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DERMA CARE THROUGH AYURVEDA

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Abstract

Skin is the most important organ of the body, which also effects the personality of an individual. Hence healthy skin is highly essential thing in present day scenario. Ayurveda emphasizes on proper nutritious diet, peace of mind and daily regimen and seasonal regimen for keeping the three doshas i.e. vata, pitta and kapha in the equilibrium state in turn the health as well as healthy skin. The daily regimen in the form of Shirobhyanga, Udvartana, Utsadana, Abhyanga, Nasya, Mukha, Prakshalana, Mukha lepa etc. along with balanced diet with ample amount of nutrients bring about healthy skin.

Key words: Abhyanga, Utsadana, Diet, Nasya

INTRODUCTION

Skin is one of the important presentable organ of the body. It has a definite role in one's personality. Hence skin diseases (twacha rogas) affect not only on somatic level, but also on a psychological level. Skin is the mirror of inner health. The external body is manifestation of everything that happens inside, including our emotions.

"India's cosmetics market is reportedly increasing at 15-20 percent yearly, it is twofold fast compared to that of US and European markets. Presently the retail beauty and cosmetics market in India is projected at USD 950 million and is predicted to be USD 2.68 billion by the year 2020^{9,[1]}. About 60 percent growth has been observed in cosmetics products in previous five year. Skin care cosmetics have experienced a relatively slower growth and products like wrinkle control creams, cleansers and toners are not that much popular compared to face creams, moisturizers and fairness creams in this category. Companies like Pond's and Fair & Lovely top the list in this segment. Increasing consumer preferences towards the use of natural cosmetic products is forcing the cosmetic and toiletries manufacturers to change strategies according to consumer preferences.

Ayurveda, the science of life also deals with the concept of beauty. Proper and nutritious diet, peace of mind and daily routines are the governing bodies of three doshas i.e. vata, pitta and kapha. According to Ayurveda vitiated vata and pitta get settled into skin and cause darkness and black spots. We are born with a soft skin but as we

grow, it also grows and comes in the contact with environment and exposed to seasonal changes. All that is required of us is a little maintenance to keep our skin healthy. Ayurveda has a very different approach to skin care from modern medicine. Rather than using topical agents alone like creams, lotions, and oils, Ayurveda treats and prevents the underlying skin problem at its root. Tridoshas are responsible for your skin manifestations i.e vata, pitta and kapha.

Acharya Kashyapa mentioned signs of good health related with skin "...suprasannendriyatvam cha...balavarnayusho laabhah" i. e pleasantness in sense organs, gain of strength, complexion and life. Even as per modern signs of physical health include good complexion, clear skin, lustrous hair, intact special senses, all among the first and foremost.

Avurvedic Concept of Skin

According to Ayurveda, twacha (skin) is the seat of sparshanendriya. It is a Jnanendriya (sense organ). It is expressed as a matrija-avayav (organ derived from mother's genetics). The development of skin occurs in third month of intrauterine life. The formation of skin results from heat generated in the process of union of sperm (Shukra) and ovum (shonita) and formation of other body elements (dhatus) in fetal body. There are 7 layers of skin according to Ayurveda - 1) Avabhasini 2) Lohita 3) Shweta 4) Tamra 5) Vedini 6) Rohini 7) Mamsadhara. Twacha (skin), the sense of touch is established by the skin with the help of vata. Bhrajaka pitta situated in skin gives colour to skin. Quality of skin is directly the reflection of quality of rasa and rakta dhatus i.e why Rasa-sara purush is also called as Twak-

sara. Presence of sweda (sweat) is essential for maintaining the health of skin.

Skin structure Skin does the dual work as a barrier between the outside environment and our body. Likely correlation between layers of skin and twaksharir (skin layers according to Ayurveda)-

Epidermis –1) Horny layer –Avabhasini, 2) stratum lucidum – Lohita, 3) Stratum granulosum – Shweta

Dermis-

- 4) Malphigian layer- Tamra, 5) Papillary Layer Vedini, 6) Reticular layer Rohini, Subcutaneous tissue and muscles mamsadhara (sthula)
- Skin and Pitta Skin, blood and pitta are inter-related. Many of the blood vitiation disorders are exhibited as skin disorders. Impaired pitta causes vitiation of blood tissue, leading to skin disorders. Among the 5 types of pitta, Bhrajaka pitta is responsible for skin quality and complexion, hence Bhrajaka pitta should be in the state of normalcy for lustrous healthy skin. Bhrajaka pitta is itself under the influence of Ranjaka pitta through proper functioning of liver and spleen. Pachaka pitta the mother all pitta types governs the both ranjaka and bhrajaka pitta.

