15 DAYS TO Brighter Skin

Women's HEALTH SECRETS
15 Days to Brighter Skin
by Lori & Jonathan Otto and the Health Secret Team

Copyright © 2019 · Jonathan Otto and Health Secret, LLC

NOTICE OF RIGHTS:
All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the United States Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the author.

DISCLAIMER:
The Author and Publisher have strived to be as accurate and complete as possible in the creation of this book. While all attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, the Author and Publisher assumes no responsibility for errors, omissions, or contrary interpretation of the subject matter herein. Any perceived slights of specific persons, peoples, or organizations are unintentional. In practical advice books, like anything else in life, there are no guarantees of results. Readers are cautioned to rely on their own judgment about their individual circumstances and to act accordingly. This book is an educational guide that provides general health information. The materials are “as is” and without warranties of any kind either express or implied. The book’s content is not a substitute for direct, personal, professional medical care and diagnosis. None of the protocols (including products and services) mentioned in the book should be performed or otherwise used without clearance from your physician or healthcare provider. The information contained within is not intended to provide specific physical or mental health advice, or any other advice whatsoever, for any individual or company and should not be relied upon in that regard. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, these contents should not be construed as medical advice, professional diagnosis, opinion, or treatment to you or any other individual, and are not intended as a substitute for medical or professional care or treatment.
Like many things in life, having bright and healthy skin is not something that can be achieved with a “one and done” solution. Many of us have skin that’s suffering from years of sun damage and general neglect.

Too often we focus our beauty routine primarily on our face and forget that our skin is our largest organ and is a crucial detox pathway for our body. Rashes, dry skin, acne, age spots, or eczema can serve as warning signs for other illnesses in the body such as leaky gut, parasites, and certain autoimmune diseases.

Did you know that “healthy skin is a mirror of a healthy body.” \(^1\) This eBook will show you how diet, hygiene, supplements, stress reduction, and certain natural medicines all play key roles in healing this vital organ, our skin. No matter your age or the current condition of your skin, you can achieve brighter skin and a healthy glow with the proper care and attention.

**WHAT CAUSES YOUR SKIN TO LOSE IT BRIGHTNESS AND HEALTHY GLOW?**

The skin ages in two different ways:

1. Normal internal aging process of all the cells in your body
2. External lifestyle and environmental factors such as smoking, chronic UV/ultraviolet sun exposure, pollution, stress, sleep deprivation, dehydration, and unhealthy diets.

“Wrinkle creams, eye serums, and other anti-aging skin care products can help diminish signs of aging. To create a truly effective anti-aging skin care plan, dermatologists urge you to start with healthy skin care habits.” \(^2\)

We all lead busy lives and don’t always have the time to put our needs first, but if you take a few minutes each day over the next 15 days to apply the following tips and insights in this eBook, you will be well on your way to healthier and brighter skin.

Thank you for joining us on our continuing Women’s Health Secrets journey as we explore how the keys to your health may be skin-deep.

**OUR 15 DAYS TO BRIGHTER SKIN TIPS FOCUS ON THE FOLLOWING:**

**Day 1:** Fresh Start  
**Day 2:** Back to Basics  
**Day 3:** Hydrate  
**Day 4:** Moisturize  
**Day 5:** Detox  
**Day 6:** Healthy Diet  
**Day 7:** Smoking and Alcohol  
**Day 8:** Exfoliate  
**Day 9:** Exercise  
**Day 10:** Skin Ailments & Hormones  
**Day 11:** Natural Remedies  
**Day 12:** Sleep  
**Day 13:** Stress  
**Day 14:** Makeup  
**Day 15:** Sun Exposure  
**Bonus Day:** Color Responsibly
You don't have to wait until Day 15 to apply all the tips. We have just laid them out in this format, so they don't seem overwhelming. In fact, you may be doing some of these tips now as part of your regular health routine and only need a quick refresher to tweak some bad habits that you have picked up in your busy schedule.

Please don't feel guilty if you miss a step because you’re too exhausted or life rearranges your plans. We have listed a variety of key actions that you can easily incorporate into your lifestyle and beauty routine.

Some of the tips should be done on a daily basis such as creating a daily routine to properly cleanse your face; while others are done less frequently such as exfoliating. However you choose to take this 15 Days to Brighter Skin journey, we know there is something for everyone along the way.

**DAY 1**

**FRESH START**

There is a growing trend towards minimalism and perhaps the best place to start your 15 Days to Brighter Skin journey is by getting rid of everything you don't need that are in your bathroom and vanity. As part of your fresh start you should gather all your beauty and hygiene products as well as old prescription medicines lurking in your bathroom cabinets and properly dispose of anything that has expired. Not only do all the half-empty bottles look messy, it could be dangerous to use expired products and medicines.

Here are a few ways you can dispose of products you no longer need:

- donate unopened items to a local shelter,
- return old prescriptions to the pharmacy for proper disposal,
- reuse or recycle old containers, and as a last resort, put everything else in the garbage.

**TIP:** Remember, that just because it was a free sample it doesn’t mean you take it. Just say “No” and your cramped bathroom cupboards will thank you!

