

Make a Realistic Resolution for 2008: Achieving Radiant Skin

By **Beatriz H Porras, M.D.**
Cosmetic Dermatology.
Medical Director Skin Diagnostics
Laser & Rejuvenation.
www.cincinnatiaskinlaser.com.
Dr. Porras is a member of the
American Academy of
Dermatology, The American
Society of Cosmetic Dermatology
and Esthetic Surgery and The
American Society for Laser
Medicine and Surgery.

After the stress and excesses of the holiday season and the harsh effect of the cold weather, you may be feeling run down and exhausted. Your skin is a reflection of how you feel and may be looking even more drained than usual. At the start of a new year, many of us feel that it is a good time to discard bad habits and replace them with new healthier ones. Many of us will pledge to join the gym, lose weight, change careers etc, but if you want a more realistic challenge, then make a new start to improve your skin.

Why your skin? The skin is the reflection of what is happening in your internal organs and it is the largest organ of the body. It is really where we show how old we are, and it is the first thing that people see about us. Your skin is also a portrait of who you are, where you come from, and what kind of life you have had. You can tell a lot about a person from their skin, and everyone's skin tells a different story. This is a detailed list of what you need to know to improve your skin and have a healthy and youthful look. Make achieving radiant skin your new year's resolution.

Daily Skin Care It all starts with this. Having a daily routine is really important for both men and women. A daily routine should include cleansing at least once a day to remove all the impurities accumulated during the day. I prefer a liquid cleanser; Cetaphil is my favorite. For women that wear make up, never go to bed without cleansing your face. Most skin types require a toner to also help removing debris and close pores. Sun block should be used every day no matter the season or skin type. Your sun screen should have zinc oxide and have at least SPF 20.

With the cold weather a moisturizer is really important since cold and artificial heat tend to make the skin drier. Choose a moisturizer



appropriate for your skin type. If you are oily and acne prone, it should be oil free. I recommend the Ultra Sheer Moisturizer by Skin Medica. If you are dry, your moisturizer should be creamy and thick. I recommend the Rejuvenative Moisturizer by Skin Medica. If you are over 25 you should be using an eye cream twice a day. The skin around the eyes is very thin, and it is one of the first places where wrinkles start. People with sagginess and dark circles under the eyes should use an uplifting eye serum. I recommend either Teamine or Uplifting Eye Serum by Skin Medica. Exfoliating is one of the key steps for healthy skin, it should be done two three times per week depending on the skin type.

How to select your skin care products? Here is where you need professional help to know your skin type and your particular skin problems. A skin analysis is necessary. The newest technology offers a computerized skin analysis that will give you in detail all the information about your skin. Always go for medical grade products obtained from your doctor's office. Most of the products carried by your dermatologist are hypoallergenic, created by physicians and designed to address specific problems. Avoid getting your skin care

products from a department store, pharmacy or from a catalog. At my office we offer two lines of skin products that are medical grade: Dermamed USA and Skin Medica.

Modify your habits: Smoking, for instance, is one of the more deleterious factors for the skin. Smoking not only can make your skin dry but also causes premature wrinkling and sagging of the skin. Smoker's skin can be prematurely aged by 10 to 20 year. Quit smoking. Cigarettes will rob the skin of elastin and collagen which keep the skin elastic.

Exercise at least three times a week. If the cold weather makes it hard to be outdoors, go to the gym. But if you don't mind the cold weather like me, bundle up and get out. Exercise keeps blood flowing and increases oxygen to the skin.

Get at least eight hours of sleep. Lack of sleep slows collagen production, alters blood vessels and tone and contributes to puffiness and bags under the eyes.

Decrease your caffeine and alcohol intake; caffeine and alcohol dehydrate your skin. Drink more green tea; this type of tea contains antioxidants and protects against photoaging. Eat a healthy diet with plenty of whole grains,

Daily Skin Care

Modify your habits

Have a skin check up once a year

Take advantage of the new technology

Pamper your skin

fresh fruit, fish, dairy products and vegetables. Drink at least eight glasses of water per day. Take your daily vitamins, more importantly for the skin vitamins E, C and A.

Get a humidifier for your house. With the cold weather and use of artificial heat, the skin tends to get very dry. Avoid tanning beds; you will look good for a few weeks but later on you will get wrinkles and spots. Use a self tanning lotion.

Have a skin check up once a year: Skin cancer is highly prevalent in America but it can be curable if it is caught early. If you have an open sore, reddish patch, shiny bump, pink growth or a scar-like area, show it to your doctor. It could be basal cell carcinoma, the most common skin cancer, or squamous cell carcinoma. If you have a freckle or mole that is dark or irregularly shaped or that has changed in size or color, it could be deadly melanoma. In any case, examine yourself once a month in front of a mirror. Learn to know your skin and visit your skin doctor at least once a year.

Take advantage of the new technology: Nowadays it is so easy to repair skin problems - wrinkles, scars, sagginess, spots and imperfections - without surgery and downtime. Take advantage of laser, Botox® and dermal fillers and renew you appearance with a healthier younger look for the year 2008. Make sure you pick a board certified physician to do your treatments.

Pamper your skin: If you can, get a microdermabrasion regularly. This procedure is quick, fast and affordable. Microdermabrasion removes dead cells and stimulates collagen production. It also improves skin texture, acne, pores, tone and overall appearance. Go only to skin experts and make sure they use only medical grade products on your face .

Look for our monthly articles in Cincinnati Woman Magazine in 2008. Make your resolutions for the New Year, and remember that your skin is the only outfit you wear every day, 365 days a year.

Happy and health New Year from the team of Skin Diagnostics Laser and Rejuvenation!

Skin Diagnostics Laser & Rejuvenation offers Skin Cancer Screening, Medical Grade Skin Products, Botox®, Titan, Laser Treatments and Microdermabrasion to give you healthy and youthful Skin. Call us for an appointment at 513-631-0059.

