

tasteforlife

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Healthy Pet

Prevent and relieve hip problems in dogs.
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Natural Beauty

Shop for safety and value in personal care.
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for a

Healthy New Year

must-have
foods

in down with
FOODS

you
DICTED TO EATING?

TER'S MEDICINE KIT:
t colds & flu naturally

WIN PRIZES!
Healthy Resolutions 2009

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"Nature gives you the face you have at 20; it's up to you to merit the face you have at 50." —Coco Chanel

what's essential in *personal care*

AND WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO PAY FOR

Pinching pennies? These days we're all looking for value when we shop, but cheap cosmetics and personal care products aren't the best buys. The good news is natural products remain affordable—often costing considerably less than department-store lines and other name brands. And unlike many inexpensive drugstore cosmetics, natural beauty products avoid dubious and harmful ingredients.

LABEL READING 101

"Today there are many natural options available that don't contain chemicals, are reasonably priced, and can be used by the entire family," says Andree Falardeau, founder of natural skin care product line Canus. Increasingly, manufacturers are using organic ingredients produced without the use of herbicides and pesticides. Look for the Natural Products Association's Natural Seal, which certifies that 95 percent of a product's ingredients are natural and present no suspected risks to human health.

Read ingredient labels carefully. The first items on that list will be the prime constituents of the product, so it's best if these are recognizable names rather than multisyllabic mysteries. Avoid synthetic antibacterials, bleaching agents (like hydroquinone), diethanolamine (DEA), EDTA, FDC colors, mineral oil or petrolatum (that coats the skin and prevents it from breathing), parabens, phthalates, sulfates (detergents), and synthetic fragrances.

NATURALLY FRESH

Choose gentle soaps for the whole family. "Body washes and liquid hand soaps make housekeeping easier," says Jennifer Schweitzer at Nature's Gate. Look for ingredients such as apricot kernel oil, sweet almond oil, shea butter, sodium hyaluronate, soybean oil, vegetable glycerin, and vitamin E, along with biodegradable cleansers for your health and that of the environment, she adds.

"While using body wash in the shower, work up a rich lather on a loofah or bath poof," says Christa Skov at Alba Botanica. ▶

For more information, go to
www.tasteforlife.com/naturalbeauty





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“Thoroughly rinse so there is no residue left on skin,” she adds—as leftover soap is drying. Apply a high-quality moisturizer after bathing or showering, “when your skin is extra thirsty,” recommends Daniel Wiser of Avalon Organics.

Soaps and skin care products with goat’s milk are great for many dry skin conditions so common this time of year. “Use them to help treat eczema, psoriasis, and even acne,” says Falardeau.

In addition to nondetergent bath and shower gels, Catherine Blackwell at JASON Natural notes that natural deodorants provide consumers with a healthier alternative to commercial antiperspirants and deodorants that depend on aluminum chlorohydrate, mineral oils, parabens, and triclosan (a dubious antibacterial). Because “deodorants are applied to an area of the body that is sensitive and highly absorbent,” use products with antiseptic ingredients like tea tree oil, “while apricot, aloe, and lavender are often used for long-lasting freshness,” she adds.

SAFE SKIN CARE

With 20 square feet of it covering your body, your epidermis deserves TLC. “Everything from environmental factors to diet and stress affects the health of your skin,” says Wiser, so “look for products that naturally hydrate and replenish the skin.”

If you select products “with a high con-

centration of hempseed oil, you only need about half the amount of product you would normally use with other cleansers, lotions, or creams,” says Theresa Hellings at The Healing Seed. “Be ready for your friends to notice a difference in your skin.”

“Cleanse twice a day using a high-quality cleanser that removes impurities without disturbing the skin’s natural balance,” says Linda Miles, LAc, DOM, at derma e. “Follow with a nonalcohol, pH-balanced toner to remove finer impurities and cleanser residues,” and then use “a moisturizer appropriate for your skin type to restore moisture,” she adds. “First and foremost, always look for skin care products with effective levels of natural actives that meet the specific needs you’re concerned about.” Select products with a high concentration of nourishing vitamins and botanicals.

“At least once a week, all skin types should exfoliate,” recommends Miles. “Exfoliation helps to remove the buildup of dead cells and waste from the surface of the skin, unclog pores, and stimulate cellular renewal for optimal skin function.” She finds that exfoliants with papaya enzymes leave skin fresh and radiant.

“As you age, the cumulative exposure to free radicals causes visible signs of aging and a decline in the health of your skin,” Miles says. To counteract this, she recommends creams and serums rich in antioxidants like astaxanthin and Pycnogenol.



SAFE ENOUGH FOR KIDS?

Little girls have always played with Mom’s makeup, perhaps now more than ever due to tween stars such as Disney’s “Hannah Montana” and the commercial marketing of makeup to children as young as three. Environmentalists are concerned about exposing kids and even teens to chemicals commonly found in cosmetics.

The Environmental Working Group recently tested 20 female adolescents nationwide and discovered, on average, 16 toxins in their blood and urine after the use of certain cosmetics. “That’s really a great concern because during the teen years . . . the brain [and] reproductive systems are developing,” explains Cindy Luppi of Clean Water Action in Boston.

Two Connecticut moms may have the answer: Recently launched Good For You Girls is a line of skin care products specifically formulated for young skin—with no synthetic chemicals. “We hope to empower girls to make safe choices,” says cofounder Kim Grustas.

“Green tea has powerful antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties,” which also help slow the signs of aging, adds Skov.

“If you are looking to help firm, tighten, and tone loose or sagging skin, choose products enriched with DMAE [another antioxidant],” says Miles. “Products rich in Ester-C would also be beneficial because it helps stimulate collagen growth to maintain and improve skin tone, firmness, flexibility, and elasticity.” She also recommends peptides to smooth wrinkles and help prevent the appearance of new ones. **TFL**

SELECTED SOURCES “The 25 Best Things You Can Do for Your Skin” by Sarah Mahoney, www.webmd.com, 9/08 ■ “Kids and Makeup: A Dangerous Mix?” www.ewg.org, 11/4/08 ■ Personal communication: Catherine Blackwell, brand manager, JASON Natural; Andree Falardeau, founder, Canus; Kim Grustas, cofounder, Good For You Girls; Theresa Hellings, cofounder, The Healing Seed; Linda Miles, LAc, DOM, vice president, derma e Natural Bodycare; Jennifer Schweitzer, brand manager, Nature’s Gate; Christa Skov, brand manager, Alba Botanica; Daniel Wiser, brand manager, Avalon Organics, 11/08 ■ “Skin Deep, the Beauty of Natural Skin Care,” NPA Now, 11/08