Topical Herbs

Mimi Hernandez, MS, RH(AHG)
Parabens

- Also known as Methylparaben, Propylparaben, Isoparaben, Butylparaben.
- Widely used as preservatives in the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries.
- Linked to possible carcinogenicity, as well as an estrogenic effect from being exposed to the continued use of parabens as preservatives.
- The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in their report "Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products in the Environment: Agents of Subtle Change?" reported that the displayed estrogenic activity in several tests. It is a known medical fact that estrogen stimulates breast cancer and anything absorbed through the skin may be as high as 10 times the concentration of an oral dose.
Petrochemicals

- Studies have found that oral and topical application of petrochemicals in rodents resulted in anemia, kidney degeneration, and nerve damage to the brain and spinal cord. Even more disturbing was that several animals died before the study ended!
Phthalates

- Dibutylphthalate and diethylphthalate (DBP, DEP, also butyl ester) helps lotions absorb into skin.
- DEHP has been classified as a "probable human carcinogen" by the EPA.
- L'Oreal is the only major cosmetic company to discontinue the use of this chemical in Europe only due to severe allergic reactions.
- 2009 - former President Bush signed a bill banning the toys containing phthalates.
- 1 Billion pounds produced annually!
Artificial fragrances are made from petroleum or coal which degrade in the environment and cause skin irritations.

Cosmetic fragrance is made with cheap synthetic chemicals which replicate the natural aroma of products which already exist in nature. Companies use them because it is cheaper than using the natural scent.
Sodium Lauryl/Laureth Sulfate

- Also known as Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS) or Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES). This is the second most concentrated ingredient in shampoos. It is used in concrete floor cleaners, engine degreasers, car wash detergents, and just about every soap and shampoo on the market. In the same way as it dissolves the grease on car engines, sodium lauryl sulfate also dissolves the oils on your skin, which can cause a drying effect.

- According to the Journal of the American College of Toxicology, Vol. 2, No. 7, 1983, SLS is a mutagen. In sufficient amounts, it is capable of changing the information in genetic material found in cells. It has been used in studies to induce mutations in bacteria. It denatures protein, impairs proper structural formation of young eyes, creating permanent damage. SLS can damage the immune system.
Simply Strawberry Mask

- Live enzymes cool inflammation
- Antioxidants Prevent aging
- Vitamin C stabilizes collagen
- Sulphur compounds detoxify
Chamomile
Topical Herbs

- **Chamomile- Granny’s Favorite!**
- We all know it as a relaxing herb.
- But it is also highly anti-inflammatory with research proving it as effective or better than hydro-cortisone cream.
- Studied very well and found to be effective against eczema and seborrheic dermatitis which involves crusty flaking around eyebrows, nasal, ears, dandruff. Also relieved redness and roughness caused by UV light radiation.
- Calming. My child asks for it by name when she has a mosquito bites-calms itching. Calms the nerves.
Comfrey

Contains Allantoin which is known to stimulate healthy cell proliferation for healing with minimal scar tissue.

Mucilage is soothing cooling and protective, quiets the nerve endings.

Noted for its ability to promote the growth of connective tissue, bone, and cartilage.

Easily absorbed through the skin.

Comfrey is best used fresh and simmered. Use the sticky paste to make a compress or dip affected area in tea.
Calendula
Topical Herbs

- **Calendula**
  - Contains marked anti-fungal activity appropriate for ringworm, tineneas, or athletes foot.
  - Increases epithelialization, a critical element referring to the skin’s ability to knit itself back together. (Vulnerary)
  - It may be used safely wherever there is an inflammation on the skin, whether due to infection or physical damage. It may be used for any external bleeding or wound, bruising or strains.
  - It will also be of benefit in slow-healing wounds and skin ulcers and is ideal for first aid treatment of minor burns and scalds.
  - Reputation for preventing and healing stretch marks
Plantain
Topical Herbs

- **Plantain**
  - The classic Spit poultice - Green Bandaid Weed - helpful for rashes, wounds, ulcerations, cuts, swelling, sprains, bruises, burns, eczema, cracked lips, poison ivy, mosquito bites, diaper rash, boils, hemorrhoids, and blisters.
  - A drawing Agent - draws out the poison for bee stings, snake bites, and spider bites, and it effectively draws out splinters or thorns and reduces the risk of scarring with more severe cuts and scrapes.
  - *In vitro* bacteriostatic and bactericidal activity has been shown for the cold aqueous extract.
Aloe
Topical Herbs

- Aloe Vera
  - Extremely rich in nutrients, minerals, amino acids and active compounds, and is one of the most miraculous and widely used natural healing ingredients in the world.
  - Speeds the rate of healing, dramatically, especially burns and frostbite.
  - Stimulates neovascularization, microcirculation, and topical immunity
  - Protects skin cells against UVB radiation (the kind of rays that cause sunburn).
Jewelweed
Topical Herbs

- **Jewelweed**
- The succulent and juicy Spotted Touch Me Nots like to grow in moist areas, near streams & ponds and ironically are found near poison ivy.
- The active principle in the plant responsible for this activity remains unidentified but evidence suggests that compounds inside jewelweed could neutralize Toxicodendron allergens.
Lavender
Tea Tree
Topical Herbs

- **Essential Oils- Lavender or Tea tree**
- Antimicrobial, anti-itching, anti-inflammatory, cooling, soothing, and analgesic.
- Also relaxing and great for traveling.
- Use on all kinds of bites or burns.
- Lavender can be used on the skin for headaches.
- Tea tree Oil is antifungal and can be used for Athletes foot, scabies, ringworm, dandruff.
- Do not ingest.
Topical Herbs
Infused Oils

- Preferably dried herbs are covered with a carrier oil.
- Massage oils
- First aid oils
- Base for salves, creams, lotions
Topical Herbs
Salves

- Base of infused oil.
- Blended with beeswax to thicken.
- Protects & moisturizes the skin.
- Lip Balms made the same way.
The Skin

- One square inch of your skin is home to:
  - 65 hairs
  - 100 sebaceous glands
  - 78 yards of nerves
  - 650 sweat glands
  - 19 yards of blood vessels
  - 9,500,000 cells
  - 1,300 nerve endings
  - 20,000 sensory cells

Our body’s largest organ makes up about 15% of our total weight and covers 20 square feet.
The Skin & Nervous System

- Deep & complex relationship
- Nerve & Skin cells come from same embryonic tissue
- Most often thought of as vata. Wear their nerves on their sleeve.
- Nervous issues can come through the skin. Stress has implications in eczema, psoriasis, acne, etc.
The Skin & Nervous System

- Demulcents- “laying a cool soothing blanket over firing nerves”
- Aloe
- Marshmallow Root
- Slippery Elm
- Comfrey
- Plantain
- Oats
- Jewelweed
Skin & Nervous System
Calm over frazzled nerves

- Chamomile
- Lemon Balm
- Oats & Oatstraw
- Skullcap
- St. John’s Wort
- Passionflower
- Lavender
- Valerian
- Hops

To Make a Nervine Tea

- Put 2 Teaspoons of desired herb in a mug. (Double amount if fresh)
- Pour boiling water over it.
- Put a lid on
- Let infuse for 15-20 minutes.
- Sweeten with honey if desired
- Enjoy Nightly!
The Skin - Excretion

- Liver
- Bowels - keep bowels moving
- Kidneys
The Skin- Excretion

- Diaphoretic Herbs- Induce sweat, may assist excretion through sweat glands.
- Boneset
- Lemon Balm
- Peppermint
- Elderflower
- Yarrow
- Catnip
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