Factors determining skin health

- (1) Proper moisture balance (*Kapha* in balance and Rasa dhatu excellence),
- (2) Effective metabolism that coordinate all the various chemical and hormonal reactions of the body (*Pitta* in balance) and
- (3) Efficient flow of nutrients to the different layers of the skin (*Vata* in balance).

Causes of Poor skin health or Skin disease

There are many functions of the body that, if not working properly, can contribute to poor skin. These may include

- Improper elimination of toxins or metabolic wastes via the digestive tract and/or the liver
- Reduced immunity and inflammation
- Physical and mental stress
- · Sluggish circulation and lymphatic flow
- Unhealthy dietary habits
- •Improper personal hygiene or excessive hygiene
- Hormonal fluctuations (e.g. skin conditions that worsen pre-menstrually)
- Nutritional deficiencies

***** Factors affecting healthy skin:

A balanced diet is the most essential factor for a healthy glowing skin. A flawless skin has aesthetic properties. Our skin is confronted daily with multiple challenges like

Dryness of skin- The extracellular water content declines as cells migrate towards outer skin. [4],[5]
 TEWL (Trans-epidermal water loss) is used to determine skin dysfunction. Hence (NMF) natural moisturizing factor is needed to retain moisture

- content ³Dry skin may be caused after prolonged washing with detergents, lack of fatty acids etc. ^[6]
- Contact to UV light -Excess exposure to U.V. light causes permanent damage also called as photo damage of skin cell. [7],[8],[9] Acute photo-damage is called as sunburn which produces erythema ,skin laxity, wrinkling, impaired wound healing. [10,11]
- Wrinkles -Accentuated by loss of blood vessels in dermis.^[12] Photo-damage increases wrinkles.^[13]
 Role of nutritional factors in wrinkling of skin are not transparent.^[14]
- Wound healing After injury, macrophages and neutrophils are necessary to remodel tissue at wound skin.^[15] Re-epithelialization process occurs and restores the skin. Wound repair is never perfect and hence tensile strength of healed injury is less than uninjured skin.
- Skin ageing Intrinsic ageing is difficult to distinguish from other effects. Ridges on the interface between two layers are diminished, hence preventing dermis from providing adequate mechanical support to the dermis. [16] Aged skin keratinocytes are relatively slow to differentiate and shed. So the stratum corneum maintenance is transformed, leading to dull skin appearance and reduced protective ability of skin.

Second Second S

During Adanakala As season proceeds, due to intense sunrays and sharp wind velocity, skin absorbs the moisture and makes the skin surface dry. And superficial salt accumulation over skin surface makes complexion dark. So to prevent these, use sunscreen creams, cover the skin properly in sharp winds and take baths and regular facewash.^[17]

During Visargakala As season proceeds, due to coldness of environment, blood vessels underneath the skin gets constricted. So skin complexion becomes quite dull and rough so to prevent this, application of light, hot oil massage helps to keep the skin in normal condition. [18]

Various methods prescribed in Ayurveda for good skin:

- 1) Shirobhyanga (head massage) "...indriyani praseedanti sutvagabhawati chananam....." (C. Su 5/83)^[19] i.e it gives pleasantness to sense organs and good quality skin....
- 2) Udvartana "....twakprasadankaram param..." (A.H. 2/15)^[20] i.e it gives exellent, clear and good complexion to the skin.
- 3) Utsadana (massage with the paste of herbs) "...utsadanaat bhavet strinaam visheshaat kantimadvapuh....." (Su.Chi.24/53)^[21] i.e it increases glow and charm, improves complexion especially in females.
- **4) Anulepana (Anointments) "...**saubhagyadam varnakaram pretyojobalvardhnam. Sweddaurgandhya vaivarnya shramghnamanulepanam..." (Su.Chi.24/63)^[22]

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i.e Application of anointment gives luck, complexion and beautiful look. It enhances ojas and strength and removes sweat, bad smell, discolouration and tiredness hence in Indian tradition there is a culture of Haridra lepan on the body of the bride several days before marriage.

