



Look Great at Any Age

Your Guide to the Best Organic Beauty Solutions

By **Melisse Golula**

It's not a gimmick. Skin changes and so should your approach to skin care. Naturally glowing skin when you're in your teens requires a different approach—and different products. Similarly, when you're pregnant, when you spot your first sun spot, or when your fine lines are a mark of worldliness your skin-care tactics should adjust. We took the most salient skin-care concerns of each age group, and asked the experts to help identify the best organic beauty solutions for them. Sure, there are some tips and treatments everyone needs, but these are just right for you.



MOTHER AND BABY

The drugs my doctor prescribed for nausea during my pregnancy were then found to cause birth defects, says Melinda Olson, a nurse and the founder of EarthMamaAngelBaby. "That was a long time ago now, but even recently it was brought to light that carcinogens are in some baby shampoos. And that has inspired me to find safe plants and herbs that have a traditional use for moms and babies," says Olson, whose clean product range comforts a variety of concerns. Witness a lanolin-free Natural Nipple Butter (\$14.95, www.EarthMamaAngelBaby.com) that doesn't need to be wiped off before breastfeeding, since it contains no beeswax.

Olson's bestseller for babies is the Angel Baby Bottom Balm (\$14.95) that uses antifungal and wound-healing calendula, and her AngelBaby Lotion is preserved with an herbal tincture of South African red tea. "That's not what you're going to get at the hospital," laments Olson, who makes an Angel Baby Kit (\$39.95) loaded with sample-size, paraben-free products just for this purpose.

Instead of the promised pregnancy glow, some women get a temporary batch of brownish blotches (melasma) or an acne breakout. Facials with natural products—definitely no retinoids or hydroquinone brightening

agents—are perfectly safe, according to Stacy Denney, founder of Barefoot and Pregnant spa in Casa Madrona, California. Her spa menu also includes a glycolic peel that can address pigmentation and pimples, as well as the acute dryness some women get. "You can also go the completely gentle route," says Denney.

(There are super-soft scrubs like

Lotus Moon Azuki Bean & Rose Petal Polishing Powder, \$22, www.smileessentials.com).

"Just make sure you're exfoliating, hydrating, and using sunscreen—you don't want to aggravate any melasma," says Denney, who adds that sun can make the condition much worse.

Although Olson and

Denney make products for

stretch marks, both founders are candid about their cause (genetics) and what can be done for them (very little). Keeping the body hydrated and the skin moisturized and supple as it stretches during pregnancy is the best tactic, they say. Some butters or oils, especially those with a high-concentration of essential fatty acids can help by promoting elasticity, like in the neroli-scented EarthMamaAngelBaby Natural Stretch Oil (\$24.95) with grape seed and borago and VedaMama Rich Body Cream (\$50, www.vedapure.com), with shea and mango butters. It was formulated by Natalie Geary, M.D., a pediatrician who developed products

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for babies (then moms and dads) without parabens, harsh chemicals, or steroids found in mass-market products.

TEENAGERS

It's hard to resist the draw of commercials hocking foaming face washes, pore-tightening toners, and powerful acne medicines for teenagers, but these products often don't provide the same results for breakout-prone or combination skins. One reason? Sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS), the most common foamer found in face cleansers (and shampoos) strip natural oils from the skin. The dryness that results from washing with it just tells your skin to produce more oil, says Suki Kramer, who suggests a daily clay-based cleanser instead. (She makes the Suki Transformative Cleansing Clay, \$44, www.sukik.com). Milk-based cleansers can also effectively breakdown and remove oils without detergents, and Cor soap (\$125, www.corshower.com) a glycerin puck with antibacterial colloidal silver, may also have an anti-acne effect without over the drying skin.

Some beauty companies like Sophyto Organics (Deep Pore Foaming Cleanser, \$30, www.sophytoorganics.com) and Invision Beauty's The Brightening Cleanser (\$28 at www.invisionbeauty.com) have found a way to cater to consumer's love of foam by simply adding a froth-producing pump to their bottles of soap-free cleansers, which whips the ingredients as they're dispensed.

That said, it's likely most of us are buying into the myth that surface dirt causes acne, when most dermatologists say the problem is actually deep within the pore—pimples are caused by a buildup of skin and oil that instead of shedding forms a plug. (Blackheads are the visible, oxidized top part of this buildup.) Look for a product with white willow bark, a natural form of salicylic acid, which is a gold-standard ingredient for acne, because it can penetrate pores and work like Drano on pimples. SukiSpa Bio-Active Purifying Face Serum (\$75) contains a high percentage of natural salicin, as well as calming botanicals.

