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REPORT

Nutrient-Rich Skin Care

Advanced Facial Masks Reverse Photoaging, Fight Blemishes, and Rejuvenate Skin

By Gary Goldfaden, MD



One of the most effective and pleasurable ways to maintain the health of your skin is through the use of skin masks targeted for specific benefits. There are a variety of nutrient-rich masks for home use that will help nourish and restore the skin's healthy appearance. Following are some of the most advanced ingredients in today's scientifically-based home facial masks.

ANCIENT TRADITIONS, MODERN ADVANCES

The science of natural skin care dates back as far as the 4th millennium BC. The ancient Egyptians were the first to develop natural skin care treatments based on a variety of general skin conditions. In the writings of the first century Roman historian Pliny the Elder, we even find a reference to an actual beauty regimen once used by Cleopatra herself. This recorded royal treatment began with a mask of black asphalt mud from the banks of the Dead Sea, followed by an invigorating scrub of

Dead Sea salt (still used in skin care products today), and finished with a scented massage of fragrant oil to hide the pungent smell of the pitch and mineral salts.

Like long ago, the science of natural skin care today still involves using botanically-sourced ingredients (such as herbs, roots, essential oils, and flowers), combining them with naturally occurring carrier agents and manufacturing them in a way that preserves the integrity of the ingredients. Unlike our ancient predecessors, who relied heavily on guesswork and mystical incantation, we now have the benefit of scientific technology that is able to verify the efficacy of new plant nutrients and assess the value of their therapeutic properties. Modern extraction techniques also provide raw materials that are extremely concentrated and free of impurities, for vastly improved results over a shorter period of time. These advancements in natural science and technology have enabled the creation of powerful, targeted formulas that specifically address certain skin conditions.

ANTI-AGING MASK: RESTORING A YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE

Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun, environmental toxins, stress, and other factors readily generates free radicals that can age your skin. The damage caused by these free radicals results in your collagen protein molecules breaking down and then linking back up again in a different way. This process, known as cross-linking, causes the normally mobile collagen fibers beneath your skin to become stiff and less yielding, resulting in the appearance of lines and wrinkles. Over time, free radical assault can also do damage to the sensitive lipid bilayers of your skin cell membranes, allowing them to lose water and become dry and dehydrated. Skin trauma caused by other oxidative agents also releases pro-inflammatory messengers like nuclear factor-kappa B that can destroy your skin's elasticity and thickness.



Since ancient times and now in today's most advanced medical spas, therapeutic masks applied to the face are used to correct many of the factors of aging. To help restore your skin's youthful elasticity, tone, and texture, a new Anti-Aging Mask has been developed that features a unique combination of scientifically proven ingredients that not only reduce fine lines and wrinkles, but hydrate, moisturize, and protect your skin from age-accelerating free radicals.

HYALURONIC ACID

One of the rejuvenating ingredients in the Anti-Aging Mask is hyaluronic acid. This large, sugar-like molecule is found in every tissue of your body. It plays a particularly significant role in your skin's extracellular matrix, the vital jelly-like mixture which transports essential nutrients from your bloodstream, via the capillary network, to the living cells of your skin. The ability of hyaluronic acid

to attract and retain 1000 times its own weight in water is unmatched by any other substance in nature. This makes hyaluronic acid absolutely crucial for maintaining your skin's moisture and softness. Hyaluronic acid's volumizing effect on the gel-like

matrix surrounding the network of collagen fibers below your skin adds vital fullness that minimizes facial wrinkles. Although hyaluronic acid is found in great abundance in young skin, the damage caused by free radicals over time drastically depletes your hyaluronic acid reserves. Therefore, the addition of hyaluronic acid to this anti-aging formula is vital to increased cell renewal and rejuvenation, and can help restore healthy texture, color, and moisture to your aging skin.¹⁻⁷

MATRIXYL™

Another ingredient in the Anti-Aging Mask that helps amplify the wrinkle-reducing, “plumping” action of hyaluronic acid is Matrixyl™.⁹ This synthetic amino-peptide complex effectively stimulates collagen synthesis by interacting with receptors that turn on genes responsible for cell proliferation and renewal. This patented pentapeptide significantly enhances the production of collagen and elastin within your extracellular matrix. This increased production complements the volumizing action of hyaluronic acid, thereby resulting in visibly reduced wrinkle depth, density, and number. Studies show that this patented ingredient is as effective as the vitamin A derivative retinol in reducing the signs of photoaging, yet it does not cause the skin irritation associated with retinol.

