

# SERENE SOLUTIONS: Natural Therapies for Stressed Skin

by Rachelle Dupree, marketing & communications director for Vivoderm Natural Skincare

**S**kin is responsible for clearing toxins, retaining moisture, and defending against environmental stressors. External and internal stressors can result in a myriad of skin responses, including acne, hyperpigmentation, eczema, psoriasis, rosacea, dehydration, and excessive oil production. Inflammation, under-eye bags, dark eye circles, flaky skin, and wrinkles can also be visible when the body or its environment is out of balance.

The first thing good skin care professionals may tell a client with stressed-out skin is to evaluate and fine-tune their diet and try holistic skin treatments. Healing and preventing stressed skin holistically mirrors what has already been proven by the medical community for long-term skin health and vitality.

Besides advising clients to adopt a healthy lifestyle, the second line of defense includes a number of at-home holistic treatments that can provide temporary reduction of facial stress responses such as tea bags, herbal facials, chilled stone rollers, or detoxifying baths and facial steams. The following remedies work as relaxing options for clients in between spa visits.

## FACIAL MASKS

An unlimited number of natural facial recipes can be found from the local herbalist, using ingredients such as blueberries, bananas, oatmeal, witch hazel, natural clay, apple cider vinegar, or honey. These masks can



provide temporary relief from all sorts of skin ailments, including oiliness, dryness, redness, and inflammation. Have safe recipes readily available or refer clients to a trusted web source.

## GENTLE STEAM

Have clients use a warm humidifier or an at-home steamer for about 10 minutes when their skin is showing signs of distress. If either is not available, have them use a bowl of hot water steeping with calming herbs like chamomile, marshmallow root, or rose. Advise them to drape a towel over their head and sit comfortably over the bowl.

## SELF-CARE BATH

Creating a relaxing at-home spa treatment by adding a mild essential oil, hydrating bath bomb, oatmeal, milk, or Epsom salts to bath water can be a great self-care experience for clients. Epsom salts contain natural levels of magnesium which can be absorbed transdermally through the body to reduce cortisol levels and inflammation. Adding a natural oil will also help soften and moisturize skin.

## DARK CIRCLES & EYE BAGS

Temporary relief can be achieved with chilled tea bags, facial rollers, or glass globes. Simply tell clients to steep green or black tea bags in boiling water for a few minutes, then transfer them to the refrigerator for 20 minutes to cool. From a reclined position, the client should place the damp tea bags over the eyes for 15 to 20 minutes. The caffeine in tea bags will constrict blood vessels and help dark circles to appear less vivid. Tea also contains antioxidants and tannins that soothe and tighten skin around the eyes.

## STRESS-RELIEVING PRODUCTS

Skin care does not need to be chock-full of unpronounceable ingredients to be effective. Natural oils like coconut, almond, and jojoba can infuse skin with vitamins, combat inflammation, and provide hydration. Honey, rosemary, lavender, and green tea are multi-beneficial. Moisturizers using aloe vera, glycerin, honey, oatmeal, or marshmallow will hydrate and take down irritation, leaving clients with calmed, clear complexions.

If these homeopathic treatments do not quite get the job done for clients, it might be time to incorporate more mechanical methods such as lasers, infrared therapy, acids, or dermabrasion. It is up to the skin care professional to decide what methods to take when improving and healing their clients' skin condition. Often, these methods may be a blend of natural and clinical practices. ▽