5) Abhyanga- The body of one who uses oil massage regularly does not become affected much, even if subjected to accidental injuries or vigorous exercise and excessive work. Regular oil massage benefits a person and he is endowed with soft skin, well-formed body parts, strength, charm and least affected by old age (Ch. Su 5/88-89)^[23]. Abhyanga should be resorted to daily. It wards off old age, exertion and aggravation of vata (A.H 2/ 8-9)^[24]. Abhyanga is the anointing of the body with oil. The medicated oils are used for entire body massage of Sarvanga Abhyanga before bathing. It is highly beneficial for maintenance of health and can also be used therapeutically in many disorders. Abhyanga can be incorporated into a routine appropriate for almost everyone. The Sanskrit word sneha means unctuous substance like "oil/ghee/fat" and "love," The effects of abhyanga are similar to that. Both these give feeling of firmness, warmness and comfort. Sneha or oil is sukshma or "subtle." Due to the Anupranava bhava, oil can pass through minute channels in the body and penetrate deep layers of tissue. As per Ayurveda there are seven dhatus, or sheets of tissue in the body. Each is successively more dense and important for life. The sneha can reach to the deepest layer through body massage for 800 matras, approximately five minutes. If we consider that the entire body needs this kind of attention, a 15-minute massage is the suggested minimum amount of time.

Benefits of applying oil to the body (abhyanga): Imparts softness, strength and complexion to the body, decreases the effects of aging, bestows good vision, nourishes the body, induces roper sleep, benefits skin, strengthens the body's tolerance, imparts firmness to the limbs, tone and vigor to the dhatus (tissues) of the body, stimulates the internal organs of the body, enhances circulation, reduces vata and pitta.

Herbal oils specific to your constitution or current condition are especially good choices for full body massage. Specific oil recommendations for each dosha are -

Types of Oil That Are Best for Vata

Sesame Oil is considered to be the "**king of oils**;" it is the preferred choice of oil for vata because it is inherently warming.

Almond Oil is also a good choice because it is warming. Vatahara oil, for massage especially if there is vata vriddhi. The herbs in this oil enhance the vata pacifying qualities of sesame oil.

Ashwagandha/Bala Oils For increasing strength and stamina may be the best.

Mahanarayan Oil

Types of Oil that are ideal for Pitta

Pitta pacifying herbal oils, such as Pitta Massage Oil, are best for Abhyanga.

Massage with **Bhringaraj Oil** or **Brahmi Oil** to the scalp and soles of feet at sleep time alleviates pitta and brings about sound sleep.

Sesame Oil or **Coconut Oil** for abhyanga in condition of excessive exposure to sun, even Neem oil can be added in abhyanga oil, it is said to reduce pitta in the skin.

Types of Oil That Are Best for Kapha

The main qualities of kapha are oily, cool, heavy, slow, smooth, soft and static. Kapha and oil share most qualities. Because similar qualities enhance a particular thing. The usage of oil, particularly cold oil, results in increase kapha instead of reducing it. But, the oil prepared with herbs having Kaphahara property can reduce kapha.

Further the best way to reduce kapha is udvartana, i.e. massage of the body with soft, fragrant powders, like Organic Calamus Powder or Triphala or Kolakulatthadi churna.

Acharya Vagbhatta says udvartana "alleviates kapha, reduces fat, and brings about sturdiness and excellence of the skin" (A.H.Su 2/15). [25]

Acharya Sushruta writes that udvartana, "reduces Vata, Kapha and fat, brings about smoothness and cleanses the skin and firmness to the limbs" (Su. Chi 24/51)^[26].

Abhyanga with warm oil is best for kapha. While Sesame Oil, olive oil, Neem oil, Almond Oil are all warming, medicated oils like brihat barichadi taila, are good choice for kapha. Further usage chickpea flour, organic Calamus Powder (vacha), Triphala powder should be advocated after Abhyanga for the purpose of cleansing. The warm oil should be used for abhyanga. Oil applied to the head should also slightly warm. Acharya Sushruta also says, "Anointment with oils brings about softness and lusture in the skin, prevents the aggravation of vata and kapha, enhances the complexion, and strength and provides nourishment to the root-principles (dhatus) [tissues] of the body" (Su.Chi 24/30).^[27]

Oil massage for beautiful skin

Kumkumadi taila – used for face massage. It enhances skin texture, complexion and also relieves skin problems like acne, scars etc.

