM Care

RapidLash® Eyelash Enhancing Serum is a unique formula of peptides, vitamins and minerals that synergistically work to improve lash durability and the overall appearance of lash health.

RapidLash® is formulated with **Hexatein® 1** Complex:

- Polypeptides, comprised of beneficial amino acids, help protect against breakage
- Biotin (Pro-vitamin B7 / Vitamin H), an essential factor in maintaining healthier-looking, youthful lashes
- Panthenol (Vitamin B5) helps coat the lashes and brows and seal in moisture and nourishment for improved overall appearance
- Amino Acids help boost the protein structure, resulting in healthier-looking appearance of lashes
- Soybean Oil, rich in vitamins, helps impart sheen and luster to lashes and brows making them appear lush and beautiful
- Pumpkin Seed Extract, high in vitamins and minerals, helps balance and enhance the appearance of lashes

The combination of these daytime and nighttime lash serums will provide your clients with both lash protection and the essential ingredients they need for optimal lash hair replenishment and beautiful looking lashes.

*Consumer study of 52 subjects over 14 days

For more Information about how to stock RapidLash® products at your practice

To learn more, visit: https://rapidlash.com/

NEW PRODUCTS

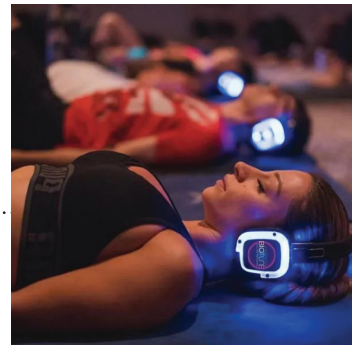
The latest products, devices and tools for skin care and wellness professionals.



Mask Trio

Sorella

Sorella has introduced a trio of masks for professional use, designed to hydrate, calm, and brighten skin. The pro-only Muesli Calming Mask features chia for smoothing, biolin for calming, and oats for nourishment. The Golden Hour Glow Mask uses exfoliating acids to renew skin and brighteners to firm and refresh. The retail-ready Marine Biocellulose Mask delivers 16% more moisture in a single treatment.



Sound technology

Biotune

Biotune unveiled groundbreaking sound technology advancements at CES 2025, combining LE Audio (Auracast), AI-driven biofeedback sensors, spatial audio, and tactile vibration to transform wellness experiences. Their innovations include synchronized, high-quality audio for group wellness, tailored biofeedback metrics for personalized meditation and therapy, and immersive soundscapes paired with tactile vibration for holistic sensory engagement. Biotune's mission focuses on making these solutions accessible to underserved communities, supporting PTSD recovery, trauma healing, and wellness accessibility. Founder Isaac Sabu notes that Biotune is committed to using technology to empower marginalized populations, while ongoing partnerships and studies aim to expand its global impact.



Multi-Vitamin Retinol Serum

emerginC

The revamped Multi-Vitamin Retinol Serum now features an advanced probiotic blend to support a balanced skin microbiome and promote a healthier complexion. This lightweight serum nourishes, hydrates, and reduces fine lines with vitamins A, B-complex, C, E and F. Infused with organic green tea, hops, neem, and alfalfa, it delivers powerful, soothing ingredients for radiant, youthful-looking skin.



DermProtect Barrier Defense

Revision Skincare

Revision Skincare has launched DermProtect Barrier Defense, an intensive moisturizer designed to repair the skin barrier and hydrate dry, sensitive, or mature skin, including perimenopausal and menopausal skin. The formula supports the skin's natural 24-hour cycle for enhanced daytime defense and nighttime regeneration. It features a blend of ***Lindera strychnifolia*** root extract, ***Hibiscus sabdariffa*** fruit extract, ***Bacillus*** ferment, ceramides, lipids, and hyaluronic acid to restore moisture and improve barrier function. According to Alisar Zahr, Ph.D., senior director of research at Revision Skincare, the product addresses the root causes of barrier dysfunction to deliver advanced hydration and repair.



AquaBiotic Balancing Moisturizer

Circadia

Circadia's AquaBiotic Balancing Moisturizer is a water-based cream designed for acne-prone, mature, dry, or sensitive skin. Formulated with Hyafactor-PGA for hydration and elasticity, it features biolin/P prebiotics to support the skin's microbiota and SK-Influx ceramides to strengthen the skin barrier. This moisturizer calms irritation, reduces sensitivity, prevents moisture loss, and protects against environmental damage, promoting long-term skin health.



NanoFusion and UltraFusion 10MHz ultrasound technology

Skin Moderne

Skin Moderne's NanoFusion and UltraFusion 10MHz ultrasound technology offer needle-free, pain-free alternatives to microneedling by enhancing the delivery of biocompatible skin care. NanoFusion creates temporary micro-channels to deliver potent serums, promoting skin rejuvenation and reducing fine lines, while UltraFusion uses ultrasound therapy to stimulate collagen production, improve firmness, and target concerns like aging, rosacea, and acne. Both treatments improve hydration, plumpness, and radiance with no downtime or inflammation. Typically integrated into skincare protocols, treatments take less than 30 minutes and prioritize sustainable, effective results without discomfort



EXOMIND

BTL

BTL has introduced EXOMIND, powered by ExoTMS technology, a non-invasive brain stimulation treatment FDA-cleared for depression. This state-of-the-art therapy stimulates brain areas involved in emotional regulation, cognitive function, and self-control, enhancing neural connectivity and restoring healthy brain activity. Offering drug-free, 30-minute sessions, EXOMIND provides an easy, patient-friendly alternative to traditional treatments without the side effects of medications. Designed for seamless integration into medical practices, it's a natural solution promoting mental wellness. "EXOMIND empowers patients to manage their mental health without solely relying on medication," says Dr. Yael Halaas.



Relax VR-3

Relax VR

Relax VR has launched the Relax VR-3, a major upgrade offering improved resolution (2160 x 2160 pixels per eye), a 105° field of view, and processing power five times faster than its predecessor. Users can explore breathtaking 8K virtual locations like the Northern Lights and Coral Reefs, paired with unique essential oil blends for a multisensory experience. Designed for stress relief, Relax VR combines cutting-edge VR technology, binaural beats, and aromatherapy, with seven research studies validating its effectiveness. Trusted by hospitals, psychologists, and businesses worldwide, Relax VR also provides comprehensive support for spas, including headsets, noise-canceling headphones, essential oils, and marketing materials.

Fresh Acres Shea Butter Cream

FarmHouse Fresh

FarmHouse Fresh has introduced its new Fresh Acres Shea Butter Cream, a luxurious shea butter whip that hydrates the skin while wrapping you in the bright, refreshing scent of a freshly picked orange orchard. This rich cream combines shea butter, cocoa butter, jojoba seed oil, vitamin E and omega-6-rich U.S.-grown non-GMO soybean oil to deeply moisturize and soothe even the driest skin without feeling greasy. It also features their FHF-grown heirloom organic cucumber extract, packed with soothing antioxidants, as well as vitamins A and E to improve skin elasticity, reduce the appearance of wrinkles, and help the skin retain moisture. With added aloe and the antioxidant benefits of cucumber extract, rich in vitamin C and caffeic acid, this cream leaves your skin soft, smooth, and beautifully refreshed with a natural citrusy glow.





Rich M Cream

Corthe

Rich M Cream's effectiveness comes from its occlusive barrier technology, which prevents water loss and protects the skin's moisture reservoir. It strengthens the skin barrier with ceramide NP, while Prodew 400, a blend of betaine, sodium PCA, sorbitol, and amino acids, provides deep hydration. Fucoidan enhances moisture retention while offering antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits.

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



Skin Script's Golden Honey Nourishing Mask

FROM SPA DAY TO EVERY DAY: THE POWER OF TREATMENT MASKS

With their expertise, estheticians can effectively determine and customize treatment plans, ensuring optimal in-office treatments and home care routines for their clients.

In today's fast-paced world, skin care masks have become a popular and essential step for individuals looking to elevate their skin care routines. These treatment masks offer a convenient way to create a spa-like experience at home while providing additional support in maintaining healthy skin between professional treatments.

Masks act as a vehicle for delivering a concentrated dose of targeted ingredients, enhancing product penetration and absorption for overall skin improvement. There are various types of masks, including sheet masks, peel-off masks, rinse-off masks, and hydrogel masks. Many masks on the market are formulated to address a range of concerns, such as detoxifying, hydration, oil control, brightening, and calming. Whether used as an occasional treat or a regular part of a skincare regimen, these masks offer an effective and indulgent way to enhance skin health.

Mask Types

- **Peel-off masks** are applied in a thin layer and once dry, can be peeled off. These masks are typically formulated to control oil and provide detoxifying benefits.
- **Rinse-off masks** are commonly used in both professional and at-home skincare routines. They can be applied with the hands, a fan brush, or a silicone applicator and are left on the skin for a specific period or even overnight. These masks are often clay- or cream-based and require rinsing for removal.
- **Hydrogel or "jelly" masks** have grown in popularity and offer a cooling sensation as they thicken upon application. Once set, they can be peeled off, making removal easier and mess-free.

Benefits of Masks for Estheticians

In the treatment room, many of the same types of masks available for retail purchase are also formulated for professional use. Professional-grade masks, regardless of their formulation, offer a range of benefits, including hydration, firming, brightening, acne treatment, soothing effects, and the reduction of hyperpigmentation and redness.

Estheticians can further personalize a client's facial treatment by tailoring masks to address specific skin concerns. Following professional exfoliation, applying a mask enhances circulation and promotes overall skin health. Compared to at-home treatments, professional-grade skincare masks contain higher concentrations of active ingredients, delivering more effective results while also adding a luxurious, relaxing element to the service.

The use of professional-grade masks allows estheticians to elevate the treatment experience with unique textures and pleasant aromas, enhancing client relaxation. Both estheticians and clients benefit from the long-term skin improvements that these advanced formulations provide, making them a valuable addition to professional skin care routines.

Images courtesy of Skin Script

Skin Script Professional Skin Care Masks

Skin Script Professional Skin Care offers five masks year-round as part of the professional use only classic line, all formulated with antioxidants to combat free radicals that help to slow signs of aging. In addition to their anti-aging properties, these masks target specific concerns such as brightening and evening skin tone, detoxification, oil control, increased elasticity, and overall skin firmness. These classic masks are available year-round.

Additionally, Skin Script provides a highly anticipated collection of seasonal facial duos, which include a professional enzyme and treatment mask designed to address various skin types and conditions throughout the year.

Classic Masks by Skin Script

- **Goji Berry Yogurt Mask** – Rich in Vitamins C, B3, and E, as well as Omegas 6 and 9, this mask calms inflammation, improves moisture retention, stimulates cellular regeneration, and helps firm and soothe the skin.
- **Strawberry Spearmint Mask** – Featuring a Kaolin cream base, this mask minimizes acne, refines pores, and absorbs excess oil while drawing out impurities. It also provides antifungal, antibacterial, and antiseptic benefits.
- **Seaweed Mask** – This unique gel-based mask hydrates and calms irritated skin while delivering nourishing and skin-regenerating benefits.
- **Charcoal Refining Mask** – Formulated to cleanse pores, this mask contains detoxifying ingredients that absorb excess oil and draw out environmental impurities such as pollution. It helps reduce the visibility of pores while hydrating and moisturizing dehydrated skin.
- **Golden Honey Nourishing Mask** – Infused with peptides that activate skin regeneration, this mask helps reduce fine lines and wrinkles while providing calming and hydrating benefits.

