

# Cancer Answers

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## Healthy Inside and Out: Nutrition for Your Skin

Your skin is the largest organ of your body. You need to feed it good nutrition just like all the internal organs of your body. Years ago, I had a doctor put me on the "Stone Age Diet". It was a diet where I was to eat everything as close to its original form as possible. The idea behind the diet was to help my body heal by offering foods that were in their purest form. Each of you knows that cancer, and the treatment of cancer are stressors. To bring this to a deeper level, treatment can also make your skin overly dry, extremely oily or dull and lifeless. Are you feeding your skin nutrients it can digest easily OR adding to you and your skin's stress unknowingly with the products you are using?

Reading the ingredient list on organic skin care products and cosmetics can be like selecting from a menu of wonderful, mouth watering fruits, vegetables and edible flowers at your local restaurant. White grapes, mangos, calendula (marigolds), cane sugar, coconut oil, red raspberries, fuchsia and apple blossoms are just a few of the ingredients often found in organic skin care products and cosmetics. Skin care products and cosmetics made of organic, "stone-age" ingredients are easier for your skin to "digest". Organic products offer your skin **direct** nutrition in the form of essential oils, vitamins and minerals without making it work through added ingredients like artificial fragrances or colors and preservatives.

Conversely, reading a list of ingredients from non-organic products can be daunting. It reminds me of a comic I saw years ago. It was a picture of a woman standing in the grocery store holding a box of pre-prepared food as she read the ingredient list. The caption read, "Mmmm, just like mom used to make. She was a chemical engineer". Talc, propylene glycol, methyl-paraben, propylparaben, urea and diazolidinyl urea, sodium lauryl sulfate and synthetic colors and/or fragrances are a few of the ingredients commonly found in skin care products, cosmetics and hair products. Over the past few years, there has been extensive research and testing done on these ingredients. The results to date are not very impressive from a health standpoint, to put it mildly.

There is no debate when it comes to the advantages these ingredients offer in respect to extended shelf life, ease of use and application. The debate begins when we examine the ingredients listed above, and others, from a user-safety standpoint. Logically there can be no denying that if what we are using on our external bodies is in any way harmful to us, then this is also adding stress internally. Anytime your body has to deal with something that is not botanically based certain body systems have to work overtime to try to neutralize or eradicate the harm.

The chemo drugs used for chemotherapy, as a cancer treatment, are **supposed** to be a stressor to your body in order to kill off cancer cells. Unfortunately, in the process of killing those cells it attacks other fast-multiplying cells in our bodies including hair, mouth lining and stomach cells.

### ...Inside and Out cont'd.

Let the record stand: I am NOT advocating giving up the cancer treatment regimen your doctors have put you on – nor trying to completely stay away from all stressors. That is not only absurd, it is impossible. However, when dealing with cancer it is important to protect your body from dealing with more stress than necessary. One of the ways to do this is by feeding your skin organic products. Adopt the following habits regarding your skin's nutrition.

1. Begin reading the ingredient lists on the skin care products you buy. Although some botanical names are hard to recognize, with some practice you will be able to decipher between botanically-based and chemically-based ingredients. Product labels that say "organic" are always the best.
2. Look for beauty products with short ingredient lists. I know this sounds too simplistic, but in reality, those products with long ingredient lists generally mean that there are more "things" in them than your body needs, or can handle.
3. Purchase skin care products and cosmetics that are preservative free. Although this means the shelf-life of your products will be shorter – YOUR "shelf-life" may be longer!
4. Once home: keep your preservative-free beauty products cool and dry. Refrigerate them between uses if you live in a very hot climate – or if you are not going to use the product up within a six (6) month period.

REMEMBER: Each product you choose to put on your skin is either feeding it or smothering it with ingredients it cannot use. If you are smothering your skin, that, in essence becomes starving it - which adds stress to your body.

Put your skin on a healthy diet today!