**DAY 2**

**BACK TO BASICS**

Remember when you were little and had to wash your face and brush your teeth before you got to hear a bedtime story? Well it’s time to add that basic activity back to your daily routine.

The debate is on whether you should use soap or oil to cleanse your skin. If you choose soap you should “avoid soaps labeled “antibacterial” or “antimicrobial.” These tend to reduce the skin’s acidity, which acts as a protection from infection.”

“In September 2016, the FDA ruled that over-the-counter antiseptic soaps and wash products containing triclosan, triclocarban, or 17 other antimicrobial agents could no longer be marketed because their manufacturers didn’t demonstrate that the ingredients were both safe and effective in preventing the spread of infections. Moreover, the widespread use of antimicrobials is thought to promote the growth of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, like methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), which can cause infections that are difficult to treat and even life-threatening.”

This is how “Superbugs” flourish.
CONSIDER USING OIL TO CLEANSE YOUR SKIN

Natural beauty expert Nadine Artemis believes that “for cleaning the skin, you want to ditch the soap and use oil. Not any oil, not petroleum oil, not almond oil, not rancid oil, but oil, like something like jojoba, or olive oil, or coconut oil, which have been used for thousands of years to take care of the skin, and that will gently cleanse and lift dirt out of the pores, and it helps the lipid barrier, it helps the integrity of the top layer of the skin. What they now know, studying the microbiome, is that microscopic splinters are lodged into the stratum corneum every time the face is washed with soap, or even your mild foaming cleanser. And they do not, these microscopic splinters, do not leave the skin when the skin is rinsed. So you’re getting a buildup, slowly but surely over the years of washing with soap, and that can lead to long term inflammation, which affects the skin’s microbiome, which could lead to acne or rosacea. So we just want to, you know, seal the skin by using oil, ditching the soap, not over exfoliating.5

Whatever you choose to cleanse your skin, it is important to “stick with a gentle cleanser that’s free from strong fragrances and alcohol that can dry out skin. Be wary of anti-aging products with ingredients like retinoids and alpha-hydroxy acid, which can increase irritation.” 6

Also, whether you start or finish your day with a shower or a bath, you are encouraged to, “limit yourself to one 5- to 10-minute bath or shower daily. If you bathe more than that, you may strip away much of the skin’s oily layer and cause it to lose moisture. Use lukewarm rather than hot water, which can wash away natural oils.” 7

TIP: Be sure to gently pat your skin dry rather than roughly rub with a towel to avoid extra damage to your skin.

DAY 3
HYDRATE

In every biology class, we learn about the 5 main organs in our body: our heart, lungs, brain, kidneys, and liver. They are all vital to our health; however, many teachers forget to mention the largest organ in the human body — our skin. According to the National Geographic website, “Skin acts as a waterproof, insulating shield, guarding the body against extremes of temperature, damaging sunlight, and harmful chemicals. It also exudes antibacterial substances that prevent infection and manufactures Vitamin D for converting calcium into healthy bones. Skin additionally is a huge sensor packed with nerves for keeping the brain in touch with the outside world. At the same time, skin allows us free movement, proving itself an amazingly versatile organ.” 8
We have been told for years to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day, but have you ever truly thought about why it is critical to rehydrate your body?

The average adult’s body is made up of 50 – 65% water. “When you’re thinking about what you’re putting in your body we want to think about hydration is one of the things, so making sure you’re drinking plenty of filtered water. It’s not just water, you want to make sure you’re getting good electrolytes and minerals.”

**TIP:** Whenever possible, be sure to drink water that is free of added chemicals and sugar. For added flavor and color, you can throw some sliced cucumber, lemon, or other fresh/frozen fruits into your water.

“Skin moisturizers, which rehydrate the top layer of skin cells and seal in the moisture, are the first step in combating dry skin.”

“Dry skin is usually not a serious health problem, but it can produce serious complications, such as chronic eczema (red patches) or bleeding from fissures that have become deep enough to disrupt capillaries in the dermis. Another possible complication is secondary bacterial infection (redness, swelling, and pus), which may require antibiotics. (Rarely, dry skin is associated with allergy.)”

Dry, itchy skin is not limited to your face and scalp (dandruff), you can experience it all over your body, especially in colder climates. “Eczema craquelure is...an extreme manifestation of dry skin, again usually occurring on the lower legs. With this condition, the dryness actually causes cracks in the top layer of skin, known as the stratum corneum. These cracks allow blood to rise up beneath the skin, appearing as squiggly red lines, which give the skin a mottled appearance. Some women with this condition experience itching and stinging.”

**WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT DRY SKIN?**

“Moisturize. As soon as you step out of the bath or shower, apply a layer of moisturizer to your body to seal moisture into your skin. A thicker ointment or cream can be more soothing — and less irritating — to dry, sensitive skin.”

The type of moisturizer you choose depends of the type of skin you have. “Some of us just genetically have dry skin or oily skin and the good thing about oily skin is that oily skin tends to not wrinkle as we age as much. The bad thing is that people with oily skin tend to get more acne.”
Whether you choose a more lightweight moisturizer, or something specifically designed for severe dry skin, the goal of the moisturizer is to seal in water in order to rehydrate your skin.