Antibacterial tea tree cleansers like Desert Essence Thoroughly Clean Face Wash with Organic Tea Tree Oil (\$9.99, www.desertessence.com) can also help and won't trigger a breakout. But tea tree can't change the behavior of the skin or prevent breakouts, which is why they're best saved for washing after workouts and acne-spot treatments.

Save scrubs made from ground fruit shells,

pits, or nuts for the body. These jagged skin-refining bits can turn a breakout into a blowout if they scratch the pimple or worse—get lodged in an open pustule or pore. Instead try smooth, round particles like those found in REN Jojoba Microbead Purifying Facial Scrub (\$35, www.ren.com) or twice-weekly clay-based masks like Astara Blue Flame Purification Mask (\$41, www.astaraskincare.com). It provides instant gratification by evening skin tone and clearing blackheads, and it helps to prevent pimples in the long run.

Like washing your face and brushing your teeth, applying sunscreen should also be a daily practice. Melanoma is the second most common form of cancer for young adults 15 to 29 years old, according to The Skin Cancer Foundation. Minerals like zinc and titanium dioxide can block both UVA and UVB rays (though zinc does it better), and do double-duty as anti-inflammatories, meaning they can help calm a bout of acne. Furthermore, mineral UV-filters are much less likely than chemical ones to cause a breakout, says Toni Maggiore, the spa director for Arrabelle at Vail Square & Lodge in Vail, Colorado. "That's because of all the additives in drugstore sunscreens, so a great choice is something simple and natural." Maggiore likes Arcona Reozone SPF 40 (\$32, www.arcona.com), a lightly tinted mineral-based sunscreen that's "non-greasy, whisper-light, and won't clog pores."

TWENTY-TO-FORTY-SOMETHING SKIN

Radiance, firmness, and smoothness are characteristic of healthy 20-something skin. But also perfectly typical are the natural processes that start to work against it: free radical damage, a slower rate of cell turnover, and a weakening of the skin's supporting proteins (collagen and elastin) that give skin a youthful plumpness, firmness, and elasticity.

So products and facial treatments should take a protective approach with the goal of holding onto healthy skin, says Farmaceutics formulator and founder, Brenda Brock, while arming it with ingredients that help defend it against its detractors. "It's the same reason we do yoga, eat well, and take good care of ourselves—we act before the damage is done," says Brock.



Since the skin around the lips and eyes lack sebaceous (oil) glands, they're often the first areas to dry, wrinkle, and show the signs of age. For lips, Brock likes beeswax balms infused with herbs like calendula, which binds moisture. "An imprint can be left around the mouth, and it's very hard to soften these lines later," she says. For the eyes, look for antioxidants and a multifaceted approach to treating dark circles, fine lines, and puffiness, like the Dr. Alkaitis Organic Eye Crème (\$49, www.alkaitis.com), with an eye-rejuvenating complex of herbal infused oils like borage, and Pangea Organics Turkish Rose & White Tea Eye Cream (\$55, www.pangeaorganics.com), which also stars bilberry to help strengthen the weak capillaries responsible for dark circles.

Jenny Ferrand, spa director of The Spa at Capella in Telluride, Colorado, notes that the 20s and 30s can also be a time when women are embroiled in a battle against acne and aging. "Sometimes a woman will get her first acne flare-up in her twenties due to hormones, or in her thirties due to stress. At the same time she's starting to see sun damage, fine lines, and hyperpigmentation." Ferrand likes what algae, such as fucus, laminaria digitata, and mineral rich red algae found in the Osea Skin Care line can do for adult combination skin. "Algae has oil regulating properties, but it also binds moisture and plumps the skin, and it imparts important antioxidants, minerals, and vitamins," says Ferrand.

Facial cleansing oils, long used by women in France and Japan, are great for this age group, because they do double

Hot List of Holistic Facialists

Chanel Jenae

Los Angeles
www.arcona.com

Firming the skin without gadgets or gizmos is the facial forte of Arcona Spa's Jenae, whose hands work nonstop and near miracles—using lymphatic drainage, acupressure, and more to tone the jawline, smooth your brow, and restore apple to your cheeks. It's a practice that draws a green carpet clientele and pairs well with the popular fruit and vegetable-based Arcona products Jenae formulates. And it's a philosophical fit for Jenae, who long ago trained with dermatologists as a paramedical esthetician: "I believe in caring for the body holistically," says Jenae. "Inside and out."



Tammy Fender

West Palm Beach
www.tammyfender.com

"The health of your skin is a natural result of your overall well-being—the state of your body, mind, and spirit." That's the motto of facialist Fender, who handcrafts her own pure botanical products based on holistic medicine and Pure Living Energy, an ineffable quality of positivity that she also exudes. In customized facials, given at her skin-care atelier or by facialists she personally trained at the Spa at The Breakers Resort, the trio of touch, pure plant products, and fine-tuned energy yields powerful results.



