



R E : V I T A L I S E

is your skin troubled?

Most people I meet these days tell me they have sensitive skin. This means that women and increasingly men, are more aware of their skin reacting adversely if the wrong hair, face and body products or cosmetics are used. Hardly surprising, as most skin products still contain the same harsh chemicals, strong enzymes, whiteners, even in the so-called 'miracle' creams.

What exactly is sensitive skin? In adults, sensitive skin starts off as dehydrated skin, no longer in its best state; skin that turns red, blotchy, irritated or itchy for a variety of reasons ranging from simple heat and cold to excessive time spent in swimming pools, working late, to insomnia, difficult relationships, or that time of the month.

This is because the skin epidermis is no longer an effective barrier against external onslaughts nor is it generating excessive free radicals with high secretions of cytokines, pro-inflammatory molecules.

Caring for sensitive skin

Taking a common sense holistic approach in treating sensitive skin, the key is to ensure you do not subject your skin to physical onslaughts like skin products containing harsh chemicals, extremes of heat and cold (sunbathing, saunas) and most of all, that your daily life is not a roller coaster of stressful situations.

Consult a trained holistic skin therapist or dermatologist to find out more about your skin needs. Use only natural or organic hair, face and body products containing no irritants like perfume, chemicals or preservatives. Hydrate your skin daily with moisturisers containing manuka honey, while rosehip serum lowers inflammation and aids cell rejuvenation.

Treat your skin to weekly masks. When drying, do not rub your skin vigorously. Avoid products containing ingredients such as fruit acids, retinol etc. Stay away from face peels, dermabrasions, laser or surgical face lifts.

Avoid temperature extremes, hot liquids, too spicy foods, alcohol or strong drugs. Daily, exercise, create a quiet space for yourself or do at least one thing that makes you happy.

Troubled Skins

If ignored, sensitive skin can degenerate easily into many troubled or chronic skin conditions, the most common being pigmentation, dermatitis, eczema or psoriasis.

Pigmentation occurs when skin is severely dehydrated and its normal renewal process slows down. Usually associated with aging, it shows up as skin discolouration but can also affect young people who spend a lot of time in the sun with no sun protection. Many people choose laser to treat pigmentation, but thinned epidermis and slow cell renewal, especially repeated, can worsen pigmentation in the long run.

To prevent or lighten **pigmentation**, hydrate your skin regularly with natural moisturisers and organic rosehip serums that aid cell renewal. Do not traumatise already fragile skin with skin or body products containing chemicals. Take in lots of water and Vitamins C, A and E. Most of all, do not leave home without a good quality, natural sunblock, UV hats, clothing or sunglasses.

Eczema a form of dermatitis, is an allergic, inflammatory skin condition affecting a growing number of people here. Ranging from red, itching and dry skin, to more severe symptoms of flaking, blistering, cracking, or bleeding, it can be set off by food allergies, heat or cold, scratching or stressful situations.

Using steroids merely suppress the symptoms, not effect a real cure and in the long run, worsening your skin condition.

For instant relief, it's better to use a natural cream such as Calendula or your own mix of carrot & spinach juice with a teaspoon of camphor and sandalwood paste, or red clover on weeping eczema. Dietwise, reduce your salt intake, avoid overly spicy, sour foods and above all, make a lifestyle change as many people develop eczema or psoriasis due to prolonged internal stress.

Psoriasis, an autoimmune disorder is a chronic skin disease characterised by dry, raised red patches covered with fine silvery scales to more chronic conditions of white pus, lesions, severe itching and pain. Non infectious, it is often seen in people between 15 to 40 yrs of age. Traditional ayurveda believe that while no treatment for psoriasis is guaranteed 100 percent, a body detox to remove toxins combined with a strict diet and lifestyle change will work wonders. It advises drinking buttermilk, eating lots of vegetables and fruit like bittergourd, pumpkin, including taking cod liver oil, lecithin, Vitamin E to hasten the healing process, again, avoiding spicy, sour, acidic or processed foods including animal fats and eggs. Other common sense dos and don'ts include no scratching, using separate towels,

exposing skin only to mild sunlight, bathing in sea water, and hydrating skin daily with good moisturisers – again, I recommend organic rosehips and pure olive or almond oil.

Good skin is not just pleasing to the eye of the beholder, it is also our only precious link to our world of senses, and speaks about our inner happiness and harmony, or the lack of it. Therefore, problematic skin is a strong signal that we are overdue in making changes in diet and lifestyle. **SL**



Evelyn Quek, international consultant/trainer, writer and speaker is also trained in Yoga and Ku Nye, ancient Tibetan healing therapy. She runs OsmosisNature dedicated to natural skin and sun care and holistic healing therapies.