**TIP:** For those in a colder climate where your skin fights to retain moisture, use a humidifier in winter to add moist air to your home.

“Even something like applying a deodorant for a few decades — in most commercial, common deodorants, they have aluminum in them, and so you've got this microdosing of aluminum going into a very sensitive part of our body, which is really connected to the lymph nodes, then often, you know, women are shaving their armpits, so you've got a full opening for all those micro-heavy metals to come into the body, and most people are also have a burden of aluminum in their body.”

But did you know that the aluminum in your antiperspirant can block your skin from expelling toxins and has been linked to Alzheimer’s? People give little thought to the safety of over-the-counter products and commonly prescribed medicine such as antibiotics or birth control pills. It is important to realize the potential danger of any medication we put in our bodies and on our skin when trying to treat skin ailments.

**WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS TO DETOX YOUR BODY?**

Did you know that when you detox your body, “skin is your largest organ of elimination? And if you can't eliminate through the fecal route, or the urine route, liver, kidney, gallbladder, then it's going to come out somewhere, which is through your skin. So, when you have a skin problem, it could be your liver or gallbladder's not detoxing properly and the toxins just coming out through your skin, or it could be an underlying gut issue causing autoimmune reaction to the skin.”
Therefore, “when you are toxic, you’re increasing the load on your liver, kidney, and your body’s detoxification process. Think of detox as filters, right? Like the oil filter in your car. Now, a filter has certain flow rate, so if you exceed the flow rate of the filter, then things are going to start to get backed up. So, if you have way too much toxin, more than what your body's ability to detox would be, then you’re going to have a net accumulation, and eventually that’s going to cause problems. Either inflammation, or it’s going to start to cause autoimmunity, or it’s going to come out of your skin, then you got skin problems.” 18

“Remember, your body is already programmed to detox. It’s already programmed to get rid of parasites. It’s already programmed to heal from autoimmune. The only reason that we can’t heal, or you still have symptoms is because either your body can’t run the program, because something's blocking that program, or you have way too much for the body to handle, and it's overwhelming the system. So, supplements are tools, supplements help support the body’s natural healing process.” 19

BE MINDFUL OF WHAT YOU’RE PUTTING ON YOUR SKIN

“I think there’s been this misunderstanding, or just kind of maybe a blind eye to the fact that what we put on our skin it actually can get absorbed into the body...Of course, we’re exposed to toxins in our environment, in our water, in our food, in our homes, in our cleaning products. There are a lot of different ways we're exposed to it. Our personal care products are one of the main ways we are. If you think about how many products do you use every day? Start thinking about it. The makeup, the sunscreen, the deodorant, the shampoo, the conditioner, the toothpaste, all of it. It becomes this sort of soup of ingredients and our bodies become this almost lab experiment. All these different things and how are they interacting?” 20

“If you just start with the things that you use every day. I know you probably have a lot of things in your bathroom and maybe in your purse, too. Think about the things that you use every day because that’s what your body is not getting a break from. Our bodies are really wise and they're able, its able to eliminate a lot of the toxins that we're exposed to. But when we're constantly being, we don't give our bodies a break from it that's when it becomes a problem.” 21

TIP: Read the labels on your health and beauty products to ensure that you are not putting harsh chemicals or heavy metals on your skin.

DAY 6
HEALTHY DIET

We’ve all heard the expression that “beauty is only skin deep” but a truer statement would be beautiful skin starts from within. “The old adage “you are what you eat” not only applies to our overall health and nutrition, but how our skin looks and feels as well. As the largest organ in the body, our skin can benefit from the same nutrition we get from foods that have a positive effect on our heart and other major organs. In fact, new research suggests that eating foods rich in protein and certain vitamins and minerals might provide valuable anti-aging effects.” 22
“Prevention is the best and most effective way to work against extrinsic skin aging effects. The best prevention strategy against the harmful action of free radicals is a well-regulated lifestyle (caloric restriction, body care, and physical exercise for body), with low stress conditions and a balanced nutritional diet, including anti-oxidative rich food.”  

People, “also need antioxidants, so colorful fruits and vegetables also help protect the skin. Oxidative damage is one of the big root causes behind especially accelerated aging and also some of the inflammatory skin issues. Getting antioxidants. Also, you could get those in the form of a supplement, as well...people ask me about collagen...Collagen is important for the structure of our skin. Collagen gives our skin that texture and that firmness and it does start to degrade as we age. We can help support it by getting food in our [plant-based] diet. Vitamin C is one of the things that help support collagen, and so that's another important nutrient.”

**FOODS THAT CAN AGGRAVATE SKIN CONDITION**

According to the American Academy of Dermatology in an article published in *ScienceDaily*, “For the millions of Americans affected by medical skin conditions such as acne, rosacea, eczema or psoriasis, eating certain foods or consuming alcohol could aggravate their symptoms or trigger an unexpected flare-up. To track down if there is a connection between certain food and a reaction on your skin, you need to keep track of your diet and determine what foods you should avoid to prevent your skin from flare-ups.

