

Natural Skin Care Checklist

By Zoe

- Simplify.** Cosmetic advertising can be deceptive. Most of us accumulate a myriad of products over the years, many of them we hardly use. Clean out your cabinets and get rid of all of the products you own with toxic ingredients. Keep your routine simple. These are the three main items you need:
 - Cleansing agent.** Use an organic glycerine soap for cleansing.
 - Broad spectrum sunscreen.** Avoiding damage from sun exposure will preserve your skin.
 - Moisturizer.** Aloe Vera, coconut oil and vitamin E are examples of natural moisturizers that work really well.
- Educate yourself.** Many times companies will label a product as natural, but it won't really be natural. In fact, these products may contain toxic chemicals. You are the expert on your own skin. Over the years, you've noticed what works well for your skin type and what doesn't. Make a list of the ingredients and skin care brands that your skin works well with and the ones you're allergic to. This will make a good reference sheet for future purchases. Research companies, and their products before you buy them. Ask yourself:
 - What is this company's values and philosophies?
 - Do they test on animals?
 - Do they care about the environment?
- Choose products grown organically and bio-dynamically.** Ingredients that are grown organically haven't been touched by pesticides or synthetic fertilizers. Bio-dynamic farming methods incorporate more holistic farming techniques between the soil, plants and animals. Look for the USDA organic seal on product labeling.
- DIY or Do It Yourself.** There are so many natural skin care recipes online. Search the internet for a few, and try your hand at making them. Oftentimes, you won't need to go further than your kitchen. Some ingredients include:
 - Honey
 - Green Tea
 - Witch Hazel
 - Yogurt
 - Coffee grounds
 - Sea salt
- You are what you eat.** One of the best things you can do for your skin is to eat well. Avoid eating too many refined sugars and grains. Eat plenty of healthy fats like flaxseed oils and omega 3 fish oils. Make sure your diet is rich in whole grains, fruits and vegetables:
 - Berries are high in vitamin C, and help support the immune system.
 - Carrots are rich in vitamin A, an important antioxidant.
 - Parsley contains a lot of vitamin K which helps skin to heal.

- Seeds, such as sunflower, pumpkin and chia) are rich in selenium, good for protecting skin against age damage and sun damage.
- Whole grains reduce skin inflammation.