ARGIRELINE

The argireline or (acetyl hexapeptide-3) in the Anti-Aging Mask is a relatively new, topical anti-wrinkle ingredient that reduces pre-existing wrinkle depth through a novel mechanism. This active peptide works by significantly down-regulating muscle contraction, interfering with the neurotransmitters that make your muscles contract, thereby preventing the formation of unwanted lines and wrinkles.¹⁰⁻¹² This safe, inexpensive, and natural alternative to Botox® injections is especially beneficial for visibly reducing wrinkle depth around your eyes and forehead.

JOJOBA OIL

To effectively lubricate dry skin, the new Anti-Aging Mask includes the outstanding moisturizing benefits of natural jojoba oil. Produced by the seeds of the jojoba plant, a shrub native to Arizona, California, and Mexico, jojoba oil's unique chemical composition is very similar to human sebum—the oily substance secreted by the sebaceous glands of your skin that protects, moisturizes, soothes, and gives your skin its healthy glow by restoring its natural pH balance. An excellent emollient, jojoba oil is widely known for its ability to penetrate deeply and undergo quick absorption to soften dry, rough, and wrinkled skin.¹³

CONCENTRATED ANTIOXIDANT TEA BLEND

NUTRIENT-RICH SKIN CARE: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Since ancient times, men and women have used topical natural agents to beautify and improve the health of their skin.
- The advanced benefits of modern natural skin care agents are now available for convenient use at home. One of the best ways to capture the benefits of novel skin care ingredients is through nutrient-rich facial masks.
- For those seeking to offset the signs of aging, ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, Matrixyl™, argireline, jojoba oil, and red tea help reduce photoaging and fine lines.
- Individuals with dull, lifeless skin can refresh their complexions using deep-cleansing agents such as zinc oxide, chamomile, aloe vera, cucumber, and grapefruit.
- Those with sensitive, irritated skin can soothe and heal their skin using arnica, squalene, seaweed, and copper peptide.
- To prevent and fight acne breakouts, utilize facial masks with zinc oxide, sulfur, and red tea.



Finally, the concentrated antioxidant tea blend in this potent anti-aging formula contains red tea extract that is up to 50 times more effective at quenching age-accelerating free radicals than green tea, due to its high concentrations of superoxide dismutase (SOD).¹⁴⁻¹⁷ In addition, red tea also contains significant amounts of alpha-hydroxy acids, which not only act as natural exfoliants

to remove dead skin cells, but are also healthy stimulators of collagen production and cell growth.¹⁸⁻²¹ Several other natural antioxidants derived from red tea, such as vitamin C, vitamin E, and flavonoids, help your skin repair, renew, and revitalize itself after the removal of dead skin cells.²²⁻³¹ Continued use of red tea lessens the appearance of many types of skin imperfections—including fine lines and wrinkles—to give you radiant, healthier, younger-looking skin.

Peel Off Cleansing Mask: Purifying and Beautifying Benefits

Even regular and careful washing with soap and water cannot remove all the makeup, dead skin cells, and other cellular debris from the surface of your skin. Over time, these accumulate, causing your skin to look dull and lifeless. In conjunction with this, sebum can collect and harden in your pores. Further, toxins from the blood and lymph fluid are expelled through your skin, where they can combine with your sebum into a pasty glue that congests your skin and blocks your pores. When the exposed tip of this plug becomes oxidized and black, the result is a blackhead (also known as a comedone). Individuals with oily and combination skin types are particularly susceptible to these problems.

Ideal for people with oily or combination type skin, the new Peel Off Cleansing Mask is specifically designed to carefully lift away dull, dead cells from the surface of your skin and clarify your complexion by drawing out imbedded impurities from beneath the top layers of the epidermis. This exfoliating action allows the special herbal extracts in this rejuvenating formula to penetrate deeply into your unclogged pores to increase skin clarity and moisture. By stimulating blood circulation, this invigorating mask gives your skin a soft, healthy glow and leaves it feeling noticeably softer and smoother. Not only does this mask dramatically improve your skin's appearance, but it also helps maximize the benefits of other skin care products you may also use for toning, hydrating, or protecting your skin.