- **Acne:** Some acne patients have noticed that certain foods worsen their symptoms particularly chocolate, greasy foods, soft drinks, peanuts, or foods high in fat.
- **Rosacea:** Foods such as liver, vinegar, soy sauce, dairy products, certain fruits and vegetables, hot chocolate, cider, tea, and coffee have been known to cause flare-ups in some rosacea patients.
- **Eczema:** Foods that have been known to worsen eczema symptoms include eggs, milk, peanuts, soy, wheat, and fish, while some patients even report that chocolate, coffee, alcohol, tomatoes and sugar can trigger a flare-up.”
Another sign that there may be deficiencies in your diet is if you are diagnosed with anemia (a decrease in red blood cells). “Oxygen is essential for skin health and is carried by red blood cells. A decrease in their number means less oxygen gets to the skin, which means that skin cells may become unhealthy or even die. Anemia should be evaluated and treated by your healthcare provider.”  

**TIP:** Although genetics play a role in many health issues, sometimes an unhealthy diet is written all over your face.

### DAY 7

**SMOKING AND ALCOHOL**

It is truly surprising with the decades of research showing the deadly effects of smoking, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that in 2017, approximately 14% of adults in the U.S., or 34.3 million people, still smoked cigarettes.

In addition to causing cancer and many other diseases, “tobacco smoke contains toxins that can lead to smoker’s face. Signs of smoker’s face include dull and dry complexion, loss of skin’s firmness, premature lines and wrinkles, and leathery skin.”  

“Nicotine in cigarettes causes blood vessels to get small (constrict) and prevents blood, oxygen and nutrients from flowing to the body tissues”  

“Skin that is slightly flushed with blood and full of oxygen suggests a strong heart and lungs, supporting the study's findings that rosier skin appeared healthy. Smokers and people with diabetes or heart disease have fewer blood vessels in their skin, and so skin would appear less rosy.”  

**EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON YOUR SKIN**

Although many would say that the occasional glass of wine or beer is not considered too much of a health risk, “like any other organ in the human body, the skin is also affected by alcohol intake. Alcoholism is associated with higher rates of wound infection and delay in wound closure.”

Most people are not aware that “alcohol dehydrates your body generally, including the skin — your body’s largest organ. This happens every time you drink. Drinking too much is also thought to deprive the skin of vital vitamins and nutrients. Over time, drinking heavily can have other, more permanent, detrimental effects on your skin. Rosacea, a skin disorder that starts with a tendency to blush and flush easily and can eventually lead to facial disfigurement, is linked to alcohol.”

**TIP:** Be Aware — Although there is not enough research done on the long-term effects of vaping, recent deaths have focused the media’s attention on the dangers of vaping.
DAY 8
EXFOLIATE

Perhaps one of the most overused beauty routines is exfoliation, which is the removal of dead skin cells on your skin. There is an ongoing debate as to whether this is helpful or harmful to our skin. When done correctly and gently with natural products, it can give your skin a healthy glow. However, excessive exfoliation can lead to permanent skin damage.

In order to prevent skin damage while exfoliating, be sure to:

- Choose an exfoliation method that’s appropriate for your skin type
- Use natural ingredients instead of chemicals, which can damage your skin
- Be gentle to your skin by not not cleaning too vigorously and use lukewarm — not hot — water
- Follow with a moisturizer to keep your skin hydrated

According to Dr. Trevor Cates, “you can make wonderful DIY exfoliants using homemade skincare products, using all-natural ingredients.

(NOTE: If you are allergic to any of these foods, do not use them in your homemade skincare products!)

- Almonds: Natural exfoliant when ground into a fine powder; rich in antioxidants
- Avocado: Contains vitamins A and E; great for moisturizing and hydrating your skin
- Natural honey: Has powerful antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties; contains vitamins B1, B3, B5, and B6 as well as potassium and calcium
- Oats: Anti-inflammatory properties promote healing; moisturizes and cleanses skin so it doesn’t dry out
- Papaya: A rich source of vitamins A, C, and E; contains the papain enzyme which is a natural exfoliant
- Pomegranate seeds: Grind these in a blender until smooth for an anti-oxidant-rich exfoliant
- Strawberries: A rich source of vitamin C; brighten skin naturally
- Yogurt: The lactic acid in yogurt is a natural exfoliant; helps balance skin’s pH.”