Introducing Botanical Bloom Hydrating Mask and Ultimate Firming Mask

Skin Script Professional Skin Care is thrilled to debut two new treatment masks this year.

Our first retail home care mask, Botanical Bloom Hydrating Mask, delivers intense hydration and radiant skin powered by our exclusive Super Floral Complex. This luxurious blend of rose, orchid, and daisy works to visibly brighten, calm, and restore your complexion—helping to fade dark spots, reduce redness, and enhance your skin's natural glow. Infused with our Triple HA Complex, featuring three molecular weights of hyaluronic acid, this mask delivers deep, targeted hydration exactly where your skin needs it most. Gentle yet effective, it's perfect for all skin types, especially those dealing with dryness, sensitivity, or dullness.



Our first retail home care mask, Botanical Bloom Hydrating Mask, delivers intense hydration and radiant skin powered by our exclusive Super Floral Complex.

Our limited-edition mask launching this June, Ultimate Firming Mask, is a professional use only advanced formula is designed for all skin types, with a focus on mature skin and those in need of restored firmness and elasticity. Formulated with powerful ingredients such as the Super Fruit Complex and botanical extracts like gardenia and orchid, this mask works to tighten, tone, and revitalize the skin. The Super Fruit Complex—a blend of kakadu plum, apple, and orange stem cells—helps reduce visible signs of aging caused by oxidative stress. This luxurious mask delivers instant results, improving skin tone, increasing hydration, and minimizing fine lines and wrinkles.

Treatment Masks in Skin Care

Treatment masks play a crucial role in enhancing skin health and appearance. With their expertise, estheticians can effectively determine and customize treatment plans, ensuring optimal in-office treatments and home care routines for their clients.

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SKIN SCRIPT
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HAPPENINGS

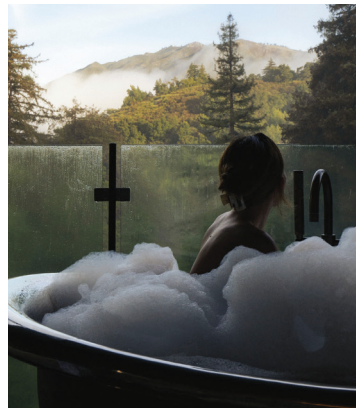
Industry news from skin care facilities, suppliers and professionals

Transformative Wellness Partnerships Shaping the Future of Luxury Experiences

Luxury wellness is evolving through innovative collaborations that redefine relaxation, rejuvenation, and sustainability. From personalized spa rituals and cutting-edge skin care treatments to streamlined hospitality solutions, these partnerships are setting a new standard for immersive and meaningful wellness experiences. Discover how industry leaders are coming together to elevate the art of well-being.

Body Bliss x Alila Ventana Big Sur

Body Bliss has teamed up with Alila Ventana Big Sur to launch the Luxe Bath Burst Couples Ritual. This in-spa experience allows couples to select from four aromatherapy options—Lavender, Eucalyptus, Rosemary, or Orange—and blend them in a copper soaking tub, symbolizing unity. Held in outdoor cabanas overlooking the redwood forest, the ritual includes a follow-up massage incorporating the custom aroma. Spearheaded by Michael Jastrzebski, this collaboration focuses on fostering meaningful, sensory-rich experiences for couples.



Body Bliss has teamed up with Alila Ventana Big Sur to launch the Luxe Bath Burst Couples Ritual.

Soake Pools x Tomu

Soake Pools, known for precast plunge pools, has partnered with Tomu, a prefabricated lodging builder, to streamline wellness-focused hospitality solutions. The collaboration offers boutique hotels, resorts, and vacation rentals ready-to-install plunge pools and prefabricated villas for year-round use. Both brands share logistics, subcontractor needs, and a commitment to sustainability, simplifying installations and reducing costs. This partnership enables faster project completion while delivering elevated guest experiences.



Soake Pools, known for precast plunge pools, has partnered with Tomu, a prefabricated lodging builder, to streamline wellness-focused hospitality solutions.

Corinthia London x Augustinus Bader

Corinthia London has partnered with the renowned skin care brand Augustinus Bader, making it the spa's new exclusive partner. The collaboration introduces a range of specialized facial and body treatments, combining Augustinus Bader's cell-renewing technology with the spa's award-winning wellness offerings. The new menu includes treatments like the Jet Lag Glow Facial, Longevity Facial, Eye-Bright Treatment, and Full Body Regeneration, each designed to rejuvenate, hydrate, and revitalize. This partnership blends cutting-edge skin care science with Corinthia London's commitment to luxury and personalized wellness experiences.



Corinthia London has partnered with the renowned skin care brand Augustinus Bader, making it the spa's new exclusive partner.

Spa Montage x Fatma Shaheen

Montage Hotels & Resorts' Spa Montage has partnered with Fatma Shaheen of Skin Design London to bring her award-winning skin care expertise to their guests. Known as the "Skin Designer to the Stars," Shaheen introduces two exclusive facials at Spa Montage: the SDL Face Tight Facial and the SDL Vitamin Skin Glow Facial. These treatments combine cutting-edge technologies and advanced techniques, including oxygen therapy, microcurrent facelifts, and custom vitamin skin peels, to deliver immediate, transformative results with no downtime. Skin Design London's luxury cosmeceuticals will also be available at Spa Montage boutiques across the Montage Hotels & Resorts portfolio, enhancing the wellness-focused spa experience.



Montage Hotels & Resorts' Spa Montage has partnered with Fatma Shaheen of Skin Design London to bring her award-winning skin care expertise to their guests.

Clockwise from top: Courtesy of Body Bliss; Courtesy of Soake Pools; Courtesy of Montage Hotels & Resorts; Courtesy of Corinthia London x Augustinus Bader

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Spas are a key part of the wellness economy, catering to the growing demand for relaxation, self-care, and recovery.

U.S. Spa Industry Thrives in $2 Trillion Wellness Economy, Valued at $28.7 Billion in 2023

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) recently highlighted the impressive growth of the United States' $2 trillion wellness economy, which remains the largest in the world. Among the standout sectors is the spa industry, valued at $28.7 billion in 2023. Spas are a key part of the wellness economy, catering to the growing demand for relaxation, self-care, and recovery. With 207.5 million wellness trips contributing to the booming wellness tourism sector ($300.6 billion), spas play a vital role in the holistic wellness experiences sought by American consumers.

The U.S. wellness economy—representing nearly one-third (32%) of the global market—has been expanding rapidly. From 2019 to 2023, it grew by 8.3% annually, outpacing major markets like China (4.9%) and Germany (5.9%). This growth reflects the rising investment in health-focused services and products, with American consumers spending an average of $6,000 per person annually on wellness.

In addition to spas, the US leads globally in nine of the 11 wellness sectors, including Physical Activity ($376.8 billion), Personal Care & Beauty ($363.5 billion), Wellness Real Estate ($180.6 billion), and Mental Wellness ($107.9 billion). Across these sectors, innovation is driving new products and services, from sensory experiences and recovery therapies to diagnostic technologies tailored to diverse wellness needs.

Managing Rosacea: Awareness, Triggers and Solutions for Healthier Skin

Controlling rosacea requires a holistic approach that tackles symptoms, triggers and environmental factors. Over 16 million Americans are estimated to have this chronic skin condition, yet many remain undiagnosed. The National Rosacea Society (NRS) recently released key statistics that highlight the impact of this condition:

*82% of rosacea patients report skin-care products and cosmetics worsen their condition.

*63% say astringent alcohol is the most irritating ingredient, followed by perfumes or fragrances (57%), witch hazel (31%) and menthol (30%).

*70% of patients identify specific ingredients that aggravate their skin, including sulfates, parabens and dyes.

The NRS launched its Seal of Acceptance program in 2024 to help patients identify suitable skin care and cosmetic products. Stress, sun exposure, hot weather, and lifestyle factors like diet and alcohol consumption are the most common rosacea triggers. Keeping a diary to track flare-ups and triggers is often recommended.

With more FDA-approved treatments than ever and growing awareness, patients are better equipped to manage rosacea through medical therapies, gentle skin care and stress-reducing techniques like yoga and meditation. During Rosacea Awareness Month, the NRS continues its mission of education and advocacy for the millions affected.

Reference: Gallo RL, Granstein RD, Kang S, et al. Standard classification and pathophysiology of rosacea: The 2017 update by the National Rosacea Society Expert Committee. J Am Acad Dermatol 2018;78(1):148-155. doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2017.08.037



Seventy percent of patients identify specific ingredients that aggravate their skin, including sulfates, parabens and dyes.

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*Model experienced 150% increase in eyelash length using Length Define Tubing Mascara. Individual results may vary. ©2025 Athena Cosmetics, Inc.



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The Beauty In Bakuchiol

By Elaine Sterling, founder, The Elaine Sterling Institute

In the ever-evolving world of skin care, new ingredients frequently emerge, promising to revolutionize our beauty routines. One such ingredient that has garnered significant attention in recent years is bakuchiol. Often touted as a natural alternative to retinol, bakuchiol offers a range of benefits without the harsh side effects commonly associated with retinoids. This article delves into the origins, benefits and uses of bakuchiol, exploring why it has become a staple in many skin care products.



Origins and Background

Bakuchiol is derived from the seeds and leaves of the *Psoralea corylifolia* plant, also known as the babchi plant. This plant has been used for centuries in traditional Ayurvedic and Chinese medicine to treat various skin conditions. The name "bakuchiol" itself is derived from the Sanskrit word "bakuchi," which refers to the babchi plant.

Traditional Uses in Ayurveda

In Ayurvedic medicine, bakuchiol has been used for centuries to treat various skin conditions and other health issues. It is renowned for its ability to promote melanin production, making it effective in treating pigmentation disorders like vitiligo and leukoderma. A paste made from Bakuchi powder mixed with water or sesame oil is applied to depigmented areas, followed by gentle sun exposure to aid in repigmentation. Due to its anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties, bakuchiol is used to soothe and treat inflammatory skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis. Bakuchiol helps in managing various skin ailments by promoting overall skin health and balancing the Kapha and Vata doshas.

Understanding Doshas

The concept of doshas is fundamental in Ayurveda. Doshas are the three energies believed to circulate in the body and govern physiological activity. They are Vata, Pitta and Kapha. Each person has a unique combination of these doshas, which determines their physical and mental characteristics. Here's a brief overview of Vata and Kapha doshas.

VATA DOSHA

- **Elements:** Air and Ether (Space)
- **Qualities:** Dry, light, cold, rough, subtle, and mobile
- **Functions:** Vata is responsible for movement and communication in the body. It governs all bodily functions related to motion, including breathing, circulation and nerve impulses.
- **Characteristics:** People with a dominant Vata dosha tend to be energetic, creative, and quick-thinking. They may have a lean body type and dry skin. When imbalanced, Vata can lead to anxiety, insomnia, and digestive issues.