ZINC OXIDE

Zinc, an essential trace mineral found in virtually every cell of your body, is highly therapeutic because it supports your immune system and provides important antioxidant protection against damaging free radicals. Not only does zinc possess an inhibitory effect on the cells involved in inflammatory activity, it also has the ability to decrease the impact of topical toxins and other irritants on your skin.³²⁻³⁴

One of the major constituents of the Peel Off Cleansing Mask is a zinc oxide compound that is suspended within a polyvinyl alcohol base. As the alcohol base evaporates on your skin, a rubbery paste is formed. As the mask congeals, it imprisons dead skin cells and other debris lying on the surface of your face, while drawing out impurities trapped within your pores. Also combined in this gel-like suspension are a number of other therapeutic ingredients that effectively nourish and renew your skin.

CHAMOMILE

The healing and soothing properties of the Peel Off Cleansing Mask come from chamomile, an herbal ingredient that has been prized for thousands of years for its healing and anti-inflammatory properties. Ancient Egyptian noblewomen used a preparation containing the crushed petals of this sweet-smelling medicinal herb to soften and refresh their skin.³⁵

The flowers of chamomile contain a flavonoid called apigenin that prevents the production of proteins which allow malignant cells to anchor to new sites, and also counters the inflammatory reactions necessary for new growths to gain blood supplies.³⁶⁻³⁸ Complementing the action of this highly bioactive compound are other constituents such as bisabolol and chamazulene which also contribute to chamomile's potent anti-inflammatory capacity. The pronounced healing virtue of chamomile is due mainly to the highly antiseptic qualities of its phenolic derivatives that effectively neutralize certain germs and prevent infection while they relieve pore congestion and soften your skin.



Chamomile contains more than 100 active components, including essential oils, beta-carotene, tannic acid, coumarin, luteolin, thymol, boron, calcium, choline, essential fatty acids, folate, inositol, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, selenium, sulfur, zinc, B-vitamins, and vitamins A, C, E, and K. The healing, calming and soothing effect of the chamomile in this scientifically advanced formula will refresh and dramatically improve the health of your skin.

ALOE VERA

The Peel Off Cleansing Mask also contains aloe vera, an ingredient highly regarded for its moisturizing and healing benefits. Used medicinally for at least 4000 years, aloe vera's first known mention occurs in a Sumerian clay tablet written in approximately 2200 BC, where it is listed as one of the "plants of great healing power." In fact, the amazing therapeutic properties of this succulent plant have been held in universal esteem by cultures such as the ancient Greeks and the Native Americans, who referred to it simply as "the wand of heaven."

Aloe vera is known to contain a diverse mixture of more than 70 active ingredients, including essential oils, amino acids, minerals, vitamins, enzymes, and glycoproteins that offer valuable antibiotic, astringent, pain-reducing, growth-supporting, and scar-inhibiting properties.³⁹⁻⁴²

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CUCUMBER

Possessing the same natural pH as human skin, the cucumber extract in this Peel Off Cleansing Mask helps restore your skin's protective acidic mantle. Composed of 90% water (which accounts for its outstanding hydrating and cooling action), cucumber extract also contains ascorbic acid (vitamin C) and caffeic acid, two antioxidants that help soothe and calm skin irritation while reducing swelling.

Also contained in cucumber are a variety of other highly beneficial minerals such as silica, potassium, and magnesium. Silica is an essential component of healthy connective tissue and aids in the tightening of collagen to help reduce facial lines and wrinkles and improve your complexion.^{43,44} Cucumber's hydrating, nourishing, and astringent properties contribute greatly to the overall health-promoting effects of this purifying and cleansing formula for healthier, younger-looking skin.

