

## Skin Care FAQ's

### ***Why should I have a facial?***

Most people have facials as a form of relaxation, or as a reward. We really should see having a professional facial treatment as much more than an occasional treat. Professional facials incorporate using products with much stronger active ingredients, which promote a visible benefit immediately. These treatments boost the efficacy of home care products, as well as decongest areas impossible for individuals to do themselves. An Esthetician may use magnification and ultra violet lights to determine skin type and condition, and recommend a course of action to correct any complaints the patient has about their skin. One main purpose in having a professional treatment is the education the patient receives. There are hundreds of skin care products available, and individuals wishing to improve the quality of their skin must see an Esthetician for analysis and recommendations for a proper home care system.

### ***What type of treatment should I have?***

This question is best answered after a thorough analysis of the skin has been performed. Once the skin type has been determined, and the desires and expectations of the patient have been expressed, a treatment plan can be designed. As individuals vary, so do the treatments. We customize our facials based on the needs and problem areas the patient is experiencing. There are treatments that nearly everyone can have, unless allergies prevent them. The two treatments we recommend are the Therapeutic Facial, which focuses on each individual's problem areas, and is followed by a glycolic acid peel. The second treatment we recommend is Microdermabrasion. It is explained in more detail on our [Resources](#) (under Glycolic peels and Microdermabrasion) page, and on our [Services](#) page. For maximum benefit we suggest alternating Microdermabrasion and Therapeutic facials (which includes a glycolic peel).

### ***How often should I have an appointment?***

The average patient will have a facial every 4-6 weeks, but you can have a facial with a glycolic acid peel as frequently as once a week. Microdermabrasion may be performed as often as every two weeks. To maintain results from the microdermabrasion sessions, you should repeat the treatment about every 6 weeks once the initial 6 sessions are completed. You should not go more than 12 weeks between microdermabrasion appointments. Extraction appointments can be done weekly provided the skin heals before the next session.

### ***What can I expect from my facial treatment or microdermabrasion?***

Your skin should begin to feel smoother and silkier. Dark spots should begin to fade, and fine lines and wrinkles should diminish over time. Blackheads will be extracted, and with proper home care do not reappear as quickly. Acne breakouts typically subside, and may disappear altogether. Home care products will become more effective. The skin will take on a more even tone. Immediately after a treatment, the skin may look red or irritated. This usually lasts only a short period of time, and then the skin tone and texture improve.

### ***Will a facial treatment make me break out?***

Most of our patients experience little to no break outs after having a facial treatment. Spas which are less medically based usually incorporate products or techniques that lead to breaking out. Our facility identifies and eliminates those products and procedures which lead to break outs after treatments. We understand people come in with skin problems, and we don't want them to leave with new or more problems. Any treatment can stimulate the skin to break out, so it is possible, but very rare that it happens in our facility. We strongly encourage the use of quality home care products, which decrease the likelihood that a patient will have an acne episode after a treatment.

### ***I'm in my 40's, why am I'm still breaking out?***

Contrary to popular belief, we are not guaranteed a cure to acne once we are out of our teens. Acne can be a life long issue, but can be controlled. The obvious diet, exercise and drinking plenty of water certainly help. Sometimes medications to improve hormonal imbalances can clear up the skin. Polycystic ovary disease can lead to acne, as well as hirsutism (excessive hair growth) and obesity. Medical tests should be conducted to rule out any diseases or conditions which may be causing the acne. If there is no known

medical cause for the problem, the patient can choose mild to severe medications to help control it, or may opt to control the issue through professional treatments, and high quality home care products.

***Is there anything I can do to get rid of my wrinkles without a facelift, collagen or other injections?***

To a certain extent, yes. Microdermabrasion is a wonderful treatment which helps stimulate your body's own natural collagen production, as well as smoothes out lines and rough edges on the skin. Glycolic acid with a pH of 3-3.5 will also help stimulate the production of collagen in the epidermis. Lipid (or fat) soluble Vitamin C which has an anti aging effect, will help reverse skin damage due primarily from the sun. There are products and treatments which truly have a positive, anti aging benefit to the skin. These options do have their limits, and with extremely aged and damaged skin, sometimes the only option to attain the desired results is to have cosmetic surgery. All of the above options should still be utilized even if surgery is an option, as surgery will only tighten the skin. The quality of the skin still needs to be addressed through professional treatments, and consistent use of home care products.