KAPHA DOSHA

- **Elements:** earth and water
- **Qualities:** Heavy, slow, steady, solid, cold, soft, and oily
- **Functions:** Kapha provides structure and stability to the body. It governs growth, lubrication, and the immune system.
- **Characteristics:** Individuals with a dominant Kapha dosha are often calm, steady, and nurturing. They may have a sturdy build and smooth, oily skin. When imbalanced, Kapha can lead to weight gain, lethargy, and respiratory issues.



Vata Kapha Pitta

BALANCING DOSHAS

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of balancing these doshas to maintain health and well-being. This can be achieved through diet, lifestyle changes, herbal remedies, and other practices tailored to an individual's unique dosha constitution.

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Bakuchiol has anti-inflammatory properties that can help soothe irritated skin and reduce redness.

Bakuchiol vs. Retinol: What's the Difference?

Retinol, a derivative of vitamin A, is widely recognized for its age-defying properties. It works by promoting cell turnover and stimulating collagen production, which helps reduce the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, and hyperpigmentation. However, retinol can also cause side effects such as redness, irritation, and peeling, particularly for those with sensitive skin.

Bakuchiol, on the other hand, offers similar benefits to retinol but is much gentler on the skin. Studies have shown that Bakuchiol can activate similar pathways to boost collagen production and improve skin texture. Unlike retinol, Bakuchiol does not cause the same level of irritation, making it a suitable option for individuals with sensitive skin or conditions like rosacea and eczema.



Benefits of Bakuchiol

1. ***Age-Defying Properties.*** Bakuchiol helps reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles by promoting collagen production and enhancing skin elasticity. A study published in the British Journal of Dermatology found that bakuchiol was as effective as retinol in improving signs of aging but with fewer side effects.
2. ***Improves Skin Tone and Texture.*** Regular use of bakuchiol can lead to smoother, more even-toned skin. It helps reduce hyperpigmentation and dark spots, giving the skin a brighter and more radiant appearance.
3. ***Antioxidant Properties.*** Bakuchiol is rich in antioxidants, which help protect the skin from oxidative stress and environmental damage. This can prevent premature aging and maintain the skin's overall health.
4. ***Gentle on the Skin.*** One of the most significant advantages of bakuchiol is its gentle nature. It does not cause the dryness, redness or peeling often associated with retinol, making it suitable for all skin types.
5. ***Anti-Inflammatory Effects.*** Bakuchiol has anti-inflammatory properties that can help soothe irritated skin and reduce redness. This makes it an excellent choice for individuals with acne-prone skin.

How to Incorporate Bakuchiol into Your Skin Care Routine

Bakuchiol is available in various forms, including serums, creams, and moisturizers. Here are some tips on how to incorporate it into your skin care routine:

1. ***Start Slowly.*** If you're new to bakuchiol, start by using it a few times a week to allow your skin to adjust. Gradually increase the frequency as your skin becomes accustomed to the ingredient.
2. ***Combine with Other Ingredients.*** Bakuchiol can be used alongside other skin care ingredients such as

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hyaluronic acid, niacinamide, and vitamin C. These combinations can enhance the overall effectiveness of your skin care routine.

3. ***Use Sunscreen.*** While Bakuchiol does not increase sun sensitivity like retinol, it's still essential to use sunscreen daily to protect your skin from UV damage.
4. ***Follow Product Instructions.*** Always follow the instructions provided by the product manufacturer. Some products may recommend using Bakuchiol in the evening, while others may be suitable for both morning and night use.

Bakuchiol's Journey to Modern Skin Care

Bakuchiol's journey from ancient medicinal use to a modern skin care staple is a fascinating story of rediscovery and innovation. The increasing demand for natural and plant-based skin care products played a significant role in bakuchiol's rise. Consumers were looking for gentler, more sustainable alternatives to traditional anti-aging ingredients.

K-beauty Influence

The Korean beauty (K-beauty) trends, known for their focus on gentle and effective ingredients, quickly adopted Bakuchiol. This helped propel its popularity globally, as K-beauty products gained a strong following.

Clinical Validation

Clinical trials and dermatological studies further established Bakuchiol's efficacy and safety profile. It was found to be suitable for all skin types, including sensitive skin, and did not cause the irritation often associated with retinol.

Modern Skin Care Staple

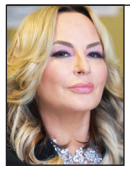
Today, bakuchiol is a key ingredient in various skin care products, including serums, creams, and moisturizers. Its versatility and gentle nature make it a favorite among both consumers and skin care professionals. Ongoing research and innovation continue to expand bakuchiol's applications in skin care. New formulations and combinations with other beneficial ingredients are constantly being developed to enhance its effectiveness. From its ancient roots in Ayurvedic and Traditional Chinese Medicine to its current status as a modern skin care staple, Bakuchiol's journey is a testament to the enduring value of natural remedies. Its ability to provide age-defying benefits without irritation has made it a beloved ingredient in the beauty industry.



Bakuchiol has emerged as a promising skin care ingredient, offering a gentler alternative to retinol with similar benefits.

A Promising Ingredient

Bakuchiol has emerged as a promising skin care ingredient, offering a gentler alternative to retinol with similar benefits. Its ability to improve skin tone, texture, and overall appearance without causing significant irritation makes it an attractive option for individuals with sensitive skin. As with any skin care ingredient, it's essential to introduce bakuchiol gradually and monitor your skin's response. With consistent use, bakuchiol can help you achieve a smoother, more youthful complexion.



Elaine Sterling founded The Elaine Sterling Institute in 2008 in Atlanta. Sterling saw the need for quality education that would match the fast-paced and growing field of esthetics. She thus created a school that is focused on high educational standards. Her vision is for a spa-like environment for her students to learn the very best of European techniques with the latest equipment.

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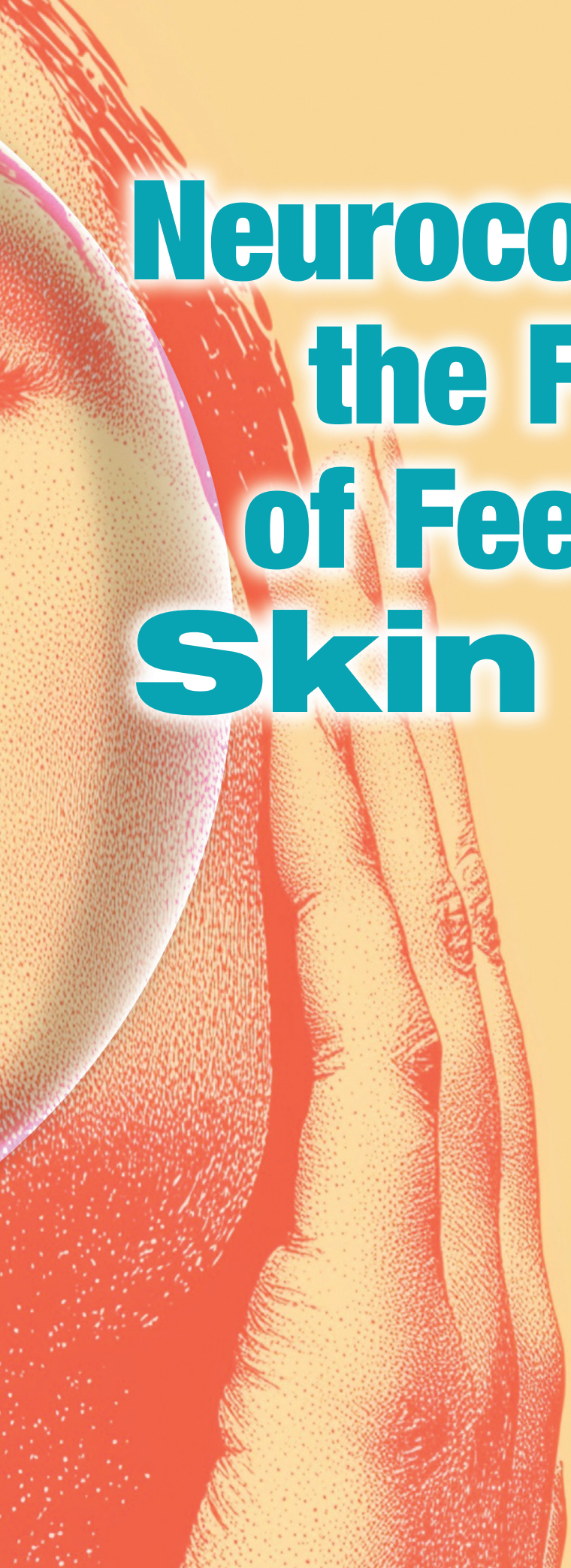

Neurocosmetics: the Future of Feel-Good Skin Care

By Toshiana Baker

For decades, skilled estheticians have understood what science is now proving—skin is more than just an aesthetic feature; it's a dynamic organ deeply connected to overall health, emotional well-being, and even cognitive function. While much of the beauty industry has traditionally focused on treating visible signs of aging—smoothing wrinkles, fading dark spots, and restoring hydration after damage has occurred—estheticians have long embraced a more holistic approach, recognizing that touch, technique, and the right formulations can influence not just the skin's appearance but its biological function.

Today, advances in neurocosmetics, longevity science, and psychodermatology are finally validating what seasoned estheticians have practiced for years. The skin is now recognized as a longevity biomarker, reflecting stress levels, neurological function, and overall well-being. At the INNOCOS Longevity Summit, L'Oréal's Chief Scientific Officer, Luc Aguilar, highlighted how skin care is evolving beyond aesthetics into prevention, intervention, and total health support. Meanwhile, researchers like Dr. Reza Ghalamghash are uncovering how neurotransmitters, sensory pathways, and cellular communication influence skin aging and repair.



The brain-skin connection isn't just an abstract concept—it has real implications for modern skin care.

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What this research confirms isn't necessarily new—it simply affirms what estheticians have intuitively known and applied in treatment rooms for decades. Now, as science catches up, estheticians have the opportunity to take the lead in this next evolution of skin care—one where beauty is finally recognized as both an art and a science, deeply rooted in expertise, technique and innovation.

Neurocosmetics: Innovation Based on the Brain-Skin Connection

The brain-skin connection refers to the constant, two-way communication between the nervous system and the skin. This relationship is mediated by a network of neurons, immune cells, and biochemical messengers that allow the brain and skin to influence each other in real time. Simply put, your skin doesn't just protect your body—it actively responds to your thoughts, emotions, and environment.

When you experience stress, anxiety, or emotional distress, your brain sends signals to your skin through the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, a system that regulates hormones, including cortisol. Elevated cortisol levels break down collagen and elastin, weaken the skin barrier, increase inflammation, and contribute to premature aging. This is why high-stress periods can lead to breakouts, dullness, sensitivity, and an overall compromised complexion.

Conversely, when the skin is exposed to external stressors like pollution, UV rays, or harsh ingredients, it sends distress signals to the brain, triggering an immune response that can lead to chronic inflammation, redness, and oxidative stress—all of which accelerate aging and disrupt the skin's natural balance.

Why This Matters More Now

The brain-skin connection isn't just an abstract concept—it has real implications for modern skin care. Psychodermatology, an emerging field of dermatology, is proving that mental well-being plays a critical role in skin health. Meanwhile, neurocosmetics is leveraging this connection to create formulations that actively support both the skin and the nervous system, helping to regulate stress-related damage at a biological level.

