



Summer skin-sations

The heat is on! SMITA IYENGAR checks out the impact summer makes on your skin.



Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability," said the English writer, Sam Keen, of the hot days of the year. But in a tropical climate such as ours, while our bodies tend to slow down, our skin is hyperactive, taking the brunt of the vagaries of weather.

Ours is no English summer, when larks and magpies sing their sunshine tunes... Here, the sun blazes relentlessly on our skin, sizzling the delicate, nature-endowed, soft and supple texture, laying it bear to the harsh onslaught of mercury-soaring dryness, pollution, sweat and grime.

It's typically an Indian trait that different communities have their own ways to beat the summer heat. While some dab cold rose water on to their skin, others make cooling sandalwood face packs. Some believe in controlling internal heat with kokum sherbets or mogra coolers, whereas for others, there is thandai, coconut water, lime and honey mixed in herbal tea... the list is endless!

With a multitude of international brands now on Indian shores, we can take professional help in dealing with heat-related skin problems. Beauty and skincare experts across the board have unique treatments to combat the dermal abrasion.

HAIR 105



FRAGRANT FUNDAS

What's the most holistic way of dealing with the oppressive heat? Aromatherapy. On an emotional level, aromatherapy relaxes your irritable nerves and deals with skin-related maladies. Aromatherapy expert, Seema Jerajani, of Fusions Salon and Academy says, "Skin that is normal during winter is more of a combination skin in summer. Dry skin feels dehydrated in summer; it is oily skin that tends to be acne-prone."

This summer, indulge in an aromatherapy facial, where the healing power of touch is teamed with the vital force of pure essential plant oils to holistically and therapeutically relax, balance, energise and stimulate your mind and body. A combination of essential oils includes those of rose, fennel, ylang ylang, sandalwood, mogra and champa, some of which are cooling in nature, some of which have aphrodisiac properties. You will walk out with radiant, glowing skin.

Seema has tailor-made, unique concoctions for different skin types.

- Fennel is good for dull, oily, and mature skin types.
- Sandalwood is soothing, cooling and moisturising. It is good for healing acne as well as for dehydrated skin.
- Vertivert is known as the 'oil of tranquility'. It is cooling and refreshing.
- Ylang ylang is cooling and softens and balances the moisture in the skin.
- Champa is cooling and moisturising.

The results of the treatments are enhanced by the use of home-care products.



BODY MESSAGES

During summer, body massages help relax tired muscles. Using herbs such as Brahmi or essential oils such as sandalwood with a coconut oil base helps cool the entire body. For face massages, however, use jojoba or plain coconut oil, which are light and penetrating. Most welcoming in summer is a bath and if you can indulge in more than one a day—you're lucky—the more refreshed you will feel. Aqua packs such as green gram paste with mint and lemon or sandalwood with buttermilk to cool you and also reduce your suntan.



THE GROUND BENEATH YOUR FEET

Spa pedicures

Using peppermint, fennel and geranium — have been designed to achieve a cooling effect and reduce swelling due to the heat.

The old technique of soaking feet for 10 minutes in herbal soaks is an effective way of relaxing and reviving them. How exotic you want it to be is your choice. Naturopath and Beauty Therapist, Nirmala Shetty of Nirmal Herbal Skin and Hair Care Clinic, has some simple yet effective foot soaks:

Herbal soak

All you need is a large tub or bucket with lukewarm water. In a vessel of hot water add margosa leaves, mint leaves, marigold flowers and rose water. Keep stirring until you notice a little colour in the water. Pour this entire mixture in the bucket and soak your feet in it for about 10 mins. You could also add a couple of drops of pine essential oil.

Sandalwood soak

Prepare this soak by adding six drops of sandalwood oil to a 3/4th bucket of water and let your feet soak in this. Relax by closing your eyes and placing some cucumber slices over your eyelids. After five minutes, remove your feet and apply sandalwood paste over them. When dry, place the feet back into water and wash off.

If you have no time for a footbath, rub rosemary oil or diluted apple cider vinegar into your feet, massaging for about five minutes before taking a bath.

If you suffer from foot odour, especially during the summer, wear socks made from natural fibres because they allow your feet to breathe. If you must wear tight shoes, sprinkle some sandalwood or chamomile powder over your feet.

Uptan for a cooling, relaxing bath:

What you need:

- ¼ cup sandalwood powder or paste
- 1 cup green gram powder
- ½ cup oatmeal powder
- ¼ cup neem paste
- ¼ bunch coriander leaves
- 1 cucumber, grated
- Buttermilk for mixing

Method:

Apply this paste all over the body and leave it on for 10 minutes. Wash off with cool or normal water. Spray some rose water all over for a cool feel.

Nirmala has a remedy to tackle heat boils or acne that arise in summer

What you need:

- 6 margosa leaves
- 6 basil leaves
- 6 mint leaves
- ½ a tomato

Method:

Grind all into a smooth paste and apply twice a day. Keep in mind that those with hypersensitive skin should avoid this pack.

Here's a face pack to reduce a tan:

What you need:

- 2 tsp. curd
- 2 tsp. almond powder
- 2 tsp. green gram
- 1 pinch of turmeric powder

Method:

Mix the ingredients and apply twice a day. Now you won't have to worry about the after-effects of a lovely day at the beach or by the pool.

