

Insider secrets for natural beauty



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Q | My skin is flaky and looks dull. Would it help if I did some kind of peel?

–Christie, Vancouver, British Columbia

A | Dear Christie,

A variety of peels are available. Some people see results after one treatment, whereas others see results after a series. Many peels can offer improvement in hyper pigmentation (freckling and sunspots), acne, scarring, fine lines, wrinkles, hydration and even skin tone.

Consider using a fruit-enzyme peel made from papaya enzymes, which will help exfoliate the skin without harsh scrubbing. Dead skin cells are composed primarily of protein; enzyme peels digest the dead skin cells on the surface of the skin without harming new cell growth.

The main goal with exfoliation is to improve your skin's texture and tone, lessen fine lines or scarring and create a healthier, youthful appearance. Visit your local grocery or health food store to find a natural exfoliating product. In fact, you'll be pleasantly surprised to know that you can purchase already-prepared fruit enzyme scrubs.

Also, consider alpha hydroxy acids, which are natural exfoliators derived from foods such as citrus fruits (citric acid), sour milk (lactic acid), grapes (tartaric acid), sugar cane (glycolic acid) and apples (malic acid). Although you will notice smoother skin after the first treatment, you'll need to use alpha hydroxy acids on a regular basis for about six weeks or longer to see a significant improvement in skin texture and fine lines.

Q | How important is it to use a toner? I used to use one, but I found that it dried out my skin. I wash my face and moisturize daily. Should I add a toner to my skin-care routine again? If so, what should I use?

– Leslie, Edmonton, Alberta

A | Dear Leslie,

Depending on the kind of toner recommended for your skin type (usually written on the bottle), a toner can do everything from aid in the moisturizing process to increasing blood flow to your skin. A toner can also stop bacteria from colonizing and shrink your pores, as well as remove dead skin cells, allowing your other products to work better.

With that being said, consider using toners that don't contain alcohol, which will dry out your skin. For oily skin, a good alternative is a product that contains witch hazel (this is less drying than alcohol) and sandalwood (for its powerful antibacterial and anti-fungal properties). If you have normal-to-dry skin, find a toner that contains rosewater, chamomile and geranium. Also, a toner with lavender does an excellent job at balancing oil production in the skin as well as clearing blemishes and evening out skin tone. It's great for all skin types and also helps to hydrate dry skin. Talk to your health care practitioner if you have any questions. ♥



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