EXFOLIATION IN NATURE

It seems that humans are not the only mammals worried about dry and flaky skin.
“Video recordings had captured the whales engaging in an impromptu exfoliation session, rubbing their chins, heads, backs, and sides against the large rocks. One bowhead was rubbing away for at least 8 minutes. Together with still images and a skin biopsy, the researchers conclude that these bowhead whales use rocks to rub away sloughing and molting skin...Though this is the first time scientists have seen this behavior in bowheads, other arctic whales — such as belugas — have been seen grooming themselves along abrasive bottom surfaces in Hudson Bay estuaries. One benefit to this annual skin cleansing? It might help the long-lived animals rid themselves of sun-damaged skin and parasites, the researchers say.” 35

TIP: “To avoid damaging the skin, stay away from bath sponges, scrub brushes, and washcloths. If you don’t want to give them up altogether, be sure to use a light touch. For the same reason, pat or blot (don’t rub) the skin when toweling dry.” 36

This debate may be due to the fact that your skin is a very complex part of your body. “Your skin is much more than an outer surface for the world to see. It protects you from bacteria, dirt and other foreign objects and the ultraviolet rays of the sun and contains the nerve endings that let you know if something is hot or cold, soft or hard, sharp or dull. Your skin also plays an important role in regulating your body's fluids and temperature...Below the smooth, hairy outer skin, or epidermis, that we see every day is a thick, strong and elastic layer of tissue known as the dermis. The dermis is richly supplied with blood vessels, sweat and oil glands, and nerve endings...The skin is served by a large number of blood vessels, and adequate circulation is needed to maintain skin health.” 37

So exercise is great for your skin as it gets your heart pumping and your blood circulating!

A study done at the University of Birmingham found that “A group of older people who have exercised all of their lives, were compared to a group of similarly aged adults and younger adults who do not exercise regularly. The results showed that those who have exercised regularly have defied the aging process, having the immunity, muscle mass, and cholesterol levels of a young person.” 38

“Despite the lack of studies proving that exercise will make your skin look younger, most of us have experienced the “glow” that occurs with exercise, and there’s nothing like the fresh, crisp, feeling you get in your cheeks after a run, walk, or bike ride in cool weather. Not only that, but as we all know, exercise will make you stronger, more flexible, healthier, fitter, improve your endurance and your balance, and increase your energy. In those ways, it will make you “younger” no matter how old you are or how your skin looks. Keep up with regular exercise. It’s worth it!” 39

TIP: A simple 10 minute walk around the block or taking a few flights of stairs instead of the elevator is a great way to add small bouts of healthy exercise into your day.
You can be suffering from a variety of illnesses that no one is aware of because they can’t see what’s going on inside your body. However, an entire section of the cosmetic industry is devoted to hiding problems with your skin. People spend thousands of dollars on creams, ointments, and cosmetics to make their skin look healthier or hide flaws, rashes, or blemishes. From minor skin issues to major ailments, it is common for women and men to seek out both commercial and natural remedies in our quest for brighter skin and a healthy glow.

Growing up, we are taught to cover skin imperfections or blemishes with concealers. We often assume that the rash or acne is a temporary problem that will eventually go away on its own. People often do not realize that these skin ailments may serve as warning signs for deeper, underlying health issues in the body such as leaky gut, parasites, and certain autoimmune diseases.

**GETTING TO THE ROOT CAUSE OF SKIN ISSUES**

“What people typically do is they’ll have a tendency to suppress or cover up skin issues. Instead of looking for the root cause, the typical approach in conventional medicine is to use a topical steroid, take an allergy medication...Until you really get to the root cause you’re going to keep creating this band aid approach where you’re not really addressing the underlying cause. Also, you’re not giving the body what it needs to heal.”

**HORMONES AND SKIN ISSUES**

“When it comes to skin, one of the early warning signs of low thyroid function is dry skin. That can be one of the early things that people notice and especially if it comes along with fatigue, and feeling kind of chilly, constipation, hair loss, there’s a number of symptoms that go along with low thyroid function. Then on the flip side of that, with hyperthyroidism, hyper thyroid function you might notice more oily skin as one of the early symptoms of hyperthyroidism.”

“When we have sex hormones like estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. Those can change during our life, they change for women, they change during the month. All of them play an important role and our skin as things like acne as well as aging and how well our skin ages and those changes that happen throughout our life. There are definitely things that we can do with diet and lifestyle. Even just the stress management...if you have a lot of symptoms, it’s important to go and work with somebody. Try not to figure it out on your own because it’s complex. You could get a lot of information that empowers you and helps educate you, but you want to work with somebody like a functional medicine doctor, a naturopathic physician that can do some testing and really find out what’s going on and individualize the treatment.”

REMEMBER that it is important to speak up and talk to your doctor if you notice any odd changes to your skin, like a recurring rash, or mole that changes size or color.

**TIP:** For extremely dry skin, “Never, ever scratch. Most of the time, a moisturizer can control the itch. You can also use a cold pack or compress to relieve itchy spots.”
DAY 11
NATURAL REMEDIES

You may be one of the growing numbers of people who choose alternative medicine over conventional treatments. We are fortunate to have access to thousands of years of herbal medical knowledge gained from diverse cultures around the world, including Traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic (traditional Indian) medicine, Egyptian, and ancient Greek and Roman medical systems. And although they each developed their own medical practices, they all evolved around plant-based medicines and remedies.

“Choosing skin care products that are clean and made with natural organic ingredients is really important so you can avoid those hormone disrupting chemicals. Even carcinogenic ingredients that are in skin care products. It’s also important to remember, though, just because it’s natural doesn’t mean that it’s going to work.” 44

According to Dr. Trevor Cates, “there are three things that are super important when you’re looking for natural skin care products:

First: they really do have to be clean. A lot of times products will call themselves natural. There’s actually really no regulation around hypoallergenic or natural. These claims, they’re just marketing claims.