***What about acne on my chest and back?***

These areas can be treated the same way you would treat the face. With the back it is a little more challenging because it is difficult to reach. Typically the chest and back can tolerate stronger products, so a more aggressive protocol is typically recommended. For those experiencing problems with break outs on the chest and back, the first step would be to replace using soap on these areas with a glycolic acid cleanser. Benzoyl peroxide is usually the best course of action to begin with as a "leave on" product. If the problem persists, other options are available.

***Are the treatments geared just for women?***

Although more women come in for treatments than men, men have the same problems women do. Sometimes men have more severe skin problems than women; they are just not as verbal about it. Our facial treatments and home care products are for both men and women. Some companies have product lines which are for men only. They are usually packaged in a more masculine fashion, lather more, or the cleansers come in a bar form. Quite often they will try to incorporate as many ingredients in as few products as possible, since men usually are not as willing to use more than a couple of products in their routine. Our products are all very gender neutral, and none of the packaging is feminized.

***What home care products should I use?***

There are specific products based on the individual's needs, but there are also some general rules that apply to almost everyone. Everyone needs a good cleanser. Unless there is an allergy or other compelling reason, everyone should be using a glycolic acid cleanser. Immediately after cleansing (and drying the face) a topical vitamin C product should be the first "leave on" product that is used. Lipid soluble vitamin C is absorbed into the skin instantly, so the remainder of the products may be applied without having to wait in between steps. The next product after vitamin C is a glycolic acid product that stays on the skin. The following step is to moisturize the skin. There are a variety of moisturizers with additional benefits, so there are many options available. For daytime use, the last step would be sunscreen. Sunscreen should be used everyday, regardless of the weather. The first four steps should be repeated in the evening, omitting the sunscreen. Additional products, like vitamin A products or skin bleaching creams, can be incorporated into the basic 5 step regimen. We carry medically based products which are only available in Esthetician or Doctor's offices. See [products](#) for complete descriptions.

***I have dozens for cleansers and face creams in my bathroom. What should I do with them?***

People tend to buy products on impulse or because they want to get a free gift with purchase. As a result, we end up with literally dozens of products we use only a few times if at all, and then put away. Count how many skin care products you have at home that you don't use. In the perpetual search for the perfect product, our available cabinet space diminishes. If you try to use up all your products before buying a new skin care program because you don't want to throw them out, it could take years to finish them off. I suggest using these products on your body. Many face creams have found their way to my arms, legs, hands and feet. I've put facial cleansers in soap dispensers in my bathroom, and heavier creams are great on knees and elbows. Use up the ineffective products on the body to eliminate the guilt from having spent the money, make space in your bathroom, and get on quality products that will produce results.

### ***What does pH mean, and why is it important to the skin?***

pH stands for potential of Hydrogen. It is a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of a substance. The pH scale ranges from 0 on the acidic end to 14 on the alkaline end. A pH of 7 is considered neutral. Our bodies have a natural covering called the acid mantle. It's composed of fatty acids from our perspiration and amino acids from our skin tissue. This acid mantle fights infection from bacteria that gather on the skin. The pH factor is a measurement of the percentage of hydrogen ions in the acid. Normal facial skin is a pH of 4.5 to 5.5, meaning it is slightly acid. If something comes into contact with the skin that is either too acidic or too alkaline, the skin's natural protective barrier (the acid mantle) is affected. Barrier recovery is slowed, damage is prolonged, and skin problems will arise, such as skin peeling, rashes, irritation, etc. We recommend using a cleanser with a pH of around 3.0-3.5. When you drop the pH in the skin during the cleansing process, the subsequent products used penetrate the epidermis more readily. Your skin will usually normalize itself within a couple of minutes to a couple of hours after using such products. When you use a product which is alkaline (above a pH of 7) like soap, it interferes with the protective acid mantle. Toners were originally created to bring the pH back to normal after using soap. Once the skin is at its normal pH, additional products will not easily penetrate the skin. The cleansers we carry are all pH balanced for maximum effectiveness.