GRAPEFRUIT

Citrus oils, such as the grapefruit extract found in this formula, have a high content of vitamin C and bioflavonoids. These powerful antioxidants neutralize the highly unstable and extremely reactive molecules that attack your cells and contribute to skin aging. In addition, studies have also shown that vitamin C helps build collagen in your skin, reducing wrinkles and enhancing your skin's natural strength and elasticity. Grapefruit is also high in limonene, another potent antioxidant that inhibits inflammatory activity to help your skin achieve a youthful, healthy glow.⁴⁵



Grapefruit

Healing Mask: Supporting Skin Recuperation

Following aggressive cosmetic procedures such as chemical peels, laser treatments, or microdermabrasion, the gel-based Healing Mask formula can provide fast, effective relief for irritated skin. This soothing, healing formulation is also ideal for extremely sensitive or allergic skin. The regenerative, rebalancing, and protective qualities of the Healing Mask come from its unique blend of natural ingredients that calm, soothe, and reduce redness while hydrating and moisturizing your skin.

ARNICA

One notable ingredient with potent healing powers included in the Healing Mask is arnica, which contains active components called sesquiterpene lactones, known for their ability to reduce inflammation and decrease pain.^{46,47} Other active principals found in arnica are thymol (an essential oil), flavonoids, carotenoids, and tannins.

The arnica in this preparation works by improving blood circulation to promote the healing of injured tissue. Arnica's ability to speed wound recuperation and reduce pain, as well as its anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory qualities, make it a valuable part of this healing formula.

SQUALENE

Obtained from natural olive oil, the squalene in the Healing Mask has a very similar chemical structure to vitamin A. The value of squalene stems directly from the fact that it is the principal hydrocarbon found in your sebum, where it amounts to approximately 12% of the total fat content.

A natural emollient that imparts suppleness to your skin without an unpleasant greasy feel, squalene readily forms emulsions with fixed oils and fat-soluble substances, yet it does not oxidize or turn rancid. Squalene is quickly absorbed into your skin, penetrating deeply to assist in the acceleration of new cell growth. It also helps to discourage the growth of microorganisms that can block normal healthy cell development by forming a protective anti-bacterial and fungicidal coating on your skin.



Squalene also has a stimulatory effect on the healing process. Not only does squalene boost your body's natural ability to regenerate, nourish, and hydrate the skin tissue, but it is also uniquely valuable for its ability to increase the rate, depth, and penetration of other topical healing agents.⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰

SEAWEED EXTRACT

The seaweed extract found in the Healing Mask is stimulating, revitalizing, and nourishing to your skin due to its content of iodine and sulfur, which also give it soothing, anti-inflammatory, and disinfectant abilities.⁵¹

COPPER PEPTIDE COMPLEX

Copper's ability to help stimulate collagen formation makes it an effective agent in the skin rejuvenation process. The copper peptide complex that is part of the Healing Mask aids healing by supporting the enzymatic function of superoxide dismutase.⁵²⁻⁵⁴

Corrective Clearing Mask: Balancing Acne-Prone Skin

For individuals who suffer from oily, congested, acne-prone, or blemished skin, a facial remedy is now available. The Corrective Clearing Mask features a combination of ingredients to purify your skin; remove excess oil; exfoliate and cleanse the pores; clear up blackheads; and even help prevent further breakouts. A perfect "spot treatment" for breakouts, this outstanding product contains anti-inflammatory ingredients that soothe and calm your skin, helping return it to a normal, healthy homeostasis.



ZINC OXIDE

The zinc oxide that forms the basis of this acne treatment helps heal blemishes by reducing sebum production, eliminating toxins, accelerating healing, and relieving inflammation.³²⁻³⁴

SULFUR

When applied topically to your skin, the sulfur ingredient contained in the Corrective Clearing Mask interacts with the cysteine present in the outermost layer of your epidermis to form hydrogen sulfide. This hydrogen sulfide effectively breaks down the tough, keratin-containing dead skin cells that comprise this outer layer and gently removes them. In addition to this exfoliating action, sulfur also has an inhibitory effect on the growth of bacteria involved in acne, possibly from its ability to inactivate bacterial enzyme systems. Sulfur is an excellent anti-inflammatory that also effectively down-regulates the production of histamines by macrophage cells that cause infected skin to become red, swollen, and painful.⁵⁵

ANTIOXIDANT TEA BLEND

Combined with these potent ingredients is the concentrated antioxidant tea blend, which helps reduce the production of inflammatory agents that promote new acne infections.⁵⁶

CONCLUSION

Nutrient-rich facial masks offer advanced solutions for today's most common skin problems. Using time-honored botanical extracts combined with cutting-edge nutritional agents, you can achieve a radiant, youthful complexion.

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