



## **Skin care appropriate for oily skin**

Oily skin has a tendency to be associated with open pores, acne and overgrown oil glands. Although people with this skin type will gravitate towards using products such as toners, astringents and harsh cleansers in an effort to clean their skin, these products are usually counterproductive as it is impossible to stop the oil glands, which are quite deep in the skin, from producing oil by cleansing the top layer. The aim should be to neutralise the appearance of the oils by the use of specially designed moisturising bases and powders. Oily skin doesn't differ from other skin types in its requirement for sun protection and preventative and reparative treatments.

### **Alpha hydroxy acid (AHA)**

These naturally occurring acids are found in many foods and have been found to help control wrinkling. They include lactic acid found in mangoes and sour milk, glycolic acid found in sugar cane, tartaric acid in grapes and wine, malic acid found in apples and pears, and citric acid found in oranges and lemons. AHAs undermine the glue-like substance holding cells together and aid in shedding of dead outer skin cells from the surface. AHAs constantly thin the top layer keeping it pliable; they also draw water back into the skin. AHAs can be used in low concentrations to moisturise dry skin, but in higher concentrations they can be shown to reverse fine wrinkling when used over a number of months and possibly even coarse wrinkling over a longer period of time. AHAs encourage the production of collagen in the skin and stimulate glycosaminoglycans making AHAs among the worlds most effective moisturisers. Dermatologists believe that concentrations need to be greater than 5% in order to be effective

## Moisturisers

Humectant based moisturisers, low or free of oils should be used by those with oily skin.

**Humectants** - Humectants are small molecules, introduced to the skin in a moisturiser which attract water from both the atmosphere and underlying layers of the skin and moisturise the skin without producing excess greasiness. Chemicals such as urea, lactic acid and citric acid work in this way.

## Retinoic acid

Most commonly known as Retin-A, it is the naturally occurring derivative and most active form of vitamin A. Originally used for acne control, retinoic acid has a number of different uses. It alters the maturation of the skin cells, making their development more normal. It alters the glue between the cells making it less sticky and producing more protective waterproofing material on the surface. It causes the epidermis to become more permeable, allowing a freer flow of water in and out of the skin. It tends to neutralise over-active pigment cells, evening out the patchy colour of sun damaged skin. In the dermis, Retinoic acid has been shown to stimulate new collagen formation and new blood vessel production. Basically, many sun-induced abnormalities are altered over time with the use of retinoic acid products. Retinoic acid has potential side effects including: the production of a local dermatitis which manifests as redness, dryness and symptoms of burning stinging and itch. In particular it may inflame sunspots and thus be more difficult to tolerate in the presence of severe sun damage. The best way to avoid these potential side effects is to ease into retinoic acid treatment slowly by gradually increasing the time it stays in contact with the skin.

## Sunscreens

Non-comedogenic sunscreens exist for acne prone/oily patients and include milk or alcohol bases and even water-based sprays.