### ***How can I tell what type of skin I have?***

There are certain characteristics of the skin which define the type of skin you have. It is important to remember you are not "locked" into a particular skin type. Many factors can change what you perceive your skin type to be, like aging, smoking or the weather. Estheticians differ in the number of skin types they define. Some will place their patients in one of three categories, while others will have ten or more categories. Below is a range of skin types, and characteristics which define what most closely describes your particular type. Sometimes it is difficult to inspect one's own skin closely without the use of a magnifying mirror. It is best done in the daylight to get an accurate impression of the skin's condition.

#### **Normal Skin:**

Normal skin has an adequate amount of water and lipids, an adequate balance between them, and a moderate sensitivity level. Normal skin is caused by the ideal balance between the rate of sebum production and cellular exchanges. It has barely visible pores and radiant pinkish complexions, with no imperfections. Normal skin is often lumped into the category of combination skin, but it is different. Many Estheticians believe normal skin is an ideal standard which doesn't actually exist, but we want to attain.

#### **Sensitive skin:**

Thin, delicate, fine pores. Flushes easily, prone to broken capillaries and rashes, and frequently allergic. If sun exposure causes you to first burn, then peel, then tan, it may be an indication of dry or sensitive skin.

#### **Dry Skin:**

Dry skin usually appears to have fine wrinkles, flaking, red patches, almost invisible pores, and a dull, rough complexion. Dry skin can be caused by genetics, hormonal aging and external factors such as wind and UV radiation. This skin type can be fine and delicate, but dry when exposed to physical elements such as sunburn, burns, cold temperatures, abrasions, and certain medications. When the skin repairs itself after being exposed to these elements, dryness and flaking usually occurs. There are skin conditions which cause the skin to flake and sometimes crack. It feels tight, especially after cleansing.

#### **Very Dry Skin:**

More severe dry skin may be rough and scaly. The outer skin layer may develop tiny cracks. The pores are almost invisible and the complexion is very dull with red patches. Very dry skin may be caused by genetics, hormonal aging, and extreme external factors such as wind and sun exposure.

#### **Combination Skin:**

Medium pores, smooth and even texture, good circulation, healthy color, may tend toward dryness on the cheeks, may be oily in T-Zone. The pores are overly dilated, tend to have blackheads and be shiny in the T-zone. If your skin is oilier on your forehead, nose, and chin than on your cheeks and around your eyes, you have "combination skin." The skin is either overly dry or excessively oily, with occasional roughness on the cheeks. The oiliness and dryness can change, depending on the time of year (skin is usually drier when the weather is cold). Causes of combination skin are an imbalance in the production and distribution of lipids

typically due to hormonal and genetic factors.

#### **Oily Skin:**

In this type of skin, the oil-producing sebaceous glands are overactive and produce more oil than is needed. This type of skin appears as greasy, shiny, thick, or slightly waxy with enlarged pores, and is prone to blackheads and blemishes. Often chronically oily skin has coarse pores and pimples and other blemishes. Touching oily skin may sometimes leave a residue of oil on the fingertips. It is caused by the hyperactivity of the sebaceous glands caused by puberty or other hormonal imbalances, stress, antibiotics, and exposure to heat or excessive humidity. . Does your face feel like a puddle of oil an hour after you've washed it? Does makeup disappear by midmorning? At age 30, are you still breaking out like a teenager? If you said yes, you have oily skin with overactive sebaceous glands

#### **Aging or Sun-Damaged Skin:**

Feels tight, visible wrinkles, slack skin tone, especially around the cheeks and jawline, leathery texture, broken capillaries. . Does your skin feel as tight as a drum when I wash in hot water? Does it reflect light, or does it appear dull and patchy? Can you see flakes or red spots where there used to be clear skin? This is a sign of aging skin.