Eladi oil enhances complexion and brings about smoothness of skin, hence used therapeutically in skin conditions such as allergic dermatitis, ring worm infection, urticaria.

Nalpamaradi Oil- A baby and face massage oil, used in the treatment of skin diseases, Herpes, Eczema, Dermatitis, allergic skin diseases such as ring worm infestation.

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Ayurveda refers another set of medicaments – **Blood** purifiers – Rakta Prasadaka herbs. Rakta means blood and Prasadakara means purifier. Blood detoxifiers (Rakta Shodhaka) Blood soothers Prasadaka) and complexion enhancers (Kanti Vardhaka) inter-relation: Among types of Pitta, Bhrajaka Pitta controls skin quality and complexion. Ayurveda emphasizes the utility of various complexion (Kanti enhancers Vardhaka). Kanti luster/complexion and Vardhaka means enhancer / promoter. Complexion enhancers are directly linked with the effects of blood cleansers or blood purifiers. The administration of blood cleansers (Rakta Shodhaka) or blood soothers (Rakta Prasadaka) herbs is advocated before usage of Kantivardhaka drugs. Blood purifier herbs are generally bitter (Tikta) or astringent (Kashaya) in taste, light Laghu), cold (shita), soft (Mridu) and slow (Manda) in property. The drugs with opposite qualities are blood vitiators, they have spicy, penetrating, corrosive, irritant, oily property and pungent, sour, and salt taste.

Complexion promoting- Rakta chandan (ptrerocarpus santalinus), Manjistha (rubia cordifolia), Lodhra (symplocos racemosa), kustha (saussurrea lappa), priyangu (callicarpa macrophyllus) and Masura (Lens Culinaris) have complexion promoting properties. Such drugs are always mild and cooling in nature with bitter and astringent tastes. Even then there are always exceptions for this rule.

Single drugs for healthy skin

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), Tree turmeric (Daru Haridra – *Berberis aristata*), Indian Sarsaparilla (Sariva – *Hemidesmus indicus*), Saffron (Kumkuma- Crocus sativus), Sandalwood (*Chandana -Santalum album*), Red sandalwood (Raktachandana Pteriospermum suaviolence), Aloe vera (Kumari), Cardamom (Ela-Elatteria cardamomum), Manjista (*Rubia cardifolia*), Indian liquorice (Yashtimadhu-*Glyccirrhiza glabra*), Lodhra-*Symplocos racemosa*

Herbs for Dosha specific Skin Health:

For Vata type of skin – Ashwagandha, Erand, Saunf, Bala etc.

For Pitta type of Skin – Amla, Madhuyasthi, Chandan, Guduchi etc.

For Kapha type of skin- Marich, Haridra, Lavang, Dalchini etc.

Herbs for Hair Care – Gudhal (Hibiscus rosa sinensis), Brahmi (Centella asiatica), Bhringraja (Eclipta alba), Kapur kachri (Hedichium spicatium)

Nutrients for Healthy Skin

There are specific nutrients involved in keeping skin healthy, and addressing nutritional deficiencies is a good place to starting any skin condition. **Essential fatty acids** present in **fish oil** play a pivotal role in improving skin health. They help to maintain healthy cellular function,

elasticity and suppleness in the skin. Essential fatty acids decrease inflammation. Skin problems can be produced due to deficiency of essential fatty acids, hence EFA particularly **omega-3 fatty acids** should be consumed as per requirement. Intake of **high quality fish oil** is good for skin health, it enhances skin hydration, elasticity and reduces inflammation. Thus brings about improvement in texture and tone and make it look remarkably healthier.

Zinc is an important mineral for skin health, which repairs damaged tissues and helps in wound healing. Zinc deficiency, reduces the ability to repair damaged skin. Zinc deficiency can also lead to impaired immune system along with impairment in maintenance of skin.

Lifestyle is Part of the Remedy

The lifestyle in the form of diet, exercise & Yoga should be adapted for healthy skin are changes you can make in your daily diet and lifestyle to help you on your way to better skin:

Diet: A healthy, well-balanced diet is essential for skin health.

