

Caring for Dry Skin

Skin dryness can cause much discomfort. The factors responsible for dry skin vary from person to person, ranging from build-up of dead skin cells, damaged intercellular matrix of the skin causing impaired ability to retain moisture, contact with harsh chemicals or products, overexposure to the sun, menopause, etc.

Here are some useful tips:

- *If your skin is both dry and sensitive, it is a good idea to keep your living environment clean and dust-free. Airborne allergens are one of the most common factors for causing sensitive reaction.*
- *Avoid foods that have been chemically processed.*
- *Avoid skin care products that contain alcohol, fragrance, colours, harsh detergents, menthol, camphor, etc, as these are these ingredients can be potentially irritating and drying to the skin.*
- *Exfoliate your skin regularly with a non-abrasive exfoliant to prevent the build-up of dead skin cells so that the skin could absorb moisture better.*
- *Strengthen your body's defense mechanism by eating fresh, wholesome foods.*
- *Keep your skin well-moisturized as dry skin tends to have poorer skin barrier function. A compromised skin barrier increases the chances of sensitive reaction.*
- *Minimize your skin's exposure to the sun as sun exposure is one of the causes of skin damage, leading to dryness and premature aging of the skin.*
- *If your living environment is dry, consider installing a humidifier to increase the air moisture content.*

DIY Beauty Treatment for Dry Skin

Recipe 1: Peaches and Cream Face Mask

Peaches contain natural AHAs that help to moisturize the skin while gently dissolving away dead skin cells. Cream is rich in fats and proteins which help to replenish the skin's lipid content and lock in moisture.

Ingredients:

<i>Fully ripen, fresh peach</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Pure Cream</i>	<i>3 to 4 tablespoons</i>

Preparation:

- 1. Remove seed and skin from the peach.*
- 2. Cut into small pieces. Mash into a pulp with a mortar and pestle. Take care not to over mash the peach to avoid it from becoming to runny.*
- 3. Scoop the mashed peach into a clean bowl. Add pure cream and mix well.*
- 4. Use immediately.*

How to use:

- 1. After cleansing, pat dry your skin.*
- 2. Apply evenly onto face and neck, taking care not to let the mask enter your eyes.*
- 3. Allow the mask to work on your skin for 20 to 30 minutes.*
- 4. Wipe away the mask with a tissue paper. Discard.*
- 5. Rinse thoroughly with warm water and pat dry.*

Recipe 2: Nourishing Avocado Face Mask

Avocado is rich in natural oils and vitamin E. Thus, besides helping to replenish the skin's moisture content, it also helps to neutralize free radicals. Egg yolk on the other hand has high Vitamin A content which helps to keep the skin healthy and youthful. This mask should be used only on very dry skin as it is very rich.

Ingredients:

Fully ripen avocado	1
Egg yolk	1
Fresh milk	2 to 4 teaspoons

Preparation:

1. Cut avocado into halves. Remove the seed and scope out the flesh.
2. Mash the flesh with a mortar and pestle until you obtain a smooth paste.
3. Beat egg yolk and stir in fresh milk. Add to mashed avocado and mix thoroughly.
4. Use immediately.

How to use:

1. After cleansing, pat dry your skin.
2. Apply evenly onto face and neck, taking care not to let the mask enter your eyes.
3. Allow the mask to work on your skin for 20 to 30 minutes.
4. Wipe away the mask with a tissue paper. Discard.
5. Rinse thoroughly with warm water and pat dry.

Note: Do not use this mask if your skin is prone to acne.

Recipe 3: Brown Rice Porridge with Dried Scallops

Try this recipe for healthy, well-moisturized skin. Chinese Yam is especially known for its skin and hair moistening properties as it helps to replenish fluids and eliminate dryness. Red dates replenish the blood and promote a more radiant complexion.

Ingredients:

Brown Rice		50 grams
Chinese Yam	Shan Yao	3 to 4 pieces
Dried Scallops		5 pieces
Fox Nuts	Qian Shi	1 tablespoon
Coix Seeds	Yi Yi Ren	1 tablespoon
Red Dates (Pitted)	Hong Zao	4 pieces
Salt to taste		

Portion: 1 to 2

Preparation:

1. Wash brown rice a few times.
2. Rinse all the herbs. Crush coix seeds lightly. Break Chinese Yam into small pieces. Soak herbs and dried scallops in a cup of water for 30 minutes.
3. Place brown rice, herbs, scallops and water used for soaking the herbs into an earthen pot. Add 3 more cups of water.
4. Bring to a boil. Reduce to medium heat. Cover and cook for 90 minutes, adding more water if necessary to adjust the consistency of the porridge to your liking. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking.
5. Before serving, add salt to taste.

Note: During pregnancy, remove coix seeds from the above recipe.