#### ***Is there anything I can do reduce the dark circles around the eyes?***

Several skin care lines carry products which focus on lightening dark circles around the eyes. The process incorporates increasing the micro circulation of the skin under the eye, as well as exfoliating and lightening the skin. Some dark circles are visible due to the shape of the eye socket, which casts a shadow. Other causes can be an accumulation of fat beneath the lower eyelid, which also casts a shadow. In that case, surgery would be an option to decrease the appearance of dark circles. Technology has improved greatly in this area, whereas previously there was nothing that could be done to decrease dark circles. Depending on the cause of the dark circles, the newer products have shown tremendous improvement for patients dealing with that problem.

#### ***What can I do to even out my skin tone and get rid of dark spots?***

Most skin care lines offer lightening products. Many people experience terrific results by using treatment products that are specially formulated to address these spots. Some products you can apply directly to the dark spot and need not apply it all over the face. It can take from one to several months of strict continuous use to achieve the desired results. Also sun avoidance is particularly important. Many skin lightening products use an ingredient called Hydroquinone. Common, safe and often preferred alternative ingredients are botanical in nature and are; kojic and azelaic acids and bearberry and mulberry extracts.

#### ***Do I need to use a toner after cleansing?***

Toners are generally used to remove any excess residue left on the skin after cleansing and to restore your skin's natural pH. If you wash your face with soap (which you shouldn't), it is a good idea to use a toner because soap is too alkaline. If you are using a cleanser with a pH in the 3.0-3.5 range, it may be better to skip using a toner. Product penetration will improve if your skin is slightly acidic, and a toner will bring it back to its normal range which may prevent subsequent products from working effectively.

#### ***Should I exfoliate?***

Exfoliating is an important and necessary part of any skin care regimen. It's important to use a good quality exfoliating products as recommended by your skin care expert. Use a product that has micro-fine beads or granules that are rounded and do not have jagged edges that can tear at the skin. Exfoliating removes dead skin cells, which helps treatment products and active ingredients to penetrate your skin more readily. Enzyme masks are another form in which you can exfoliate your skin at home.

#### ***What is Glycolic Acid?***

Glycolic acid is in the family of Alpha-Hydroxy Acids (AHA's). Glycolic acid comes from sugar cane and is a natural exfoliator. Glycolic acid is felt to have the best penetration because of its small molecular size and thus is more often used in skin care treatments.

***What is the difference between AHA's and BHA's?***

AHA's or Alpha-Hydroxy Acids are extracted from nature, and often referred to as fruit acids. Citrus acids are extracted from citrus, malic acid from apples, glycolic acids from sugar cane, lactic acids are from milk, and tartaric acids are from grapes. AHA's are used in skin care treatments to speed up the removal of dead skin cells from the top layer of the skin.

BHA's , Beta-Hydroxy Acids also known as salicylic acid is a derivative of aspirin. BHA's are often used to treat acne as it clears the skin. BHA's also have anti-inflammatory properties that also benefit acne prone skin.

***Is Microdermabrasion or an Acid Peel better or more effective for rejuvenating the skin?***

Microdermabrasion and Glycolic Peels both do basically the same thing for your skin, which is to exfoliate. Both remove the top layer of dead skin cells to reveal fresher, smoother skin and stimulate faster cell turnover to keep your skin radiant. Microdermabrasion is a mechanical means of exfoliation which uses a scrubbing action to remove the dead skin cells. Glycolic Acid is a chemical process of exfoliation which uses a chemical, Glycolic Acid, to remove the top layer of dead skin cells. Both accomplish similar results. It is a matter of preference if you want to use a chemical or physical action to exfoliate your skin. When used alternately, each process can compliment the other procedure, and you are receiving the most effective treatment possible.