

Skin Deep?

Our skin is our single largest living organ and
it literally defines who we are.

By Sudha Hamilton



Without our skin, we would be a skeleton in a puddle of blood and that would take some getting used to...I imagine. Skin is often derided for being at the surface of things and thus incorrectly labelled 'superficial' – so skin deep – but what this elastic covering achieves for our anatomical structure is more than just a tidy appearance. Skin breathes, and like a baboon's bottom, its colour and appearance indicates our state of health – it is a barometer for all to see, of our moods, our level of hydration, our age and whether we are succumbing to disease.

We look outward in our search for beauty in our lives, we are conditioned to look out and not within, to seek beauty and meaning in romantic love, Art and nature. Beauty that inspires us to love or perhaps to begin the journey to find our heart, and meaning – to find meaning in that same quest for love, or is there meaning in beauty itself? Much of our seeming obsession with appearing beautiful is, I think, the desire to be loved for who we are. As Louise Hay writes, "Our skin represents our individuality. Skin problems usually mean we feel our individuality is being threatened somehow. We feel that others have power over us." I always think of adolescence and the eruption of skin problems at this time as a great example of this.

Our skin makes us uniquely who we are and no other. To touch another's skin is an intimate act and usually the preserve of mothers and lovers. Skin to skin. The feel of your

beloved's skin is very important – it must feel right to touch for things to proceed from there. How one feels inside one's own skin is another way of describing the emotional response to one's own existence. It is funny that we describe someone as 'skinny' when they in fact have less skin than someone who is not so svelte, but perhaps we are referring to them having less fat beneath their skin. Still we call someone a fatty when they have more fat but linguistically ignore the need for the extra skin to stretch over that fat. Well a skinny latte for me please.

Skin is portrayed in myth as often about magical powers, like the dragon's scaly skin being impenetrable or the healing powers of the snake shedding its skin as renewed life. When the beautiful white swans descend down to water, they remove their feathered skins to become frolicking naked ladies and if you can steal their skin they will follow you home and be yours forever – according to the myth that is. Skins were our first clothing in ancient times, to keep us warm and perhaps also to take on some of the properties of the slain animal – bear skins, sheep skins, fox, wolf, mink, cat, dog, buffalo, rabbit, kangaroo.....Shaman still today, wear skins of their totemic animal when performing rituals. We moved on from there to utilise ingredients derived from animals like lanolin and whale fat in the production of skin creams and cosmetics to heal us and make us beautiful. Now we are refraining from such practices and looking more exclusively to the plant world for the natural solutions to our skin needs.

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Beauty TIPS



Skin Care

Collagen is what gives our skin that youthful plumping and elasticity. As collagen breaks down with the normal ageing process we're left with the sagging and wrinkling that some accept with good humour, wearing their character lines with pride. Many of us though, see these early signs of ageing and take action, doing what we can to slow the ageing process. Certified Organic Moroccan Rose Face Oil from **Bod** gives you the most natural and effective way to pull in the reins on the visible signs of ageing before things get desperate. With almond, rosehip, jojoba, avocado & evening primrose oils it's full of vitamin C which is essential in the formation of collagen. Use just a few drops morning and night to give you back your youthful glow.

RRP \$36.95 each, Certified Organic by ACO.
www.gorgeousthings.com.au

This fabulous all natural and organic face scrub has been designed as a gentle cleanser with healing and soothing properties. **Labreni** was founded and designed for people suffering skin conditions, such as eczema and rosacea – so you can be assured that the products contain no synthetic chemicals, petrochemicals, synthetic preservatives, sulphates, phosphorous, parabens, mineral oils, dyes or fragrance. With the healing powers of aloe and hydrating properties of jojoba and myrrh, the vanilla scrub exfoliates and polishes your skin without damaging delicate areas. The crushed vanilla beans and walnut husks make for an aromatic skin care experience. **Labreni Vanilla Scrub** also helps to soothe inflamed skin and balance your skin tone, removing any redness.

\$29.50 each
www.labreni.com.au

Colloidal silica, what does it do? It reduce loose skin and wrinkles, assist with acne and wound healing and improve skin problems like eczema and psoriasis-applied externally, it contributes to your skin's moisture content, elasticity, cross-linking of collagen and generalised tissue repair, try **Third Stone Botanicals'** Green Tea Eye Serum to relive your tired, puffy eyes and restore elasticity.
www.thirdstonebotanicals.com.au

Hydrate your face, without clogging pores, with **Invoke Natural Skincare's** Daily Creme Moisturiser. Boosted with vitamin E to hydrate and repair the skin's glow, the 50ml size is great for your handbag or desk.

\$16.00 each
www.invokenaturalskincare.com.au

Hair Care

EverEscents Organic Care

Treat yourself to the exclusive all natural and organic hair care collection EverEscents Organic Hair Care. We tried the bergamot shampoo and conditioner and the lavender – they're completely delicious. The Organic Matt Mudd is also a welcome alternative to the toxic cocktail in many styling products, and I was even able to allow my 2 year old to give himself a Mohawk knowing I wasn't toxifying his delicate scalp, and it has a great fresh peppermint aroma. The range is natural, aromatic and effective! After trying so many Organic and no nasty hair care brands over the years, I was chuffed. The range has been formulated through years of extensive research in conjunction with world-class hairdressers, highly respected cosmetic scientists and experts in the natural health care industry. They're SLS, SLES, Paraben, Propylene Glycol, PEG, artificial colour/fragrance, animal derivative, chemical FREE! AND they foam, and lather in a satisfying way that is sometimes absent with completely natural ranges, they leave your hair feeling great and the smell divine.

\$13.95 for the 125ml bottles,
 \$19.95 for the 250ml.
www.everescents.com.au

Lips Care

Keep lips luscious with a moisturising lip balm from **Mokosh Organic** and **Fairtrade Skincare**. Try Virgin Coconut and Apricot Kernel, naturally flavoured with a subtle taste of organic coconut oil.

\$10.00 each
www.mokosh.com.au

Body Care

Cleanse and moisturise the body with natural nourishing ingredients, and leave your skin smooth and fresh with **Natural Instinct's** Natural Body Wash - your skin will love you for it. Follow with the Natural Body Lotion, to replenish your skin.

\$19.95 each
www.naturalinstinct.com.au

Skin Things' - Japanese Body Brush

The practice of body brushing goes back centuries - it helps in reducing stress, blood circulation and muscle tone; exfoliates and tones the skin; and helps slow the aging process. And an added bonus - it helps reduce cellulite! Get your wet or dry body brush today!

\$16.50 each
www.skinthings.com.au

ecoInfusion Spa Tonic

Spa Tonic is a natural spa water purifier. It eliminates the need for using harmful chemicals to maintain your hot tub water. As traditional chemical treatments can be absorbed through the skin or by inhaling the steam, it is ideal for people who have illnesses, skin conditions or are just looking for an easier, more natural solution. **Spa Tonic** creates softer water, so no "bathtub ring" – not to mention feeling luxurious and actually moisturising your skin rather than drying it out! You won't need (or want) to shower afterwards. No red eyes, dry skin or irritating rashes - so is perfect for those with sensitive skin. It also won't fade your bathing suit or dyed hair and your jewellery will be safe from discolouration. And of course - no pungent chemical smell!

www.ecoinfusion.com.au

Keep your hands nourished this winter with **Endota Spa's** Lavender and Alpine Pepper Hand Cream. The lavender will calm your skin, while the alpine pepper increases circulation.

\$34.00 each
www.endota.com.au