

## **Skin care – A long term approach**

It is a commonly held belief that the sun damage inflicted in one's youth through excessive but enjoyable beach activities is a permanent problem.

Nothing could be further from the truth and it is never too late to start on a long term skin maintenance programme. One of nature's great blessings is the ability of skin to regenerate. The cells in the superficial or upper layer of skin are constantly turning over, with new cells forming in the base and going upwards and finally literally "falling off".

This is the white, dry flakes seen on skin, especially in winter. Hence, regular skin care to protect the newer cells formed will gradually improve the quality of skin, making it soft, supple and shiny and more durable. If this sounds like the care we give expensive leather shoes and handbags, it is, as our skin is very similar to the hide from which good leather is made!

## **Skin care – The basics**

The skin has sebaceous (oil) glands which secrete sebaceous material to oil the skin and to soften it. Nature does not always get the balance right as there are some with dry skin and others with oily skin and yet others with "normal" skin.

Our normal activities and dry weather, air-conditioning and bright lights all contribute to cause dry skin. This is compounded by age, as the skin gets thinner and secretes less sebum.

To counteract all of this and to protect the skin, skin care should be regular, like brushing your teeth, twice daily at least.

Soap usage should be kept to a minimum, for dirt removal only. Use a body wash for showering. This adds moisture to the skin and feels like soap, but leaves no residue. After your shower, do not rub vigorously with your towel but dab gently and massage moisturiser into all your skin, not just the face. There are a wide variety of moisturisers available, all of them, quite similar except for the perfume and packaging. The brand is not the issue here - it is regular use and lots of it!

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