**Tips on Skin Care**

Kimberley B.C. Goh, M.D.

Skin is the largest organ in the body. We take it for granted until it starts to age or has health issues of its own. Then we try to backtrack and reverse some of the damage our habits have caused. What can we do to slow skin aging down and take better care of our skin right now and make up for skin care neglect?

**Sun block:** Use complete coverage, one that covers UVA as well as UVB. Those that have Zinc and Titanium are some of the best. There are now clear zinc products so you do not look like the old white the lifeguards used to use on their noses. You need to apply it 30 minutes before exposure and reapply during the day. You can also buy clothing with UV protection, even when it is wet. A wet tee shirt may only have an SPF of 4. They also have face masks now that are also UV protection to use on the water and in sports.

**Quit smoking:** On several levels, smoking damages the skin. It interferes with the thin layer of fat needed to make the skin healthy and flexible, it damages the elastic fibers and increases skin cancer risks.

**Remove makeup completely:** The chemicals and pigments in makeup can damage the skin, it needs to breathe and be clean, make sure to remove the makeup at night before you sleep.

**Avoid soap** on face, use cleansers, and rinse completely.

**Rinse face with cold or cool water** after cleansing, it will help close pores and prevent them from being blocked.

**Use a toner** if you have oily skin or prone to acne. It will get more of the makeup and oils off of your skin.

**Moisturize:** Use a moisturizer to keep the skin from drying, and preserve elasticity. If you use a moisturizer with a sun block, it will save a step.

**Pat do not rub dry:** Rubbing the skin stretches it, breaks elastic fibers within the skin and can lead to increase in wrinkles.

**Use a satin or silk pillowcase** to avoid increasing wrinkles. Sleeping on your side or face, the skin is pulled during the night from friction over the cloth and stretches. Using a satin or silk pillowcase allows the skin to slide over the fabric easier.

If the damage is done, or you want to slow aging down, what can be done to restore some of the skin’s vitality?

**Vitamin C serum:** (Vitamin C in a serum that is produced to be absorbed directly by the skin.) Vitamin C is used several times by the skin cells in the making of collagen. This helps increase the production of collagen if there is an issue.

**Retinoid:** These are Vitamin A derivatives. Retin A is one of the best, and can be used in several concentrations. It is a prescription drug at its best concentrations, and you have to see a physician to get a prescription. However it makes you a little more vulnerable to UV damage, so if you are not going to use sun block carefully, it is not a good choice.

**Exfoliate:** Exfoliation removes some of the outer layer of dead dried skin. Mild chemical peels, microdermabrasion, scrubs and brushes can help. You have to be careful not to over exfoliate. I have seen several people who have used too many procedures and overlapped products and damaged their skin.

**Skin care products:** There are many moisturizers and products promoted to help your skin. Find some that work for you that you can afford and will use. Many physicians and spas offer special skin care products and services.

Remember, your skin has to last your lifetime, take good care of it.

Kimberley B. C. Goh, M.D.

Grand Strand Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Center, P.A., [www.kimberleygohmd.com](http://www.kimberleygohmd.com), gsprs@sc.twcbc.com. 4610 Oleander Drive, Suite 101, MB, SC 29577