Second: you want the natural ingredients to be active. A lot of times skin care manufacturers will throw in an ingredient and say it contains CoQ10, or it contains Vitamin E or Argan Oil. They’re using that, again, for marketing and there’s not actually enough of that product, or it’s not in its pure form enough and supported by other natural actives to actually make a difference in your skin. You want there to be natural actives. Quality, quantity of ingredients, just like you’d want for your food or your supplements you want that for your skin care products, too. That’s another big key why some of those natural products seem like they would work, but they don’t.

Third: a lot of people I think don’t know about and that is the pH of skin care products. One of the biggest functions of our skin is to act as a barrier to the outside world. It has this mild acidity, this acid mantle that protects it from external invasion. When we’re using skin care products, we actually want to use products that have a lower pH. The ideal pH range, research shows the ideal pH range for skin care products is 4.6 to 5. A lot of skin care products are actually over 5 and some are even much, much higher than that.” 45
Natural Remedies for Brighter Skin

There are numerous natural beauty remedies available online that you can create in your own kitchen and modify to suit your skin type. Some of the common ingredients that are popular in natural remedies to give your skin a healthy glow include:

- Aloe Vera
- Banana
- Coconut Oil
- Cod Liver
- Cucumber
- Green Tea
- Honey
- Lemon
- Olive Oil
- Papaya
- Rose Water

Also, consider incorporating some of the following natural herbs and minerals in your meals or by adding supplements to your diet to naturally enhance your skin and overall health:

**Herbs**
- Ashwagandha
- Bacopa
- Chamomile
- Ginger
- Griffonia seed extract 5-HTP
- Passion Flower
- Turmeric

**Minerals**
- Calcium
- Copper
- Humic and Fulvic Acid Powder
- Iron
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Zinc

TIP: Not all natural products are created equal, so be sure to read the labels and research new products to ensure they are the best choice for you to add to your skincare routine.

DAY 12
SLEEP

Apparently it's called “Beauty Sleep” for a reason. A number of studies have shown that adequate sleep is crucial to give your cells time to repair.

One study at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland showed that “inadequate sleep is correlated with reduced skin health and accelerates skin aging. Sleep deprived women show signs of premature skin aging and a decrease in their skin’s ability to recover after sun exposure...The researchers found that good quality sleepers recovered more efficiently from stressors to the skin. Recovery from sunburn was more sluggish in poor quality sleepers, with erythema (redness) remaining higher over 72 hours, indicating that inflammation is less efficiently resolved.”

Experts recommend about 7-8 hours of sleep each night for adults. If you don’t take advantage of this often called “fountain of youth” your skin health will suffer.
Another study at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden showed that, “The faces of sleep-deprived individuals were perceived as having more hanging eyelids, redder eyes, more swollen eyes, darker circles under the eyes, paler skin, more wrinkles/fine lines, and more droopy corners of the mouth...In addition, sleep-deprived individuals looked sadder than after normal sleep, and sadness was related to looking fatigued. The results show that sleep deprivation affects features relating to the eyes, mouth, and skin, and that these features function as cues of sleep loss to other people. Because these facial regions are important in the communication between humans, facial cues of sleep deprivation and fatigue may carry social consequences for the sleep deprived individual in everyday life.” 47

TIP: If you routinely have difficulty falling asleep, you need to take the time to discover the root cause for your insomnia so you can fix the problem rather than mask the symptoms... sweet dreams!

DAY 13
STRESS

You can have the healthiest skin care routine, but if you have too much stress in your life, your skin will suffer as stress can harm your skin and other body systems.

“For example, adrenal hormones and play a role in the skin, as well as many other aspects of our health. Since we’re talking about skin, cortisol is an adrenal hormone that’s released with stress. It can continue to be released if we don’t manage our stress and adrenals can have a hard time regulating that secretion and that function. What can happen with high cortisol is it can trigger more inflammation in the body and that is another one of the big root causes is inflammation. With skin issues, I call it “skinflammation” where you have that internal inflammation that’s showing up on the skin. Really, a lot of the chronic skin conditions like eczema and acne, those are inflammatory issues. It’s funny with skin we get stressed by our skin and then stress can trigger skin or skin symptoms. Mindfulness stress management practices are really important.” 48
BEST WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

- Be aware of what triggers your stress levels to increase, and avoid those stressful situations whenever possible
- Learn effective ways to quickly relax such as meditation, deep breathing, or yoga
- Exercise regularly and get lots of restful sleep
- Stay positive and eat a healthy and well-balanced diet

TIP: Remember that a little stress can be good for you as long as you know how to unwind and de-stress.

DAY 14
MAKEUP

Consumers spend thousands of dollars on creams, ointments, and cosmetics for two reasons — 1) camouflage to hide our flaws, rashes or blemishes or 2) seduction to make our skin look healthier and more attractive.

