

We all want to have that “glow” when we look in the mirror. It is important and possible to look and feel good about ourselves during cancer treatments. I have seen my mother, friends and many clients through breast cancer. As each of them battled this disease, I found similar skin issues they all encountered. One of the best things I was able to help them with was how to keep their skin healthy and looking good during and after chemotherapy.

***How to help with dryness:*** One of the most common side effects associated with chemotherapy is total body dryness. From dry cracked lips, hands and feet to an overall dryness on the entire body. Here are the best ways to keep your skin hydrated and moisturized.

#### Nutrition

- Drink plenty of water. I recommend 80 ounces per day to all my clients.
- Choose a diet rich in omega fatty acids and flax seed.
- Eat at least 5-7 serving of fruit and vegetables. Consider supplementing with a whole food supplement such as Juice Plus or Body Balance.

#### Skin care regime

As you begin treatment, I suggest setting aside any anti-aging, skin resurfacing products you may have been using. Most of those products have at least a year shelf life. If not, give them to a friend. Your goal will be to simplify you regime for the time being and treat your skin as if you were expecting some minor skin irritations from your treatments.

- Choose a gentle, hydrating cleanser such a Vital C Hydrating cleanser by Image. Avoid any type of bar soaps on the face or body.
- Choose a gentle moisturizer and wear sunscreen daily! Try our Organic SPF 30 by Image.
- Gently exfoliate once a week. Choose a product with a mild exfoliating ingredient such as cornmeal, rice or a fruit enzyme.
  - Image Hydrating Enzyme Mask.
- Aquaphor, made by Eucerin: Buy this! This miracle ointment is gentle enough but effective for any area. Great for dry lips, cracked hands and feet, minor burns and skin irritations. You will find that the number of times you wash your hands increases. One of my favorite ways of treating dry hands is by applying a generous amount of Aquafor at night before bed. Some even go a step further and wear light weight gloves for deeper penetration.

□ Get regular facials that are hydrating and nourishing. Many people will ask what they can do for you. They want to help and support you through this journey. Let a friend treat you to a facial. The benefits will not only help your skin but will also encourage you to relax, allow others to support you and get you out of the house. Some days, just having a simple distraction can lift your spirits!

• Choose moisturizing, hydrating and oxygenating facials. Avoid any chemical peels or microdermabrasion treatments. Save those for after your skin has recovered from chemotherapy. Your goal is to treat the side effects of chemotherapy and care for your skin gently but effectively.

***How to help with redness:*** a “chemo flush” can appear for a few days after treatments. Here are a few suggestions for managing redness in your skin:

□ Topical vitamin C is one of the best anti-inflammatories, a super hydrator and a must have anti-oxidant for the skin. By applying this product daily you will help calm the skin down, help hold water in your cells and fight against daily free radical exposure. Choose one with L-ascorbic acid as a main ingredient.

- Stay cool and avoid extreme heat.
- Avoid direct sun exposure.

***How to get your skin to glow:***

- Gently exfoliate 1-2 per week.
- Use topical ingredients that hydrate the skin such as vitamin C or hyluronic acid.
- Hydrate and protect from moisture loss with an emollient moisturizer. Avoid any type of perfume, dye, fragrance, retinol or AHA's.
- Wear sunscreen daily with a minimum of SPF 30. Because of treatment and medications, your skin will be more sensitive to the sun.
- Take flax seed and omega fatty acids supplements. Choose a diet rich in anti-oxidants by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables.

## ***The Finish Line***

We have nourished, hydrated and prepared for the sides affects that came with our treatments. It is time to say goodbye to cancer and hello to a healthy future. As life begins to resemble days before your treatments, many of my clients want to resume or begin a anti-aging skin care regime. I encourage my clients to continue a gentle, nourishing regime and slowly begin to re-introduce anti-aging and skin resurfacing ingredients and procedures. This should be a slow process and I recommend seeking professional advice from a licensed Aesthetician or Dermatologist. Your skin may have changed during treatment. Your body has been through a battle and this can play havic on your skin. You may experience dry, dull skin or find that areas of your skin have endured textural changes. The good news is there are plenty of things you can do to improve the overall texture and appearance of your skin.

## ***A Personal Note***

Cancer has touched many people in my life. From my mother, grandmother, grandfather, relatives, clients and dear friends. I want to take the time to praise you for your courage and strength. Although some days are better than others, by simply reading this book, you have taken a positive approach at taking care of yourself. You may have cancer, but do not for one moment let cancer have YOU. Go and kick cancer's ass, one day at a time.

~Beth Pestotnik Certified Medical Aesthetician