**Healthy Skin**

Your skin provides a physical barrier that protects you from pathogens & contaminants in the external environment. While this may seem obvious, what is often less obvious is how the skin constantly works to regulate the body’s internal environment. The skin is your body’s largest organ and the state of its health reflects your overall health and wellbeing. As a major route of elimination, many skin symptoms are not so much an inherent problem with the skin itself, but instead speak more to systemic imbalance. When a skin condition develops, it is important to determine and address the root cause, as opposed to merely suppressing the symptoms.

**Factors that Affect Skin Health**

1. ***Skin Hygeine –*** establishing a daily cleansing regimen is an important component of developing healthy skin.
2. ***Choice of Personal Care Products –*** While cleansing is important, it is also important to ensure that the process does not damage your skin mechanically or chemically. For a complete list of items to avoid in your personal care products, visit our website and download the handout *Chemicals and Synthetics to Avoid.* It can be found at: [www.naturopathicfoundations.ca/patients/handouts/](http://www.naturopathicfoundations.ca/patients/handouts/) (under Environmental Handouts).
3. ***Nutrition* –** Adequate nutrition is required to achieve and maintain healthy skin. Food sensitivities and nutrient deficiencies contribute to a number of skin conditions & impair the skin’s ability to both detoxify and heal.
4. ***Water –*** Adequate water intake is reflected in the tone and texture of skin. Dehydration weakens the skin’s barrier & hinders the body’s ability to eliminate toxins.
5. ***Toxins –*** Personal care products, pesticides, poor sources of drinking water & air pollution can all contain toxins that cause inflammation, disrupt hormones and alter the body’s pH, making it more acidic and damaging the skin.
6. ***Mental and/or Emotional Stress –*** For many people stress and anxiety can exacerbate existing skin conditions
7. ***Immune Function –*** A weak immune system impacts skin in two ways; first it decreases the overall healing ability of the body and second, persistent skin conditions can weaken the immune system as the skin’s ability to fight infections becomes compromised.
8. ***Dysfunction of Other Systems –*** skin symptoms will often arise when other organ systems (particularly the digestive tract, kidneys, lungs, or liver) are not functioning optimally.

**Common skin concerns effectively addressed with naturopathic therapies:**

Acne

Alopecia (Hair Loss)

Cellulite

Dry Skin

Eczema

Fungal Infections

Insect Bites

Premature Aging

Psoriasis

Rosacea

Urticaria (Hives)

Vitiligo

**Tests often utilized in determining the root cause of skin conditions include:**

* pH testing – urine & saliva
* IgA/IgE/IgG Food Sensitivity Testing
* Hair Mineral & Heavy Metal Analysis – to assess toxic body burden and mineral status
* Hormone testing – serum, saliva, urine
* Thyroid Panel – TSH, T3, T4
* Serum Vitamin D
* Skin scrapings – to test for bacterial or fungal infections on the surface of the skin

**At Naturopathic Foundations, our approach to resolving skin conditions involves:**

* Reducing exposure to toxins by helping you choose safe personal care products

Recommended skin care lines carried at the clinic

Ah-vo

Ferlow Botanicals

Golden Naturals

Jentschura

Pure Earth Minerals

St. Francis

* Creating individualized diets that identify & remove food sensitivities.
* Correcting mineral imbalances and deficiencies which inhibit the body’s ability to effectively excrete toxins and establish optimal pH.
* Strengthening the body’s ability to eliminate toxins via botanicals, homeopathic drainage, hydrotherapy and nutritional supplements.
* Addressing sources of mental &/or emotional stress and implementing healthy coping strategies.
* Regulating the function of the immune system to improve its efficacy.
* Providing ongoing assessment of overall wellbeing and delivering proactive preventative care to maintain the health of all organ systems.

All naturopathic doctors treat skin issues, but if you have specific questions with respect to skin you can speak with Jacqueline Cooper, ND who has a special interest in helping patients achieve ***Healthy Skin***.

**Contact us to book an appointment by calling (905) 940-2727**