If you chose to wear makeup to stand out in a crowd, studies have shown that “Makeup acts and stimulates three of our senses: touch (which encompasses all sensations from the body surface), smell (fragrance), and sight (the process of becoming and looking beautiful). The positive stimulation of these senses by makeup can induce sensory as well as psychological pleasure.”

BUT NOT ALL COSMETICS ARE CREATED EQUALLY

“There are thousands of different cosmetic products on the market, all with differing combinations of ingredients. In the United States alone there are approximately 12,500 unique chemical ingredients approved for use in the manufacture of personal care products. A typical product will contain anything from 15–50 ingredients. Considering the average woman uses between 9 and 15 personal care products per day, researchers have estimated that, when combined with the addition of perfumes, women place around 515 individual chemicals on their skin each day through cosmetic use.”

“While the current scientific thinking on many of these chemicals is that they are safe to use, it is up to each consumer to make their own decision as to whether they purchase and use a product containing certain ingredients or not. Consumers should also try to purchase reputable brands from established sellers — cheap imports or copies bought online may not have been through the proper testing and assessment process and may not contain what they claim to. In our pursuit of beauty, it is wise to remember that cosmetics can be complex combinations of chemicals. Achieving even a basic understanding of the long chemical names on a product ingredient list — what they are and what they do — can go a long way to helping consumers make informed decisions about the products they choose to use — certainly helpful when putting on your best face.”
One last reminder... We started this 15 Day to Brighter Skin journey by getting rid of old and expired makeup. If you didn’t get rid of your old makeup tools as well, you should know that many skin issues and flair ups are caused by bacteria from old makeup or dirty makeup brushes.

According to dermatologists from the American Academy of Dermatology, “dirty makeup brushes can wreak havoc on the skin. In addition to collecting product residue, dirt and oil, makeup brushes are a breeding ground for bacteria. This could compromise your complexion — in the form of acne breakouts and rashes — as well as your health.”

**TIP:** Always read the ingredients of the labels for your makeup products, and choose natural, clean, and guilt-free alternative for your makeup routine.

---

**DAY 15**

**SUNSCREEN**

“We need the sun, even though it’s often denied from a dermatological perspective, and we’ve been lobbied into this loss of sunlight. Our skin and our bodies... have thousands of Vitamin D receptors all over our body, and these Vitamin D receptors need to be brimming with Vitamin D. And our skin converts sun beams into this lubricating liquid that we need, and it doesn’t come from Vitamin D supplements. That's a different type, it’s a good thing, and if you live in a cold climate, you might need that in the winter. But, that’s a fat soluble Vitamin D, and what our bodies need and are designed for, our skin is literally designed to engage with the solar rays and to convert that information, that spectrum of color, UVA, UVB. We’re supposed to be engaging with that so that we can activate our immunological peptides... it cleanses our blood; it creates a very valuable and useful cholesterol sulfate.”

**SUN EXPOSURE & VITAMIN D**

“Vitamin D is critical for health, and low levels in the blood are associated with bone disease, cancer, autoimmune diseases, infectious diseases and Type 2 diabetes. Sunlight absorbed through the skin is an important source of Vitamin D, along with intake from foods and supplements. Yet there is little data on how these behavioral factors interact with genetic factors to affect levels of Vitamin D in the blood.”

**COVER UP IN STYLE**

“We actually don’t need a ton of unexposed skin in order to get Vitamin D. It depends on where in the world you live like how close to the sun are you? … Typically, what I’ve seen from the research is that three or four days a week if you go out in the non peak hours of the sun and you get 5-10 minutes of sun exposure, just on your arms and legs without sunblock that’s going to be enough to get Vitamin D.”

If you are heading outdoors for extended periods of time, take the following precautions from getting too much sun exposure:

- seek shade during the hottest part of the day and whenever possible, wear:
  - a wide-brimmed hat
  - pants
  - long sleeves
  - gloves (help to minimize common signs of aging on our hands, such as age spots)
  - sunglasses (help reduce fine lines around our eyes)
SUNSCREEN
To protect your skin, apply sunscreen to all exposed skin. You want to use a natural sunscreen that offers broad-spectrum protection, SPF 30 (or higher), and water resistance. Also, be particular about the type of sunscreen you use, “The problem is that a lot of these sunscreens have chemicals in them that have these endocrine disrupting chemicals...Be aware of these ingredients and start looking at your labels.” 56

Experts suggest that you avoid chemical sunscreens that contain oxybenzone, octinoxate, avobenzone and retinyl palmitate. Instead they recommend that you look for mineral based or natural sunscreens with zinc-oxide or titanium dioxide. Also, drinking chlorophyll has been known as “internal sunblock” as it has an abundance of skin-protecting antioxidants.

TIP: Make sure you are getting between 10 - 30 minutes of exposure to sunshine every day. If you're not getting enough sunlight, make sure your supplements include D3 + K2.

BONUS DAY
COLOR RESPONSIBLY
You have come a long way on your journey towards brighter and healthier skin. Now don’t ruin all your progress with poor beauty choices — Color Responsibly! People too often choose the wrong shade of color in their wardrobe and the results make your skin look gray and washed out.