Understanding this connection allows estheticians and skin care professionals to adopt a more comprehensive approach that considers emotional



health, lifestyle, and nervous system regulation as much as ingredients and treatments. This is why techniques like facial massage, aromatherapy, temperature contrast therapy, and energy-based treatments are gaining recognition—not just for their visible effects, but for their ability to reduce stress hormones, boost circulation, and enhance overall skin resilience.

As science continues to validate what estheticians have known for years, the industry is shifting toward a more integrative approach to beauty that recognizes skin care as a powerful tool for both physical and emotional well-being. Traditional skin care treats the skin externally, addressing hydration, wrinkles, and pigmentation. Neurocosmetics, on the other hand, works at a deeper level, targeting nerve endings, neurotransmitters, and cellular communication to enhance overall skin function.

Key Neurocosmetic Ingredients to Watch

- **Neuro-Peptides (Argireline, Acetyl Hexapeptide-8):** Relax facial tension and smooth expression lines.
- **Adaptogens (Ashwagandha, Rhodiola):** Regulate cortisol and reduce stress-induced inflammation.
- **Bioelectric Minerals (Magnesium, Copper, Zinc):** Support cellular energy and collagen production.
- **CBD & Cannabinoids:** Interact with the body's endocannabinoid system, calming inflammation and improving skin barrier function.
- **Marine Extracts (Algae, Sea Kelp):** Provide essential nutrients to restore skin balance.

5 Key Strategies to Integrate Neurocosmetics into Your Professional Skincare Practice

1. **Sensory Activation**
   Through Aromatherapy Incorporate essential oils known for their neuroactive properties, such as sandalwood, neroli and blue lotus, into your treatments. These oils interact with the limbic system, promoting relaxation and enhancing the skin's response to treatments. Diffuse them in the room or add a few drops to a warm towel for deep inhalation before beginning a facial.

2. **Manual Techniques to Stimulate the Brain-Skin Connection**
   Techniques like specialized facial massage, energy therapy, and lymphatic drainage sculpt the face and stimulate neurotransmitters that promote relaxation and skin regeneration. Encourage clients to incorporate self-massage at home for prolonged benefits and provide retail items to support this effort.

3. **Temperature Contrast Therapy**
   Alternate between warm compresses and cooling tools like cryo-globes to activate the nervous system and improve circulation. This method helps stimulate skin receptors, reducing inflammation and enhancing product absorption for optimal results.

4. **Bioelectric and Adaptogenic Skincare**
   Introduce products containing bioelectric minerals and adaptogenic ingredients into your practice. These ingredients help regulate stress responses in the skin, boost cellular energy and promote resilience against environmental damage.

5. **Educate Clients on the Brain-Skin Relationship**
   Empower your clients by explaining how stress, sleep, and emotional well-being impact skin health. Provide practical take-home techniques to enhance their skincare results beyond the treatment room. Integrating these neurocosmetic principles into your practice elevates your client experience, aligning skincare with overall well-being and reinforcing the connection between beauty and holistic health.

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With neurocosmetics gaining momentum, the future of skin care is no longer just about how we look—it's about how we feel.

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How Estheticians Can Incorporate Neurocosmetics in the Treatment Room

- Integrate temperature therapy with warm compresses and cryotherapy to stimulate circulation.
- Incorporate aromatherapy and neuro-fragrance blends to enhance relaxation.
- Perform manual techniques like facial massage and gua sha to stimulate neurochemical responses.
- Offer bioelectric skin care products infused with mineral-based actives for enhanced treatment benefits.

The Future of Beauty: Beyond Skin Deep

With neurocosmetics gaining momentum, the future of skin care is no longer just about how we look—it's about how we feel, how we age, and how well our skin functions as a reflection of our overall health. Kelly Dobos, a cosmetic chemist and former president of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists, has emphasized the importance of formulating skincare that interacts with the nervous system to promote holistic well-being. Her expertise in product development supports the growing understanding that neurocosmetics isn't just a passing trend—it's a scientific advancement shaping beauty's future.

Experts like Dr. Reza Ghalamghash, Kelly Dobos, and Luc Aguilar reinforce that skin care is evolving into a tool for longevity and neurological balance, not just aesthetic improvement. Estheticians who understand and integrate these concepts into their treatments will lead the way in results-driven skincare and help redefine the perception of beauty as an integral part of whole-body health and wellness.



Toshiana Baker is the founder of SpaWorx (spaworx.biz), a consulting and training development agency that educates, enlightens and empowers spa, beauty and wellness organizations, while supporting growth in their financial performance. She is also the founder of the Network of Multi-Cultural Spa and Wellness Professionals (NMSWP), a community to create a sense of belonging for underrepresented and marginalized spa pros. Baker is a passionate organizational leader, dynamic speaker and bestselling author who has served the spa and beauty industry as a licensed skin care therapist and global educator for nearly 15 years.

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Targeted Treatments for Periorbital Skin: **A Guide to Youthful Eyes**

By Terri Wojak, Aesthetics Exposed Education

The eyes are considered the focal point of the face; it is the first area we are drawn to when looking at another person. The skin around the eyes is also one of the most delicate and complex areas of the face, often showing the first signs of aging. Due to its thin structure, high mobility, and constant exposure to environmental stressors, it is particularly prone to aesthetic changes. It shows up as wrinkles, ptosis, dark circles and puffy eyes. A clear understanding of the anatomy and physiology of this region, along with its unique characteristics, is essential for delivering effective, targeted treatments. This article delves into the structure of periorbital skin, explores common aesthetic concerns, and highlights potential treatment options.

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TARGETED TREATMENTS FOR PERIORBITAL SKIN: A GUIDE TO YOUTHFUL EYES

Anatomy of the Skin Surrounding the Eyes

The skin around the eyes is unique and requires special care due to its delicate structure. Factors like thinness, reduced oil production and constant movement make this area more prone to dryness, discoloration and early signs of aging. Here's what you need to know:

- ***Thinness:*** The skin surrounding the eyes is much thinner than the rest of the face. The skin here is about 0.3-0.5 mm thick, while the rest of the facial skin averages around 2 mm in thickness. This makes imperfections appear more easily.
- ***Sebum:*** There are fewer sebaceous glands in this area, leading to less oil production. This makes the area more prone to dryness and early signs of aging.
- ***Blood vessels:*** The eye area has a dense network of blood vessels, making it prone to discoloration, particularly dark circles. The vessels are also more apparent due to the thin skin.
- ***Movement:*** The eye area undergoes constant movement due to blinking, expressions, and squinting. This leads to the early formation of fine lines and wrinkles.
- ***Fat:*** The thinner, more delicate fat around the eyes is primarily used for protection and mobility of the eyeball. Fat loss or shifting can lead to hollowing under the eyes. Fat displacement can leads to under eye bags as orbital fat moves forward.

Understanding Upper Eyelid Aging: Causes and Factors Behind Visible Changes

The skin on the upper eyelids is one of the fastest-aging areas of the face. It changes over time due to both intrinsic (genetic) aging and extrinsic (environmental) factors. The skin on the upper eyelids is extremely thin, typically less than 1 millimeter thick. The thinness of this skin makes it more prone to collagen loss, dehydration, and damage from environmental stress. Additionally, the constant movement of blinking, 15-20 times per minute, contributes to mechanical stress. This results in drooping, fine lines, and even functional impairments that can impact vision.

There are several factors that influence the appearance of the eyelid as it ages. There is a natural decrease in collagen and elastin production, causing less resilient skin. The loss of elasticity and firmness leads to drooping, known as ptosis. Ptosis can reveal age, make one look tired, or impair vision.

Another factor is volume loss and fat movement. In younger eyes, fat pads are evenly distributed, with age loss a shifting of fat is common. This can lead to hollowing near the brow bone and puffiness along the lash line, making the eyelids look heavy. These visible changes can be worsened by the weakening of the levator muscle, which helps lift the eyelids. As the muscle weakens, the eyelids gradually droop, causing more ptosis.



The skin around the eyes is unique and requires special care due to its delicate structure. Factors like thinness, reduced oil production and constant movement make this area more prone to dryness, discoloration and early signs of aging.

Thinning skin and wrinkles also occur as the eyes age. The thin skin becomes more fragile, increasing the visibility of blood vessels and fine lines. Crepey textures are common due to dehydration and lack of oil. Let's not forget environmental factors—sun exposure, excessive blue light and pollution—all create free radicals that lead to premature aging. Constant tugging, pulling, or rubbing also contributes to the visible aging of the skin around the eyes.

HOW TO SLOW DOWN UPPER EYELID AGING

- ***Hydration:*** The use of an eye cream or gel with hydrating ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, ceramides, and peptides to keep the eyelid skin moisturized and plump.
- ***Sun protection:*** The application of a gentle, broad-spectrum SPF around the eyes to prevent sun damage. UV protective sunglasses should also be worn year-round.
- Retinoids: Low levels of vitamin A formulated for the eye area will help build collagen and keep the skin in a healthy state.

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- *Antioxidants:* For protection from damage caused by UV and blue light exposure, antioxidants such as Vitamin C, niacinamide, or green tea extracts should be used.
- *Upneeq (oxymetazoline hydrochloride ophthalmic solution, 0.1%):* An FDA-approved prescription eye drop for adults with low-lying eyelids. It is clinically proven to give lifted, more open eyelids that last up to 8 hours.
- *Microcurrent:* Encourages neuromuscular activity and ATP production helping the eyelid regain lifting ability.
- *Medical device treatments:* Fractional laser resurfacing, microneedling, radio frequency, or RF microneedling may be used for skin tightening and collagen production. The use of these treatments in this delicate area is debatable. With proper education, medical providers or delegates can successfully treat the area with little risk.
- *Neuro modulators:* These injectables can be used to relax the downward pulling muscles, allowing the brows to lift more effectively.
- *Surgery:* In cases of severe drooping, especially when it interferes with vision, blepharoplasty/eyelid surgery can remove the excess skin.



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Thinning skin and wrinkles occur as the eyes age. The thin skin becomes more fragile, increasing the visibility of blood vessels and fine lines.



Dark circles around the eyes are a common aesthetic concern that affects people of all ages and skin types. Discoloration under the eyes can make people look tired, older or even sick. To know how to treat the skin correctly in this area, you must first look at the cause.

Understanding and Addressing the Causes of Dark Circles

Dark circles around the eyes are a common aesthetic concern that affects people of all ages and skin types. Discoloration under the eyes can make people look tired, older or even sick. To know how to treat the skin correctly in this area, you must first look at the cause. Too often, professionals or retailers offer every client with these concerns the same "miracle" eye product on the market.

Causes of dark circles include vascular issues, hyperpigmentation and hollowing. Below is a collection of treatment recommendations for each cause.

TREATMENTS FOR VASCULAR DARK CIRCLES

Vessels under the eye may appear darker due to poor circulation and the pooling of blood under the eyes. This can be caused by lack of sleep, dehydration, unhealthy diet, smoking, excessive drinking, lack of exercise, screen time and allergies. The vessels could also be more visible due to genetics, more vascularity in the area or thinner, more transparent skin. Noticeable vessels are more common in lighter skin types. Treatments include:

- *Lymphatic drainage massage:* Helps improve circulation and reduce stagnation of blood.
- *Cold compresses:* Ice rollers, cool globes, and specialized devices constrict blood vessels to reduce visible dark circles.
- *Caffeine:* Caffeine in eye products helps constrict blood vessels and improves blood flow.
- *Vitamin K oxide:* Helps to reduce the pooling of blood under the skin, visibly reducing the darkness associated.
- *Collagen builders:* Help to thicken skin. Peptides, growth factors, stem cells, vitamin A or exosomes all can be used.