Julia March

New York City
www.juliamarchskinincare.com

March is a masterful facialist, capable of calming skin woes and a monkey mind in one facial appointment. (Try the Organic Bliss or the Healing Zen facial.) She's made a study of many modalities, including Vortex Healing, a type of energy work, and naturopathy, so while your skin is alighted in a lactic acid-rich yogurt peel or March's own mask of rose, oats, and propolis, your chakras line up, your brainwaves slow down, and, at the end of the service, your skin emits the glow of a woman managing her stress.—M.G.



duty as a makeup remover and leave skin soft. Furthermore, face oils bind to oil on the skin, while water-based cleansers need surfactants, detergents, or emulsifiers to do this. Nude Cleansing Facial Oil (\$50, www.nude skincare.com), uses natural soy, vegetable, and olive oils, and Huiles & Baumes Cleansing & Makeup Remover Oil (\$30, www.spaessence.com) contains jojoba oil, apricot oil, and black cumin oil in its washes.

Exfoliating Fruit acid washes or peels like Susan Cimminelli Algae Deep Cleanse (\$65, www.susanmimelli.com) with papaya enzymes, or Juice Beauty Green Apple Peel for Sensitive Skin (\$39, www.juicebeauty.com) provide that popular it's-working tingle while balancing combination skin. Brenda Brock Likes lactic-acid exfoliants from milk, which is why she created *Farmaesthetics Sweet Milk & Lavender Bud Facial Exfoliate* (\$25.50, www.farmaesthetics.com). The milk solids gently slough while imparting hydrating skin-friendly fats, says Brock, who recommends weekly exfoliation to keep skin clear and glowing, since the natural cell-turnover process slows down with age.

GRACEFUL AGING GROUP

Skin looks young, vital, and healthy when we fight stress, not our age, says Jenny Ferrand of Capella Telluride, who sees good topical products and skin care treatments as a supplement to the well-rounded process of self-care. Ferrand likes vitamin C, which has a solid track record for minimizing mottled skin and smoothing wrinkles. It's found in *Pure & True Infuse Nourishing Multi-Vitamin Moisturizer* (\$62, shop.pureandtrue.com), as well as a handful of targeted serums, such as John Masters Organics Vitamin C Anti-Aging Face Serum (\$10, www.johnmastery.com), which includes two forms of vitamin C. In addition, many antioxidant fruits, nuts, and berries are a good source of vitamin A, and may have the benefits of anti-aging retinol, the active wrinkle-smoother that's widely used in beauty products (and whose drug counterparts are Retin-A and Renova). Even better news, the natural sources don't have the skin-irritating side effects, says Niki Wilson, a cosmetic chemist.

Also look for water-free serums, a secret weapon of natural skin care because they need no chemical preservatives. That's the case with *She Essential Beauty Face Serum* (\$60, www.sheessentialbeauty.com), created by New York City acupuncturists and Chinese

herbalists, Beth Hooper and Laura Kauffmann. It contains rosehip oil as the base ingredient, and water can't hold a candle to it.

"We chose it because it improves skin elasticity and regenerates skin cells," says Hooper, who also added Zhen Zhu (pearl powder) for radiance. Similarly, *Flora's* apothecary style complexion oils and popular *Fleur Vibrante* treatment balm (\$75, www.fleurvibrante.com) have a grape-seed-oil base. These essential-fatty acid rich products share an important trait that makes them effective—a smaller molecular weight, which helps them better absorb, says chemist Wilson.

For firm and plump skin, there are a handful of natural ingredients with promise. Skin-firming ingredients like wheat proteins can provide immediate results, and brown and red algae have studies supporting their ability to smooth wrinkles over time, says

Facial cleansing oils are great for mature skin because they do double-duty as a makeup remover and leave skin soft.

Wilson. Hyaluronic acid, found naturally in the skin (and in a synthetic form in injectable fillers) is a hit, because it binds 1,000 times its weight in water, thereby plumping the skin. It's found in the French line *Suzanne aux Bains* Moisturizing

Day Organic Treatment (\$48, www.saffronorange.com). Peptides, amino-acid chains attached to a fatty

acid, represent the final frontier of skin rejuvenation because they're designed to penetrate the skin, as in *Organic Apothecary Rejuvenating Face Cream* (\$45, www.spiritofnycfrange.com) and have been shown to boost collagen in the Petri dish, so there's good hope it can do it for skin. ☐

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