The color of your clothing can affect how your skin looks, and the wrong choices can dull your complexion. If you are unsure if your new sweater suits your skin tone, be sure to ask for professional help to make the right selection to put your best foot — and brighter face — forward.

TRUE ANTI-AGING SECRET
Finally, many believe that the true secret for beautiful, youthful skin is having the right attitude!

You truly look your best when “you radiate that kind of youthful vibrance. I think that no matter how old you are you can have that. That comes from being healthy...having that just radiance and vibrance from within.” 57

TIP: Treat yourself — you’re worth it!

FINAL WORDS
BEYOND THESE 15 DAYS TO BRIGHTER SKIN
From time to time, we still may need a little blemish cover or foundation to deal with occasional acne flare ups as we continue on our healing journey. But to be truly healthy, it’s time that we looked at the body as a whole, both on the inside and outside. Diet, hygiene, supplements, stress reduction, and certain natural medicines all play key roles in healing the largest organ of our body. When you make the right choices and choose to live well your skin will reflect your healthy glow.
Listen to what your skin has been trying to show you for years — that it’s time to stop covering your body with makeup, creams and lotions that stop your skin from properly doing its job — helping the good vitamins in and let the bad toxins out.

Investigate the rashes, dry skin, acne, age spots, or eczema that serve as warning signs for other illnesses in the body such as leaky gut, parasites, and certain autoimmune diseases. Take the time to listen to your body and discover the underlying health issues that may be causing your skin problems.

Think twice before you slather on an unknown over-the-counter cream or take a medicine without thoroughly investigating all the side effects.

As I said before, we still may need a little blemish cover or foundation to deal with occasional acne flare ups, but don’t forget to consider how that blemish got there in the first place. Diet, hygiene, supplements, stress reduction, and certain natural medicines all play key roles in keeping our skin healthy.

Good luck in putting your best face forward, and thank you for joining us on our continuing Women’s Health Secrets journey.

SOURCES
4. https://www.health.harvard.edu/womens-health/how-clean-should-your-skin-be
5. Nadine Artemis - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
9. Dr. Trevor Cates – Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
16. Nadine Artemis - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
17. Dr. Peter Kan - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
18. Dr. Peter Kan - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
19. Dr. Peter Kan - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
20. Dr. Trevor Cates - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
21. Dr. Trevor Cates - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
24. Dr. Trevor Cates - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
25. Dr. Udo Erasmus - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
26. Dr. Trevor Cates - Women's Health Secrets Docuseries Episode 8 – 2019 - Online
ABOUT LORI & JONATHAN OTTO

Lori Otto is a natural medicine advocate and investigative journalist who, along with her husband Jonathan, has traveled around the world uncovering little-known natural health secrets from renowned doctors, researchers, and health experts.

For many years, Lori was in a losing battle with her body. Nothing worked. No medicine helped. Doctors could not heal her and said much of it was “in her head”. By turning to natural remedies and supplements, she successfully overcame hypoglycemia, anemia, digestive allergies — including IBS, bloating, and pain to the point of being afraid to eat — significant respiratory and skin allergies, adrenal fatigue, brain fog, and joint pain, and was able to cease her prescriptions for anxiety and depression. Lori credits this dramatic healing to a foundational anti-parasitic detox combined with gut healing and restoration that allowed her renewed intake of healthy nutrients to be absorbed properly.

Before her own severe health issues were corrected, she was a devotee of standard medical care and, in her own words was “very skeptical” towards natural medicine. Through her travels and her husband’s earlier work, she observed countless testimonials of healing success achieved through natural remedies. “I could no longer deny the power behind natural medicine and its incredible results.”

Lori had struggled to get pregnant but is now the proud mother of a healthy baby boy, Asher. Throughout her healing journey, she studied all she could about pregnancy and labor, and this learning experience inspired her to create the groundbreaking 9 Episode Docuseries, *Women’s Health Secrets*. Her goal is to educate and empower other women, offering them hope and healing.

Jonathan Otto is an investigative journalist, humanitarian, and award-winning documentary filmmaker. His life narrative is characterized by his unceasing desire to uncover truth and alleviate suffering in the world. He volunteers his own time overseas, especially in Africa where he has sometimes faced life-threatening situations, and for which he continually draws finances from his own pocket, whenever necessary.

Jonathan has turned his attention to seeking truth and exposing error in the areas of health and wellness. This has led him to create and collaborate as an editor and producer on many health films and projects, such as the docuseries, *The Truth About Cancer* and *The Truth About Vaccines* with Ty Bollinger, and *Diet Against Disease* with Dr. Joseph Mercola.

In recent years, Jonathan has created and produced his own self-hosted docuseries, *Depression, Anxiety & Dementia Secrets, Autoimmune Secrets*, and *Natural Medicine Secrets*. These docuseries represent his unceasing global quest to find truth, gathering stories and protocols from world-renowned health experts and their patients.

It’s been Jonathan’s supreme pleasure to collaborate with and support his beautiful wife, and mother of their young son, Lori Otto.