- *Circulation:* Gentle massage nightly while applying eye products, including tapotement improves circulation. Nano-facials, microcurrent, LED, radio frequency, ultrasound, carboxytherapy and even regular exercise can improve overall circulation.
- *Intense pulsed light (IPL) therapy:* IPL works by heating and collapsing vessels beneath the skin.

TREATMENTS FOR PIGMENTED DARK CIRCLES

Melanin deposits can cause dark circles in the skin. For many people with darker Fitzpatrick types (IV-VI), they are often genetic. Those with naturally darker skin can show more pigment in the thin skin under the eyes. Sun exposure also increases hyperpigmentation, and the delicate eye area is not always protected as it should be. Inflammation causes post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. Frequent eye rubbing due to allergies, dry eyes or contact lenses adds repeated mechanical stress to the delicate skin around the eyes, triggering pigment production. Treatments for pigmented dark circles include:

- *Topical brighteners:* Ingredients such as vitamin C, kojic acid, niacinamide, licorice extract, tranexamic acid or arbutin interrupt the pigmentation process to lighten darkened skin.
- *Sun protection:* Daily use of sunscreen with SPF 30+ and sun protective sunglasses is essential to prevent further darkening.
- *Gentle care:* No rubbing, pulling, or tugging. Use gentle cleansers to remove makeup from the eye area.
- *Microneedling and platelet rich plasma (PRP):* PRP or is suggested to inhibit melanin production, while stimulating collagen.
- *Chemical peels:* Light peels with lactic acid and/or mandelic acid can reduce the buildup of melanin. Some medical providers use TCA or other deeper peels.
- *Laser:* Fractional lasers work by heating portions of the skin to smooth uneven texture and discolorations.
- *IPL:* IPL can help break down existing pigmentation.

TREATMENTS FOR DARK CIRCLES CAUSED BY HOLLOWING

Hollowing is a frequently overlooked cause of dark circles under the eyes. It is influenced by factors such as genetics, aging, lifestyle and medical conditions. The orbital rim recedes over time due to bone loss, reducing support for the overlying fat and muscle, leading to a sunken appearance beneath the eyes. Additionally, changes in the fat pads occur with aging, resulting in fat loss. There is also fat migration, where the fat shifts downward, exacerbating hollowing while creating a bulging appearance in the lower eyelid region. Treatments include:

- *Collagen stimulators:* Vitamin A, peptides, growth factors or exosomes stimulate collagen production and improve skin elasticity.
- *Microneedling and radio frequency (RF) therapy:* Encourages collagen synthesis and skin renewal.
- *Hyaluronic acid fillers: R*estore volume and reduce the appearance of shadows under the eyes.
- *Blepharoplasty:* Surgical removal or repositioning of fat to reduce the hollowing.



Puffiness, or under-eye bags, are a common aesthetic concern that becomes more prominent with age. This can be caused by fluid retention, decreased skin elasticity or the accumulation of excess fat

Understanding and Addressing Under-Eye Puffiness: Causes and Treatments

Puffiness, or under-eye bags, are a common aesthetic concern that becomes more prominent with age. This can be caused by fluid retention, decreased skin elasticity or the accumulation of excess fat. Fluid retention can occur from excessive salt intake, crying, lack of sleep, dehydration and allergies. Treatments for fluid retention will differ from those that are puffy, due to fat pads. Genetics play a role in the shape and placement of fat pads, but they can also weaken during aging, causing bulging under the eyes.

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TREATMENTS FOR SWELLING

- ***Sleep:*** Getting sufficient sleep with the head elevated; 7-9 hours per night is recommended.
- ***Cold compresses:*** Ice rollers, cool globes, and specialized devices reduce excess swelling.
- ***Hydration:*** Reducing salt intake and drinking 8-10 glasses of water a day will reduce water retention.
- ***Stimulation:*** Nano-facial, microcurrent, gua sha, gentle massage, LED can all increase circulation.
- ***Caffeine:*** A vasoconstrictor that reduces swelling by tightening blood vessels.
- ***Peptides:*** Strengthen skin structure, reducing sagging and puffiness over time.
- ***Anti-inflammatories:*** Green tea extract and chamomile are a few that contain antioxidants and soothe inflammation.
- ***Lymphatic drainage massage:*** Helps reduce excess fluid buildup.

TREATMENTS FOR FAT

- ***Microneedling and RF therapy:*** Tightens skin and improves circulation.
- ***Blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery):*** Removes excess skin and fat deposits to eliminate severe under-eye bags.

Essential Tips for Caring for the Delicate Skin Around Your Eyes

The skin around the eyes is uniquely delicate and requires specialized care to maintain its health and appearance. Addressing concerns like dark circles, puffiness and aging with effective treatments can help preserve youthful and vibrant skin. A combination of targeted skin care ingredients, lifestyle modifications and professional treatments ensures optimal eye care and long-term results.



Addressing concerns like dark circles, puffiness and aging with effective treatments can help preserve youthful and vibrant skin.

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Must-have Tools For Your Makeup Kit

by Brittney Culbreth



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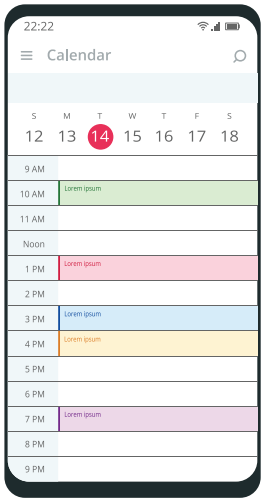
Having the proper makeup tools can elevate the experience for your clients and help execute your makeup bookings as a makeup artist. The right tools not only allow you to perform your job well but also efficiently. There are so many tools on the market that it can be confusing at times on what are essential, what would be considered unnecessary, and what items would maybe be an extra item but would help tremendously. This article will discuss the makeup tools that will help you as a makeup artist for your business and while completing makeup applications.

Booking/Marketing Tools

First, let's consider the tools that can you help you before you are on site with your clients that will specifically assist with marketing and booking. We all know social media can really drive your business and expose you to new clients each day.



Social scheduler. Within social media platforms, there are tools you can utilize to schedule your posts so that you are consistently posting. I have found this to be extremely useful! The more consistent you are with posting content, the more exposure will get. It is often difficult to carve out time each day to post. Therefore, scheduling the posts with an app or within the social media platform will help support your posting goals for your business.

Booking app. Next, you can also link a booking application to your social media so that clients can easily access your schedule to book with you. A booking app isn't necessary, but it might be something that will help clients book their appointments with you. Many times we are working with clients and miss messages and calls from clients that want to book. Booking applications help remedy this issue by allowing the client to view your availability and book accordingly. It is also useful to reserve with a deposit if this is one of your policies you'd like the enforce.

Organization Tools

Finding the right makeup trolley or case is essential if you want to stay organized. There are several key features that are important while shopping for the perfect makeup bag or case. You want to be sure it is made of durable, high-quality fabric. We as makeup artists travel with our kits often, and this will put your bag through a lot of wear and tear. Investing in a quality bag is really important so that you aren't replacing it often, and you can avoid broken straps and other potential issues while carrying your kit. I also highly recommend finding one on wheels. This is personal preference, and I encourage you to try each type of case to see what you prefer. For me personally, wheels are so much easier as the bag can get pretty heavy. Also keep in mind that even though it is on wheels, it will need to have a handle to also carry it if needed. This is extremely helpful when in situations where you have to carry your kit upstairs or on uneven surfaces.

I also found a case useful when it holds your organizers easily. I recommend looking at brands that offer organizers specifically made for the bag so that you know they fit perfectly. This will avoid frustrations of organizers not fitting well. Some carriers and cases offer innovative compartments specifically made for makeup artists. These type of cases are an investment; however, in my personal experience I have saved money by purchasing one really high quality bag as opposed to replacing other bags multiple times over the years.

Sanitation Tools

Before considering makeup application tools, let's consider sanitation items to add to your kit to help ensure safety and cleanliness for you and your clients. It may seem simple, but I've often witnessed that these are sometimes forgotten in a makeup kit. These are items I have found useful to have on hand for each application.

Makeup spatulas and mixing palettes are great to use while mixing products. There are plastic and stainless steel sets to choose from. The stainless steel option tends to last longer, do not get stained like the plastic ones can, and are better for proper sanitation and disinfection measures. I also find that paper towels and other disposables are great at keeping your surface clean and to avoid cross contamination. Some disposable items I keep on hand are: gloves, mascara wands, lip color applicators, sponges, beauty sponges, cotton tipped applicators, cotton balls, and tissue.

I also have brush cleaner on hand for any time I do need to clean brushes between clients. I highly recommend a brush cleaner that instantly dries so that you can use them quickly after the cleaning.



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Brushes and Sponges

Brushes are a huge part of your makeup kit, as they are essential to complete makeup looks. It is important to have enough brushes to complete makeup looks for all of your clients. I personally have enough makeup brushes on hand to complete multiple looks back to back so that I do not have to clean my brushes between clients. Rather, I clean them all at the very end of the makeup booking. For instance, if I am working a wedding and I am completing six makeup applications, I will have enough brushes with me to do everyone's makeup look with clean brushes. At the end of the day I will clean all the brushes for the next day of bookings. It is an investment to have this many brushes; however, it cuts down on cleaning the brushes between each client which allows me to utilize my time more efficiently. This is a personal preference of mine but it is something that has really helped me and may help other makeup artists as well.



Aside from brushes, I also recommend beauty sponges for a makeup kit. Sometimes a beauty sponge is preferred depending on the makeup application and product that is being used. Having both foundation brushes and sponges on hand is very convenient. I recommend looking to buy these in bulk since they are single use when using on clients.



Helpful Essentials

Lastly, there are a few other items I'd like to include that have personally made my day to day as a makeup artist easier. If you work on site for makeup applications such as wedding venues it is good to have a nice portable chair. A lot of venues will have chairs, but sometimes they are taller or shorter than you need. By bringing your own chair, you can have some control of the booking and it will make things more comfortable for you.

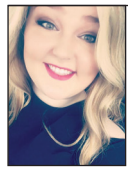
Lighting is also something that can be a bit unpredictable when working on site. Ring lights are great to bring with you. I highly recommend finding lighting that folds up nicely and that is easy to carry with you. If you work in a salon, spa or studio and not on site, you can look at more stationary lighting options that work really well.

I also bring a container for my brushes. Some makeup artists prefer a belt, which is also great! It is all about personal preference, but you want something to put your brushes in so they are easier to find while working and overall more professional.

I always have a mascara curler in my kit as well in case it is needed. I also enjoy having tweezers or lash applicator tools and small scissors on hand when I apply false lashes.

What Works For You?

Gathering items for a makeup kit can be daunting. This is something you can continue growing over time. Tools are there to help equip you and make the job easier as a makeup artist. Explore what you have, what others have, and what is recommended in this article and see what works for you. This is just one solution and not THE solution. There are so many different tools and makeup products to make your kit professional and efficient!