- Nourishment

 Eat plenty of sweet, juicy fruits and multiple grains in your diet (millet, barley, amaranth, rye, wheat) to provide a variety of minerals.
- Variety of cooked vegetables with spices should be taken daily. Vegetables like Spinach, Carrot, Tomato, and Cabbage also provide required minerals, vitamins and proteins to your skin. Green leafy vegetables are rich in fiber and minerals like iron that help in nourishment of blood and skin tissues.
- Take light, easily digestible proteins such as milk, paneer, cheese, as well as mung dal. Turmeric is the greatest friend of skin because it is purifying and is a potent antioxidant. Intake of Cow's milk daily with natural sweeteners like honey, devoid of sugar is good for skin health. Further abstaining from intoxicants like coffee, tea and other such beverages is advocated.
- Cumin and Fenugreek purify the blood and fat tissue and black pepper cleanse sweat (the waste product of fat), hence they are related to the health and appearance of the skin.
- ✓ Rehydration For maintaining moisture and elasticity of skin internal rehydration is must. Drinking water, eating sweet, juicing fruits and including high quality fats such as ghee or olive oil in your diet. For external rehydration daily massage with skin massage oil enhances absorption and increases glow and lustre.
- ✓ **Detoxification** Cleaning your colon is prime requisite of detoxification to avoid constipation take daily walks, eat more fibrous foods, and drink plenty of water.

Exercise: Exercise helps increase blood flow to the skin, and encourages the removal of toxins through sweat, so make daily exercise should be a part of skin health program.

Stress management: Stress result in inflammatory response of the body and influence digestive and immune functions adversely, together these lead to poor skin health. Stress on your mind is immediately reflected on the face. Stressed peoples have trouble sleeping and lack of sleep causes stress, so it is important to take care of both factors at the same time.

Sleep well, do **meditation** and easy breathing exercises.

Brush skin: Dry skin brushing prior to morning shower is a simple technique to stimulate lympathic circulation, helping the body to clear the build-up of toxins that can aggravate skin conditions.

Use of pH-controlled soaps: Humans are covered in a diverse wardrobe of skin microbes, many of which promote skin health. Frequent washing or use of strong alkalising soaps can take away some beneficial microbes from the surface of the skin, leading to infection by the pathogenic organisms.

Supplements: a personalized supplement regimen to boost your health status and address the causes of skin ailment.

***** Local applications:

Honey has been used topically in healing of wounds burns, decubitus ulcers. It also has antifungal and antibacterial property.

Curcumin the active compound of turmeric is a polyphenol, having anti-inflammatory activity.

Extract of *Azadirachta indica*, Meliaceae family is useful as antifungal, anti-flammatory.

Kustha (Saussurea lappa) are made into paste and applied externally to remove pimples, black spot and patches on the face.

Bark or milky sap of **Bala** (Sida cordifolia), **Atibala** (Abutilon indicum), **Madhuka** (Glycyrrhiza glabra) can be applied when patches on face.

In dark patches on face **Bhangapatra** (cannabis sativa), **Masur** (Lens culinaris) shows good results in dark patches.

❖ Ayurvedic medicines to enhance the complexion Haridrakhanda rasayana- It is commonly used in the treatment of allergic skin diseases, itching skin. Regular consumption of this, for long term (2 − 4 months) makes the skin as lustrous as gold as per the classical description.

Drakshasavam that is indicated in piles, fistula, indigestion, bleeding diseases, intestinal worms, injury, wounds.

Tikta Ghrita - In the realm of herbal medicine for the skin, there is not much greater than Tikta Ghrita (Bitter Ghee). This medicated ghee is beneficial in liver problems, blood and Gastro-intestinal tract ailments, inflammation, hormonal problems, improving the complexion and healing the skin. This formula can also be applied externally for even greater results.

Triphala Churna- Triphala is quite the herbal panacea in the world of Ayurveda. It is rich in antioxidants and Vitamin C. It is a good detoxifier, mild laxative, blood cleanser and is good for liver. Triphala is a great addition to any skin healing herbal regimen. In addition to taking Triphala internally, one can also make a facial scrub from this powder and apply it to the face to help clear the complexion and increase the radiance of the skin.

Mukta Bhasma- Calx prepared from pearl. Excellent to balance Pitta dosha. It increases skin complexion, eye power, digestion power and nourishment.

