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SKINCARE 101

A-Z SKINCARE GLOSSARY

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AHA (ALPHA-HYDROXY ACID)

Natural acids derived from fruit, dairy products and sugar cane which loosen and remove dead skin cells from skin, enhancing the skin's texture and overall appearance. Effective in smoothing skin and wrinkles. AHA's include: Glycolic Acid, Lactic Acid, Malic Acid and Citric Acid.

ANTIOXIDANT

Molecules that slow down or prevent oxidation of other molecules. In skin care, antioxidants help prevent premature ageing.

AYURVEDIC AROMATHERAPY

The Indian science of Ayurveda is based on inherited genetic constitution and molecular biology, treating different body/skin types based on the 5 elements of air, water, fire, ether (space), and earth.

BHA (BETA-HYDROXY ACID)

Also known as Salicylic Acid. BHA exfoliates the skin whilst providing anti-inflammatory action. BHA also dissolves the substance that causes cells to stick together, therefore making it effective in combating acne and breakouts.

BOTANICALS

Ingredients derived from plants.

CAFFEINE

Helps to reduce puffiness and redness by constricting blood vessels. Used commonly in eye care products and cellulite treatments.

CERAMIDES

Fatty acids that help to hold cells together, strengthening the epidermis (surface layer of the skin).

CERTIFIED ORGANIC

These ingredients must be grown without the use of synthetic fertilizers or chemicals. They also must be grown, prepared, processed and packaged according to the specific standards of the country which they are being certified in. They then must be certified by an Organic Certification Body.

COFFEEBERRY

A powerful antioxidant extracted from the fruit of the coffeeberry or California buckthorn plant.

COSMECEUTICAL

Cosmetic products that contain biologically active ingredients and claim to have pharmaceutical benefits.

COENZYME Q-10 (COQ10)

An antioxidant present in the skin which declines with exposure to sun. COQ10 is used commonly in anti-ageing skincare to help strengthen cells and improve the texture of the skin.

COLLAGEN

A protein that makes up approximately 80% of our skin, collagen gives our skin firmness and strength. Over time collagen breaks down, however certain ingredients can promote new collagen production in the skin.

DERMATOLOGICALLY TESTED

Just means “tested on skin”. Different companies will use this term to mean different things.

DIMETHICONE

A form of silicone used commonly in oil-free moisturisers for its slip and hydration properties.

FERULIC ACID

A plant based antioxidant which enhances the stability of Vitamin C and E.

FREE RADICALS

When talking skincare, free radicals refer to UV rays, pollution etc, that cause damage and degradation to the skin.

GLYCERIN

A hydrating ingredient used commonly in moisturising products.

GLYCOLIC ACID

An AHA derived from Sugar Cane which exfoliates the skin, smoothing out fine lines and uneven texture. Used commonly in anti-ageing and brightening products.

GREEN TEA

A powerful antioxidant.

HYALURONIC ACID

A sugar molecule which increases the skin's moisture content. Hyaluronic acid can hold 1000 times its weight in water.

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HYPO-ALLERGENIC

Generally used to mean that the product is less likely to cause an allergic reaction. This does not guarantee you will not react, you will still need to check specific ingredients if you are super sensitive.

IDEBENONE

A bio-engineered antioxidant used to combat free radicals, found in some anti-ageing products.

JOJOBA OIL

an oil derived from an evergreen shrub used for its softening and hydrating properties. Said to be the oil that most closely resembles the skin's own natural oils.

KAOLIN CLAY

A natural clay which offers adhesion to cosmetic products. Absorbs oil, and drives out impurities, so it's great for an oily/acneic skin.

LACTIC ACID

An AHA derived from fermented milk, Lactic Acid exfoliates the skin to improve texture and clarity. It has a larger molecule size than glycolic acid so can be a less irritating alternative for sensitive skins.

LANOLIN

A natural oil that comes from sheep's wool. It has excellent moisturising properties and is easily absorbed by our skin. Lanolin is also known to protect and soothe the skin. Used commonly in lip balms, moisturisers etc.

MINERAL OIL (PARAFFIN OIL)

Liquid petrolatum which has an excellent ability to cut through grease, dirt and makeup. Commonly used in skin care and baby products. Also useful in locking in moisture. Mineral oil acts as a thin layer on the skin, and essentially creates a barrier which has been known to block pores. To be avoided when skin is problematic and prone to breakouts.

NATURAL

A tricky term that has no standard definition when it comes to skin care. Most commonly used to refer to products that are made mostly of plant-derived ingredients.

NIACINAMIDE

A form of Vitamin B3, Niacinamide helps to strengthen skin and improve elasticity whilst reducing redness.

NON-COMEDOGENIC

A comedo is a clogged pore (whitehead or blackhead); therefore a non-comedogenic product is one that claims not to clog pores.

ORGANIC

An ingredient that has been grown free of chemical pesticides. Read packaging carefully as organic does not necessarily mean that every ingredient is organic, or that the ingredients are certified organic.

OIL-FREE

Indicates the product is free from oils, both natural and artificial. A highly recommended choice for those with an oily/acneic skin.

PARABENS

Commonly used preservatives in food and cosmetics that prevent bacteria and fungus from forming.

PEPTIDES

Proteins used in some skin care products for anti-ageing benefits. There are numerous types of peptides.

PHLORETIN

Derived from apples, Phloretin enhances the activity of other ingredients whilst reducing damage caused by the sun.

RETINOL (VITAMIN A)

Used mainly in anti-ageing products to stimulate the renewal of cells. Is available over the counter up to 1%. Increases the skin's sensitivity to the sun and must be used in conjunction with a daily SPF.

SALICYLIC ACID

See BHA

SPF – SUN PROTECTION FACTOR

Sun Protection Factor. The number that follows is a measure of the time it will take for your skin to burn with the sunscreen applied, in comparison to unprotected skin. . If Jane's unprotected skin would burn in 10 minutes, an SPF30 product (correctly applied) would give her 30 x 10 minutes in the sun before burning.

SULPHATES

Cleansing agents that create a lather used to remove dirt and oil. Can be synthetic or plant derived.

TITANIUM DIOXIDE

A natural mineral used for sun protection like a physical barrier between your skin and the sun. Used in sunscreens and cosmetic products.

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UVA

Ultraviolet rays from the sun that cause premature ageing to the skin.

UVB

Rays that cause the skin to tan and burn.

VITAMIN A

Promotes the growth and repair of body tissues. Vitamin A is used commonly in anti-ageing products.

VITAMIN C

A key antioxidant which strengthens collagen synthesis and promotes radiant skin.

VITAMIN E (TOCOPHEROL)

A powerful antioxidant that's essential for the body to protect it from free radicals. Vitamin E also has excellent conditioning properties.

ZINC

A natural sun protector, acts as a physical barrier between your skin and the sun. Used in sunscreens and foundation (especially mineral makeup). Zinc has also been known to be beneficial for those with sensitive and acneic skin.

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