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Harnessing Plant Exosomes for Transformative Skin Care Treatments

By Rebecca Gadberry, YG Laboratories

In the fast-paced realm of cosmetic science, innovations come and go—some creating powerful waves, others merely washing ashore as short-lived fads. Plant-derived exosomes (PDEVs) represent not just an improvement in skin care technology, but a revolutionary shift in how we harness nature's intelligence for skin transformation.

HARNESSING PLANT EXOSOMES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SKIN CARE TREATMENTS



We're likely to see increased customization, with exosome blends tailored to individual skin types and concerns. Imagine a future where you can select specific plant exosome formulations based on a detailed analysis of a client's skin needs, creating truly personalized treatment protocols.

The Breakthrough of Plant Exosomes in Skin Care

If you haven't yet heard about plant exosomes at trade shows, from industry publications, or new product launches, prepare yourself—they're rapidly becoming the most discussed skin care innovation since the introduction of peptides almost 30 years ago. Dozens of plant exosomes are launching from ingredient suppliers worldwide, which means the market will soon be flooded with offerings.

Plant exosomes are tiny extracellular, lipid-bound vesicles naturally produced by plant cells, measuring between 50-300 nanometers—roughly 1,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair. Despite their microscopic size, these minuscule messengers pack extraordinary power.

Unlike synthetic delivery systems that attempt to mimic natural processes, exosomes are nature's original communication network, making them ideal for nature-loving skin care clients who want dramatic results straight from Mother Nature's laboratory. They've been silently operating in our bodies and in the plant kingdom for billions of years, though we've only recently discovered their existence (first identified in 1983) and begun to understand their remarkable potential for skin care.

What makes plant exosomes particularly exciting is their dual function: they serve both as protective carriers for powerful bioactive compounds and as signaling mechanisms that can influence cellular behavior. This means they don't just deliver ingredients to the skin—they actually communicate with skin cells, potentially triggering regenerative processes and optimizing skin function.

Why Plant Exosomes Outperform Traditional Delivery Systems

Throughout my career teaching cosmetic chemistry, I've emphasized the importance of delivery systems. Even the most potent active ingredient is useless if it can't reach its target. Traditional delivery systems like liposomes represented significant advances when they were introduced in 1979, but plant exosomes offer several distinct advantages:

Plant exosomes possess a natural bilipid membrane derived from their "mother" cell. This structure is remarkably stable, allowing exosomes to protect their cargo in hostile environments—including the challenging landscape of a cosmetic formulation. Unlike synthetic liposomes, which can be fragile and prone to degradation, plant exosomes have evolved over millions of years to withstand environmental stressors.

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The Plant Exosome Advantage

The limitations of human exosomes highlight why plant-derived exosomes represent such a significant breakthrough for the skin care industry. Plant exosomes offer similar benefits without the ethical, regulatory, stability, and safety concerns associated with human-derived materials. Unlike their human counterparts, plant exosomes:

- Can be sustainably sourced from renewable plant materials
- Present no risk of pathogen transmission associated with human tissues
- Face fewer regulatory hurdles in the cosmetic market
- Demonstrate remarkable stability in product formulations
- Can be produced with consistent standardization from batch to batch
- Are typically more affordable to produce at scale

This natural progression in exosome technology—from human-derived to plant-derived—represents not just a practical evolution but a philosophical one as well. By harnessing the communication systems plants have perfected over millions of years of evolution, we can achieve comparable or superior results without the ethical and practical complications of human-sourced materials.

As we continue exploring the remarkable potential of plant exosomes, their advantages over both traditional skin care delivery systems and human-derived alternatives become increasingly clear.

Plant exosomes contain not just a single active ingredient, but a complex array of bioactive compounds—comprising DNA, miRNA, proteins, peptides, lipids, cytosolic materials and various metabolites, including some of the anti-inflammatories and antioxidants found in plant extracts, and cell-surface proteins that identify the type of cell where they originated, as well as those they target. This natural cocktail often works synergistically, producing effects that isolated compounds cannot achieve alone.

Exosomes vary widely because of what's inside them. Their makeup depends on several key factors: what plant they come from, which part of the plant produced them, what type of cell made them, and what conditions the cell faced while creating them. This is why exosomes from different plants, or even different cells from the same plant, offer unique benefits for skin health.

Exosomes can ensure more efficient delivery of beneficial ingredients to skin cells. Their protective outer shell shields fragile molecules inside from breaking down, while the natural lipid membrane helps exosomes merge directly with skin cells to deliver their cargo safely. Even more impressive, exosomes can pack-in higher concentrations of active compounds than traditional plant extracts, lysates, or fermented materials.

Plant exosomes are completely natural and have been part of the human diet since our earliest days. We've been consuming them in fruits, vegetables, and plant-based beverages throughout human history, making them exceptionally safe and well-tolerated by our bodies.

The Science Behind Plant Exosome Efficacy

Perhaps because the use of exosomes originated in the medical community, the growing body of research on plant exosomes is particularly compelling. Recent studies have demonstrated their remarkable ability to influence skin cell behavior in ways previously unseen.

In one laboratory study, researchers compared the effects of traditional plant extracts with plant exosomes derived from the same sources (Badea et al., 2022). The results are fascinating: human keratinocytes treated with plant exosomes showed significantly different gene expression patterns compared to those treated with conventional extracts.



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HARNESSING PLANT EXOSOMES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SKIN CARE TREATMENTS



As we age, fibroblasts typically become larger and less efficient, leading to decreased collagen production and the visible signs of aging we're all familiar with.

The exosome-treated cells exhibited epigenetic changes in over 1,500 genes, with 861 genes upregulated and 648 downregulated—far more than the cells treated with traditional extracts. These changes positively influenced pathways related to aging, regeneration, and skin barrier function.

What does this mean for your clients? It suggests that plant exosomes can work at a fundamental level to reprogram cellular behavior, potentially addressing the root causes of skin aging, rather than merely masking symptoms.

Wound healing studies are even more interesting. In one in vitro experiment, human fibroblasts treated with plant exosomes demonstrated a remarkable 52% increase in wound healing ability compared to untreated cells (Kim et al., 2022). After just 24 hours, the exosome-treated cells had achieved complete wound closure, while untreated cells had only closed about half the gap.

For professionals working with aging skin, the implications may be profound. As we age, fibroblasts typically become larger and less efficient, leading to decreased collagen production and the visible signs of aging we're all familiar with. However, when human fibroblasts were treated with a specific blend of plant exosomes, they showed a 20% reduction in cell area (size) and a 22% reduction in duplication time—essentially behaving more like younger, more efficient cells (Kim et al., 2022).

Perhaps most impressive was the 60% increase in Type I collagen expression observed in fibroblasts treated with plant exosomes (Kim et al., 2022). As we know, collagen is the structural protein responsible for skin firmness and elasticity, and its decline is a primary factor in the development of fine lines and wrinkles.

Beyond these clinical results, the scientific community continues to uncover how plant exosomes work at the cellular level. Recent studies demonstrate their versatility:

- ***Cellular Signaling and Tissue Regeneration (Kim et al., 2022):*** Kim's research changes how we think about skin repair. Their study shows that plant exosomes guide key cell activities like growth, movement, and tissue building. This explains why they work better than standard plant extracts. These exosomes don't just deliver ingredients—they actually tell skin cells what to do. This helps skin care pros understand why clients see better, longer-lasting results with exosome products than with regular ones. This cell "reprogramming" makes exosome treatments especially good for damaged skin that needs deep healing, not just quick fixes.
- ***Barrier Function Enhancement (Zhao et al., 2021):*** Zhao's study found that aloe vera exosomes boost skin barrier repair by 31%. This matters because a weak skin barrier leads to many skin problems like

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sensitivity and early aging. The study shows that these exosomes help skin make more ceramides, which make up about half of the skin's protective outer layer. Unlike creams that just add ceramides on top, exosomes get the skin to make its own ceramides, which may last longer. This could help people with eczema, rosacea, or sensitive skin after treatments. Aloe vera exosomes work with the skin's natural processes instead of just covering up problems.

- *Antioxidant Delivery and DNA Repair (Cho et al., 2021; Kawakami and Yamamoto, 2023):* Studies on green tea and pomegranate exosomes show major progress in skin protection. Green tea exosomes deliver antioxidants 3.4 times better than older methods, solving a big problem in skin care—getting ingredients where they need to go. At the same time, pomegranate exosomes boost DNA repair enzymes by 28%, fixing damage instead of just preventing it. This gives us two tools: green tea exosomes to prevent damage and pomegranate exosomes to repair it. Together, they might finally deliver on the promise of antioxidants in skin care by both preventing and fixing damage from the environment.
- *Anti-inflammatory Mechanisms (Chen et al., 2019):* Chen found that ginger exosomes block a specific inflammation pathway called NLRP3. This explains why ginger has been used to reduce swelling and irritation in many healing practices. The NLRP3 pathway plays a key role in skin problems like acne, psoriasis, and sun damage. Most anti-inflammatory ingredients work broadly and become less effective over time. But ginger exosomes target just one specific trigger. This targeted approach may help long-term skin issues without the body becoming resistant to treatment. For skin care pros, ginger exosomes could be great for products that treat acne, rosacea, and skin irritation after treatments, where managing inflammation—not completely stopping it—works better.
- *Neuroinflammation and Sensitive Skin (Zhuang et al., 2020):* Zhuang's team made an exciting discovery about grapefruit exosomes. They found these exosomes can calm nerve-related inflammation through a pathway called AMPK. This is big news for treating sensitive skin, where nerves play a major role in causing reactions. Scientists now know that skin and nerves work closely together in many skin

Human Exosomes: Potential and Controversies

While plant exosomes are revolutionizing skin care, it's important to understand their relationship to human-derived exosomes, which were discovered first and have their own distinct properties and applications.

The Origin of Human Exosomes

Human exosomes are nano-sized vesicles naturally secreted by nearly all human cell types, including stem cells, fibroblasts, adipocytes and immune cells. Like their plant counterparts, human exosomes contain a complex cargo of proteins, lipids, and nucleic acids that facilitate cell-to-cell communication.

In skin care, human exosomes are typically derived from:

- Mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) harvested from bone marrow, adipose tissue, or umbilical cord blood
- Cultured human fibroblasts
- Platelet-rich plasma (PRP)
- Induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs)

The extraction process involves isolating these cells, cultivating them in specialized media, and then harvesting the exosomes they naturally release through various purification techniques including ultracentrifugation, ultrafiltration, or immunoprecipitation.

Potential Benefits in Skin Care

Human-derived exosomes offer several theoretical advantages for skin rejuvenation:

- **Direct Cellular Communication:** They speak the same "language" as human skin cells, potentially making them highly effective messengers.
- **Rich Growth Factor Content:** Many contain epidermal growth factor (EGF), fibroblast growth factor (FGF), vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF, which can trigger rosacea), and transforming growth factor beta (TGF-β).
- **Regenerative Potential:** Some studies suggest they may promote wound healing, collagen synthesis, and tissue repair.
- **Anti-inflammatory Properties:** They can modulate inflammatory responses in the skin

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problems. Grapefruit exosomes might help the many people with sensitive skin—about 60-70% of women and 50-60% of men say they have it. These exosomes could help stop the cycle where inflammation causes sensitivity, which causes more inflammation. This could be a breakthrough for people whose sensitive skin hasn't improved with regular treatments that only fix the skin barrier or reduce inflammation.