Nalikerasavam- It enhances skin quality, complexion and attractiveness. It is also used to enhance longevity and bring about rejuvenation.

Shankha Bhasma - Calx prepared from Conch shell. It is coolant, improves skin quality and complexion.

Saraswatarishta- It is a liquid preparation made of selfgenerated alcohol indicated for skin health, memory and immunity.

Gandhaka Rasayana-used in the treatment of skin diseases, itching, chronic fever, urinary tract disorders.

Praval Bhasma- Calx prepared from coral, also used in Ayurvedic treatment of cough, asthma, bleeding disorders etc.

Simple home remedies for a healthy glowing skin:

Avoid chemical treatments, fairness creams etc. as they only give a temporary look but will not last longer and may also damage your skin and cause early wrinkles.

- **1. Face back:** About 20 gms of Aloe vera pulp is blended with half a teaspoon (3 grams) turmeric powder and heated for a minute and this is applied externally. Left for 20 minutes, washed off with water.
- **2.** The paste prepared by rubbing **Nutmeg** and **root of Sariva** with the fresh juice of Aloe vera is applied to the face daily. This is beneficial in black and white heads.

Natural methods / tips for making skin glow and improving facial skin complexion

 The almonds soaked in water overnight should be grinded after removing their skin. A teaspoon of gram floor, one teaspoon of milk and 4 drops of lime juice are added mixed well and applied on the face

- followed by gentle massage, provides long lasting clear and fair skin.
- 2. Take 1 tablespoon of milk powder is taken and mixed with one tablespoon of honey. Further one tablespoon of lemon juice and half tablespoon of almond oil are added and blended well to make it into a fine paste and applied on the face and neck daily and washed after an hour.
- Turmeric is good ingredient for skin. Make a facepack with mixture of turmeric and milk. Apply this and wash off after an hour with cold water for glowing skin.
- Lemon juice and glycerin work nicely for dry skin whereas fuller's earth and turmeric are used for oily skin.
- 5. Take one tomato, grate it well and mix it with 3-4 drops of lime juice. Apply it on your face wait for 15 minutes and then rinse it off.
- 6. A mixture of egg white, milk cream and honey works excellent against skin tanning.
- 7. Mix tomato juice with honey or yogurt and apply it daily on skin to remove tanning.
- 8. Prepare a fine paste of ripe papaya, oatmeal powder, milk cream and honey. Cover your face with this paste for 15 minutes. Wash it off with water.
- 9. Apply buttermilk to skin, keep for 10 minutes and then wash off thoroughly for softening, cleansing and radiating effect.
- Sandalwood paste acts as a sunscreen and protects the skin from harmful UV rays of the sun.It also enhances fairness and is considered as anti-aging ingredient.
- 11. The application of mixture of carrot juice and pineapple juice to the skin twice a week helps to remove skin marks and also enhances the skin glow.
- 12. Making a face pack with red sandalwood powder and coconut milk is the best recipe for glowing skin.
- 13. Hemp (cannabis sativa) is useful as an antiinflammatory agent as it helps in improving sundamaged skin and prevents ageing of skin. It has a good effect on dry and rough skin.
 - Above mentioned tips, accompanied with regular exercise (yoga, gymnastic, aerobics etc.), avoiding makeup for longer hours and using a scrub to clean makeup and dirt after returning home are some of the precautions to be taken for effective and long lasting naturally glowing skin.

CONCLUSION

The healthy skin is not only enhances beauty but also an external indicator of an individual's internal physical and emotional health. The skin problems like acne, eczema, psoriasis, rash, itchiness, extreme dryness or dullness, complexion indicates an imbalance in the diet and/or lifestyle that may be a causative factor. Skin is the dressing organ of the body. Hence skin diseases not only involve somatic level but also affect psychology of an individual. Hence to get a proper idea of skin disease, one must know the normal echo texture. Ayurvedic herbs and herbal drugs play a key role in curing various skin

ailments. Large number of herbs are components in cosmetic products. Further pure natural products without any synthetic chemical used in the form of face packs are highly beneficial. They are devoid of side effects and equally effective in comparison to chemical formulations. The use of bioactive ingredients in cosmetics influence biological functions of skin and provides nutrients necessary for the healthy skin.

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