

How to use essential oils, home remedies and diet to relieve acne

Facial Steam

A facial steam is an excellent treatment for acne because it opens and clears pores and increases circulation by bringing infected pores to a head.

It is important **not to use boiling-hot water** since it could burn the skin. Also, your head should be at least 8 inches away from the water level.

When and how long? 15 to 20 min will suffice for each steam. You can repeat treatment 2 or 3 times a week.

Ingredients:

4 to 6 cups of hot water

1 drop of Bergamot essential oil

2 drops of Lemon essential oil

A bowl

A towel

You can also use **calendula, peppermint or lemon balm** herb, fresh or dried in addition to the essential oils for their healing and antiseptic benefits.

Pour the hot water into a ceramic or glass bowl. Add the essential oils. Drape the towel over the head, bending over the bowl at least 8 inches away from the water level. Keep the eyes closed during the steam treatment for 15 or 20min or until the water has cooled. Gently pat the face with the towel to dry. Follow with the facial toner below or a floral facial spray to close the pores and balance the skin's pH.

Antiseptic Toner for Acne

This is an antibacterial, anti-inflammatory recipe. The use of this toner will help you prevent infections by decreasing bacterial growth.

Ingredients:

4oz of distilled water or herbal infusion (tea)¹

1 tbs. Cider vinegar

1tbs. Witch Hazel lotion

1 tsp. Honey

2 drops Tea Tree essential oil

2 drops Bergamot essential oil

2 drops Juniper essential oil

3 drops Vitamin E (to prevent scarring from acne)

¹ Antiseptic herbs that you can use are: basil leaves, lavender flowers, lemon balm, marjoram, oregano, peppermint, garden sage and sweet thyme. You do not have to use all of them together. Just use the one available.

In a small spray bottle, or glass bottle, add the herbal infusion or distilled water. Add the vinegar and witch hazel. Add the essential oils to the honey, in a large spoon or saucer and mix well. Add the aromatic honey to the water and shake very well to mix completely. Label. Mist over the face after cleansing or moisten a cotton pad and smooth over the face to remove oil and dirt during the day.

Facial Scrub

A finely ground facial scrub can be used to exfoliate dead skin cells, and deeply cleanse pores. However take care **not to overly scrub** or irritate the skin. If the acne includes flaky dry skin, blackheads and whiteheads then the facial scrub will be most beneficial.

In the following recipe, the oatmeal and cornmeal are the abrasive exfoliates. Honey is a very good antibacterial and anti-inflammatory agent for the skin

Remember: overstimulation of the skin can cause an increase in sebum production, so don't overdo!

Ingredients:

1 tsp fine to medium ground oatmeal
1tsp finely ground cornmeal
1 tsp honey
1tsp natural yogurt
1 tsp Brewer's yeast (optional)
Mineral water (enough to make a paste)
3 drops lavender essential oil

Combine oatmeal, cornmeal, honey, yogurt and brewer's yeast. Add just enough water to make a paste-like-consistency. Add Lavender essential oil and mix well. Apply to the face with fingertips, massaging very gently with upward and circular movements. Do not rub hard or near the eyes. Rinse well with warm water.

How do I treat individual blemishes?

Use a drop or two of **Tea Tree, Cedarwood or Lemon essential oil** on a cotton swab to dab onto infected pores. These oils can be used to kill bacterial infections, aid healing and decrease inflammation. Saturate the cotton swab first with witch hazel or cedar vinegar and then apply one drop or two of the listed essential oils. Make sure to just dab the oils onto the infected area only, and not over a large area. This is spot treatment. Used in this way before bedtime you can often dry up pimples and bring redness and swelling down overnight.

Best Essential for acne conditions

Bergamot, Cedarwood, Clary sage, Chamomile, Eucalyptus, Geranium, Grapefruit, Juniper, Lavender, Lemon, Lemongrass, Lime, Mandarin, Neroli, Patchouli, Petitgrain, Rosemary, Sandalwood, Tea Tree and Ylang Ylang.

Best Carrier Oils for acne conditions

Hazelnut, Jojoba, Wheat germ, Kikui nut, Vitamin E, Calendula infusion.

AVOID

Mineral oil, Petroleum byproducts, Lanolin and Vaseline since all of these have been shown to block pores and inhibit skin respiration among other ill side effects.

Other Home remedies

- Chop 1 cucumber and blend with 2 tablespoons of aloe gel. Apply to your face and leave it on for 20 min, then wash it off. You can do this 2 to 3 times a day, especially if there is inflammation.
- Apply 2 tablespoons of plain organic yogurt to the affected area. Leave it on for 20 min. You can do this 2 to 3 times a day
- Boil one bunch each of fresh dandelion greens, carrot and beet tops in 4 cups of water for 20 min. Strain and drink the liquid. You may want to drink 3 cups a day.
- Boil 1/3 cups of fresh or frozen raspberries in 2 cups of water until reduced to ½ cup. Strain the juice and discard the raspberries. Keep the concentrate juice in a glass jar in the fridge. Use a cotton ball to soak up the juice and apply on affected area twice a day.
- For oozing, infected acne conditions make a mask by mixing ½ cup of pearl barley powder (found in Asian markets or acupuncture offices) with just enough egg whites to make a paste. Cover the affected area with such paste and leave it overnight. Wash it off when you wake up. Do this once a day for 1 week.

Diet

Diet is very, very important in the treatment of acne as well as a nice and flowing “gut”. Here are some recommendations:

EAT: squash, cucumbers, watermelon, winter melon, celery, carrots, cabbage, beet tops, dandelions, mulberry leaf, carrot tops, lettuce, cherries, papayas, persimmons, raspberries, buckwheat, alfalfa sprouts, millet, brown rice, mung beans, lentils and split peas.

AVOID: refined sugar, dairy products, chocolate, caffeine, carbonated drinks, nuts, shellfish and fatty processed foods.

You will also benefit from the ONE_DAY_DETOX recipe.....a good way to cleanse from inside out!

Supplements

Research shows that

- ❖ Taking up to 30mg of zinc a day can help relieve the symptoms of acne.
- ❖ Vitamin A can help reduce sebum production. Dosages should not exceed 5,000 IU a day to avoid potential side effects; the usual daily dose is 1,000 to 2,000 mg.
- ❖ If acne gets worse or shows up before your period, you can take up to 100 mg of B6 vitamin all month long.

Remember that Stress is a big trigger for acne. Exercise can help you relieve stress and thus help alleviate acne. Also, the acupuncture points that I showed you in class can bring some relief.

Good luck in your “experiments” and have fun!

Yamin Chehin L.Ac, D.OM

References:

Secrets of self healing by Dr Maoshing Ni

Aromatherapy, soothing remedies to restore, rejuvenate and heal by Valerie Gennari.