Collectively, these research findings reveal that plant exosomes are not merely improved delivery vehicles but sophisticated biological communicators with the ability to influence multiple aspects of skin function simultaneously. Each plant source offers unique benefits targeting specific skin concerns, suggesting that customized blends of plant exosomes could be developed for highly personalized skin care approaches tailored to individual client needs.

Clinical Results That Speak Volumes

While laboratory studies provide valuable insights, what ultimately matters is how these ingredients perform on real human skin. Here again, plant exosomes demonstrate promising efficacy.

In a placebo-controlled clinical study involving 40 volunteers aged 40-50, researchers compared a basic serum formula with and without plant exosomes (Sfriso et al., 2024). After just 20 days of daily application, the exosome-containing serum produced a 17.5% improvement in skin elasticity compared to the placebo. By day 45, this improvement had increased to 22.5%.

Similar results were seen for skin roughness, with the exosome formula producing significant improvements, while the placebo showed no effect. These findings confirm what the laboratory studies suggested: plant exosomes can deliver measurable, visible improvements in the key parameters of skin aging.

What's particularly noteworthy about these clinical results is that they were achieved with a relatively simple formula. The serum's INCI list included water, fruit extracts from apple, mandarin, and papaya, along with basic humectants and preservatives. This suggests the efficacy came primarily from the plant exosomes themselves, not from a complex blend of traditional active ingredients.

Also compelling is a recent split-face clinical trial showing that exosome formulations outperformed both basic moisturizers and traditional botanical extracts. According to Smith et al. (2023), these formulations delivered "24% greater improvement in elasticity, 18% greater reduction in wrinkle depth, and 22% enhanced skin radiance after 12 weeks." These findings establish a clear connection between the molecular mechanisms of plant exosomes and the visible skin improvements that matter most to clients.



When discussing plant exosomes with clients, focus on their natural origins and their unique ability to "speak the language" of skin cells.

The Future of Plant Exosomes in Skin Care

Looking ahead, the potential applications for plant exosomes in professional skin care seem almost limitless. Researchers are currently exploring specialized exosome blends for specific skin concerns, from hyperpigmentation to acne to extreme sensitivity and eczema.

One particularly promising direction is the development of "loaded" plant exosomes, where additional beneficial compounds are intentionally incorporated into the exosomes' natural cargo. This approach is being used to stabilize and deliver growth factors like EGF and FGF-2, molecules too large and short-lived to make it into the skin on their own (Core Biogenesis, Peauforia and Peauvita, 2024).

We're also likely to see increased customization, with exosome blends tailored to individual skin types and concerns. Imagine a future where you can select specific plant exosome formulations based on a

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detailed analysis of a client's skin needs, creating tru personalized treatment protocols.

For the sustainability-minded, plant exosomes off another significant advantage: they align perfectly w circular economy principles. They can be produced with zero waste, using parts of plants that might otherwise be discarded. This makes them an ideal choice for eco-conscious brands and consumers.

As Marc; et al. (2022) note, "Plant-derived exosomes represent a sustainable and eco-friendly approach to advanced skin care, utilizing natural nanocarriers that can be produced from agricultural by-products."

Beyond Skin Care: The Broader Implications of Exosome Technology

While our focus is naturally on skin health and appearance, it's worth noting that exosome research extends far beyond cosmetics. Medical researchers, who were the first to explore exosomes in the world of medicine, are investigating exosomes for applications ranging from wound healing to cancer treatment to neurodegenerative diseases.

This broader research context is important for two reasons. First, it means that our understanding of exosome biology is advancing rapidly, with new discoveries potentially informing skin care applications. Second, it underscores the fundamental biological importance of these tiny messengers. We're not talking about a trendy ingredient with superficial effects—we're harnessing a profound biological communication system that operates at the cellular level.

While we must always work within our scope of practice and avoid drug claims for obviously biologically-active ingredients, understanding the deeper biomechanisms of ingredients like plant exosomes enables us to better select the right product for specific skin conditions and provide more educated guidance to our clients.

Incorporating Plant Exosomes Into Your Treatment Protocols

If you are looking to integrate this cutting-edge technology into your practice, I recommend a thoughtful, strategic approach. Plant exosome products can enhance virtually any facial treatment, but they're particularly valuable for addressing aging skin, compromised barriers, sensitivity and inflammation.

Consider introducing plant exosome serums as a specialized add-on to existing facial treatments.



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Significant Concerns and Limitations

Despite these potential benefits, human exosomes face considerable regulatory and safety issues. The FDA has issued multiple safety notifications and warning letters regarding unapproved exosome products, explicitly stating that exosomes are regulated as drugs and biological products requiring premarket review and approval. The agency has emphasized that no exosome-based products have received FDA approval for the prevention or treatment of any disease or condition and has cautioned both consumers and healthcare providers against their use in unapproved therapeutic applications.

Practical Limitations

- **Stability Challenges:** Human exosomes are extremely delicate and can degrade rapidly outside controlled environments.
- **Standardization Problems:** The composition of human exosomes varies significantly between donors and even between batches from the same donor.
- **Risk of Immune Reactions:** Foreign human materials may trigger immune responses when applied topically, especially on compromised skin.
- **Contamination Concerns:** Human-derived materials carry potential risks of pathogen transmission if rigorous testing protocols aren't followed.
- **Cost Prohibitions:** The extraction and purification process is extremely expensive, making genuine human exosome products prohibitively costly for many consumers.

Questionable Claims

The marketplace contains numerous products claiming to contain human stem cell exosomes, but many of these claims warrant skepticism. True human exosome products would be extraordinarily expensive and require special handling and storage. Many products likely contain:

- Extremely diluted exosome content
- Degraded exosomes with minimal activity
- Cell culture media components rather than actual exosomes
- Synthetic alternatives masquerading as human exosomes

HARNESSING PLANT EXOSOMES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SKIN CARE TREATMENTS



Their ability to enhance cellular communication and stimulate regenerative processes makes them ideal for use after exfoliation or microneedling, when the skin is primed to receive these ingredients.

For home care recommendations, plant exosome products work beautifully as a foundation layer in a skin care routine. Their natural composition and communication abilities help optimize skin function, potentially enhancing the efficacy of other products applied afterward.

When discussing plant exosomes with clients, focus on their natural origins and their unique ability to "speak the language" of skin cells. Many clients are increasingly interested in biologically intelligent skin care that works with the body's natural processes, rather than forcing changes through chemical peels or other harsh treatments that can imbalance the skin's microbiome. Plant exosomes perfectly align with this goal.

Everything You Need to Know About Exosomes: Dosage, Technology, Stability, and Client Education

Exosomes are dose-dependent. The amount applied to the skin is crucial for your clients to achieve the promised results within the expected timeframe. If brands aren't conducting their own clinical studies, they should at least use exosomes at the effective percentages in a vehicle similar to the one in their ingredient supplier's tests. To maximize results, advise clients to apply the recommended amount at the specified frequency suggested by the brand. If a client has product left after two months, when it's intended to last 4-6 weeks, they're likely not using enough to see a noticeable difference.

Extraction technologies matter. While exosomes may seem like they come straight from Mother Nature's lab, the reality is more complex. Advanced extraction and stabilization technologies are essential to isolate and purify these tiny titans while preserving their bioactivity. This meticulous process can significantly increase costs, making exosome products more expensive than other technologies.

Formulation stability is crucial. Because exosomes are biological entities, they require appropriate stabilization and preservation systems to maintain their integrity and effectiveness. Considerations for temperature extremes, pH sensitivity and oxidation also come into play. Look for products that address this concern through careful formulation.

Storage conditions may be more specific than for conventional products. Some exosome formulations may require refrigeration or have shorter shelf lives than traditional skin care products. Good advice is to store any exosome product in a cool, low-light area and away from fluorescent or LED lights.

Client education is essential. The concept of plant exosomes may be unfamiliar to many clients, so developing clear, accessible explanations will help them understand the value of these advanced formulations.

Results timing should be managed appropriately. While some benefits of plant exosomes may be apparent quickly (such as improved hydration or refined pores), others (like decreasing wrinkle depth) will develop over weeks of consistent use.

Human vs. Plant Exosomes: Understanding the Difference

While plant exosomes are revolutionizing skin care, it's important to understand their relationship to human-derived exosomes, which were discovered first and have their own distinct properties and applications.

Human exosomes are nano-sized vesicles naturally secreted by nearly all human cell types, including stem cells, fibroblasts, adipocytes and immune cells. Like their plant counterparts, human exosomes contain a complex cargo of proteins, lipids, and nucleic acids that facilitate cell-to-cell communication.

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In skin care, human exosomes are typically derived from mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs), cultured human fibroblasts, platelet-rich plasma (PRP) or induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs). The extraction process involves isolating these cells, cultivating them in specialized media, and then harvesting the exosomes they naturally release through various purification techniques.

Human-derived exosomes offer several theoretical advantages for skin rejuvenation, including direct cellular communication, rich growth factor content, regenerative potential, and anti-inflammatory properties. However, they face considerable regulatory and safety issues.

The U.S. FDA has issued multiple safety notifications and warning letters regarding unapproved exosome products, explicitly stating that exosomes are regulated as drugs and biological products requiring premarket review and approval. As Davis and Callender (2020) note regarding human-derived exosomes, "The regulatory landscape for exosome-based cosmeceuticals remains complex, with significant challenges in standardization and quality control."

Human exosomes also face practical limitations, including stability challenges, standardization problems, risk of immune reactions, contamination concerns, and prohibitive costs. The marketplace contains numerous products claiming to contain human stem cell exosomes, but many of these claims warrant skepticism.

Human or Plant-Derived Exosomes: Which Are Better?

Given the current regulatory landscape, the question is no longer about which options are better, but rather which ones are permitted. The limitations of human exosomes highlight why plant-derived exosomes represent such a significant breakthrough for the skin care industry. Plant exosomes offer similar benefits without the ethical, regulatory, stability, and safety concerns associated with human-derived materials.



The limitations of human exosomes highlight why plant-derived exosomes represent such a significant breakthrough for the skin care industry.

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HARNESSING PLANT EXOSOMES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SKIN CARE TREATMENTS

Unlike their human counterparts, plant exosomes can be sustainably sourced from renewable plant materials, present no risk of pathogen transmission associated with human tissues, face fewer regulatory hurdles in the cosmetic market, demonstrate remarkable stability in product formulations, can be produced with consistent standardization from batch to batch, and are typically more affordable to produce at scale.

The Dawn of Biologically Intelligent Skin Care

What makes plant exosomes truly revolutionary is not just their efficacy, but the way they fundamentally shift our approach to skin care. Plant exosomes work with the skin's natural 'intelligence'. They establish a biologic dialogue, delivering not just ingredients, but information that helps skin cells function optimally.

This represents the future of professional skin care: biologically intelligent approaches that respect and enhance the skin's innate wisdom, rather than overriding it. As you incorporate these remarkable messengers into your treatment protocols and home care recommendations, you're not just adopting the latest trend—you're participating in a fundamental evolution in how we understand and care for the skin.

Martínez and Andriantsitohaina (2021) summarize this paradigm shift perfectly: "The biological activities of plant-derived extracellular vesicles represent a new frontier in natural product research, offering unprecedented opportunities to harness plant-based bioactive compounds through their natural delivery systems."

The microscopic miracle of plant exosomes opens new possibilities for skin transformation. As skin care professionals, we have the privilege of bringing these benefits directly to our clients.

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Receiving seven awards as a legend in the beauty industry, **Rebecca Gadberry, LE, FSCC**, is a preeminent ingredient authority who has taught thousands of beauty professionals how to understand and successfully discuss ingredients with their clients. The first Marketing Fellow of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists (FSCC) who is also the 13th licensed esthetician in California, Rebecca is the senior instructor and program director for UCLA Extension's highly acclaimed cosmetic science program since 1986, a co-host on the popular podcast, Facially Conscious: Get the Skinny on All Things Skin, and Director of Product Development & Education for YG Labs.

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Massage, Oils and Tools for Compromised Clients



By Becky Kuehn

Massage therapy has long been celebrated for its ability to reduce stress, alleviate pain and promote relaxation. However, working with compromised clients — such as those undergoing cancer treatment, managing chronic illnesses, or dealing with immune system challenges —requires a thoughtful, specialized approach. Therapists must consider the client's unique physical, emotional, and medical needs while utilizing the right oils and tools to ensure safety and effectiveness.

This guide explores the nuances of massage for compromised clients, highlights the best oils to use, and discusses tools that can enhance the overall experience.

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Understanding the Needs of Compromised Clients

Clients with compromised health often face unique challenges that necessitate tailored care. These clients may include individuals undergoing chemotherapy, recovering from surgery, living with autoimmune disorders, or experiencing severe stress or trauma. The following considerations are essential when working with such clients:

- **Medical Clearance:** Always obtain medical clearance before performing massage on compromised clients. Collaborating with the client's healthcare provider ensures the massage complements their treatment plan and does not cause harm.
- **Gentle Techniques:** Use lighter pressure and avoid deep tissue massage, as compromised clients may have fragile skin, low platelet counts or other vulnerabilities.
- **Customized Sessions:** Each session should be tailored to the client's specific needs, comfort levels and health status. Communication is key to ensuring their safety and well-being.
- **Emotional Support:** Massage is as much about emotional healing as physical relief. For compromised clients, creating a safe and nurturing environment can have profound psychological benefits.

Choosing the Right Oils for Compromised Clients

The type of oil used during massage plays a critical role in enhancing the therapeutic experience. For compromised clients, it's essential to select oils that are gentle, hypoallergenic and non-irritating. Here are some top recommendations:

1. **Tamanu Oil**
   Tamanu oil is a powerhouse for compromised skin. Known for its anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and wound-healing properties, it is ideal for clients with sensitive or medically reactive skin. Tamanu oil can soothe irritation, promote tissue regeneration and provide a protective barrier.





Technically a liquid wax, jojoba oil closely mimics the skin's natural sebum.

2. **Jojoba Oil**
   Technically a liquid wax, jojoba oil closely mimics the skin's natural sebum. It's hypoallergenic, non-comedogenic and deeply moisturizing. Jojoba oil is particularly effective for clients with autoimmune conditions like eczema or psoriasis, as it calms inflammation and supports skin health.
3. **Apricot Kernel Oil**
   This lightweight and gentle oil is perfect for clients with delicate skin. Rich in vitamins A and E, apricot kernel oil nourishes the skin without leaving a greasy residue. It's an excellent choice for clients undergoing chemotherapy or radiation, as it soothes dryness and irritation.
4. **Essential Oils (with Caution)**
   While essential oils can enhance relaxation and provide therapeutic benefits, they must be used sparingly and with caution for compromised clients. Always ensure they're high quality, diluted (1% or less in a carrier oil) and check for allergies beforehand.

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Massage Tools for Enhanced Comfort and Safety

In addition to oils, certain tools can make massage sessions more effective and comfortable for compromised clients. Here are some recommended tools:

1. **Massage Pillows and Bolsters**
   Proper positioning is crucial for compromised clients, especially those recovering from surgery or dealing with mobility or lymphatic issues. Pillows and bolsters can provide support, reduce pressure on sensitive areas and ensure the client is comfortable throughout the session.
2. **Hot/Cold Packs**
   For clients with localized pain or inflammation, hot or cold packs are traditionally used to complement massage techniques. However, for clients dealing with compromised skin conditions caused from medications or illness, the packs should be warm and not hot or cold. Always check with the client to ensure these are appropriate for their condition.
3. **Kansa Wands**
   Kansa wands are traditional Ayurvedic tools designed to enhance relaxation and promote wellness. Made with a unique bronze alloy, they balance the skin's pH, reduce stress, improve circulation and support lymphatic drainage. Ideal for facial or body massage, they soothe tired muscles, rejuvenate the skin and enhance overall mind-body harmony.
4. **Gua Sha**
   Gua sha is a traditional healing technique that promotes lymphatic drainage, reduces inflammation and enhances circulation. Using smooth-edged tools, it helps release muscle tension, improve skin elasticity and reduce puffiness. Perfect for facial and body care, gua sha revitalizes the skin, promotes relaxation, and supports overall wellness and vitality.

Specialized Massage Techniques for Compromised Clients

Certain massage techniques are particularly beneficial for compromised clients. These methods prioritize safety, comfort and therapeutic outcomes:

1. **Lymphatic Drainage Massage**
   This gentle technique stimulates the lymphatic system, promoting detoxification and reducing swelling. It's especially beneficial for clients recovering from surgery or dealing with lymphedema. Note: Ensure you're trained in this technique and that it's within your scope of practice.
2. **Effleurage**
   Effleurage involves long, sweeping strokes that promote relaxation and improve circulation. This technique is ideal for clients with chronic pain or heightened sensitivity.
3. **Reflexology**
   By focusing on pressure points in the hands and feet, reflexology can provide therapeutic benefits without direct contact with sensitive areas of the body.
4. **Gentle Stretching**
   Incorporating light, guided stretching into a massage session can improve flexibility and relieve tension without causing strain.

A Delicate Balance

Massage therapy for compromised clients requires a delicate balance of skill, knowledge and compassion. By understanding their unique needs, selecting the right oils, and incorporating appropriate tools and techniques, therapists can create a safe and healing environment. Whether it's using tamanu oil to soothe irritated skin or employing lymphatic drainage to reduce swelling, every choice should prioritize the client's well-being.

Ultimately, the goal is to provide not just physical relief, but also emotional support, empowering clients to navigate their health challenges with greater comfort and confidence. Massage therapy, when done thoughtfully, can truly be life-changing for those who need it most.



Becky Kuehn is a Master Esthetician and Cosmetologist who specializes in the realm of Oncology Esthetics. Since 2013, she has been the driving force behind Oncology Spa Solutions, dedicating herself to educating others on the safe practices of working with individuals undergoing cancer and various health-related difficulties. Her passion drives her mission to impart knowledge and expertise in this field.

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TIBA Boutique Spa

By Katie Anderson

We stumbled upon Tiba Boutique Spa by chance while browsing spa opening announcements—and we couldn't be happier that we did. Though not new to the Nashville scene (it originally opened in 1994), Tiba recently celebrated a fresh chapter with a relocation to Berry Hill and an exciting partnership as the first U.S. location of the Ingrid Millet Paris Institute. Intrigued by how the spa blends the charm of a boutique with the elegance of a French skin care haven, we wanted to learn more. To delve deeper, we spoke with Donna Shaffer, general manager of Tiba, who works with the spa's founder, Nuhad Khoury.

1. Tell us about the aesthetic of your spa's interior and the emotion you are looking to evoke from customers.

Shaffer: We use simple architectural lines, strategic lighting effects and natural finishes in the wet room, such as the blue onyx and white marble featuring a chromotherapy, aromatic steam rain shower. There is whitewashed oak flooring throughout the spa, retail and salon. The retail areas and Dessange Salon feature abundant natural lighting with color accents through unique luxury merchandising. Tiba's updated concept is a memorable and uniquely designed new space, where each carefully selected, intricate detail creates a warm, intimate and joyous environment for their guests.

When designing their spas, owners should carefully consider the services or retail offerings that set them apart. Are you providing something exclusive, innovative, cutting-edge, or on-trend (while ensuring it's a sustainable trend)? Perhaps a bespoke experience that differentiates you within your competitive landscape?

2. What inspired your design components and process?

Shaffer: Forty years serving clients from Nashville and beyond in the spa and retail market gave Nuhad creative insights as she designed her new location. Nuhad's inspiration was towards "nature." Features include natural elements like moss and succulent spheres and a wall covered with museum glass at the spa's entrance, designer natural wood and frosted glass entrance door, and abundant natural lighting with access to a beautiful outside tigerwood relaxation deck to enjoy light refreshments and fresh air. Nuhad used a landscape architect and her vision to create a garden oasis atmosphere using existing and unique trees, plants and flowers native to Tennessee. There is a sculpted raised, 20-foot length, stone, herb garden planter box adjacent to the garden and relaxation deck. Nuhad's future plans are to offer a light Mediterranean fair using her fresh-grown herbs and vegetables.

3. Does your spa have any unique features or design aspects?

Shaffer: Tiba is an intimate space with a wealth of service and shopping options. Careful attention was paid to optimizing space and flow to incorporate the

Photos courtesy of Nuhad Khoury

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Using the latest technology, lighting, music, and projection were incorporated into every space to create a memorable experience.

newest regenerative and restorative wellness services such as the PureWave Vemi Bed and Semi Mat, the Solo Carbon-Far-Infared Chromotherapy Sauna Bed, and Ballancer Pro Lymphatic Drainage Compression Therapy. Using the latest technology, lighting, music, and projection were incorporated into every space to create a memorable experience! Tiba, now the first U.S.A. Ingrid Millet Paris Institute, has a stunning treatment room and rainfall shower. The finest French luxury skin care products are used in services.

4. What advice would you give to someone who is designing their spa's interior?

Shaffer: You must know in advance what your unique offering is. For example, what is your style or design unique to you? What will become your "brand" in design and offerings that you will keep fresh but consistent for years? What services or retail are you offering that is exclusive, different, the latest, ground-breaking, trending (be careful it's a lasting trend), or bespoke in your competitive set (day spas, hotel spas, resort spas, etc.)? What atmosphere in the retail and salon areas vs. the quiet massage, facial, and various treatment rooms? The room location and flow of traffic are based on the purpose of the rooms and acoustics. Look at the operational side of design and aesthetics and stay consistent throughout the entire project. If you haven't been in front-of-house/back-of-house operations in a spa, work in one or hire experience to help with your design. Is your spa a small boutique offering to target the top 10% of the luxury demographic, or are you building a spa that can accommodate large groups for parties or convention/business groups that need services done within a short timeframe? Know your vision.

THE RUNDOWN:

TIBA BOUTIQUE SPA

Address:	**606 West Iris Drive Nashville, Tennessee, in Berry Hill**
Web:	**www.shoptiba.com**
IG:	**tiba_boutiquespa**
Founded:	**1994**
Treatment rooms:	**Five**
Staff Size:	**Five**
Owner:	**Nuhad Khoury**
Spa manager/director:	**Donna Shaffer**
Skin care:	Ingrid Millet Paris, Orlane, Cellcosmet, Serucell, Kelemata
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