



Natural Beauty

NATURAL
PRODUCTS
SEEM TO BE
EVERYWHERE. TRY
THESE ABCS TO
GET YOU STARTED.

By Stacy Booth

HERBS AREN'T JUST FOR DINNER. IN FACT, NEITHER ARE LEMONS, PAPAYA, ALMONDS, OATMEAL, AVOCADOS OR HONEY. THESE INGREDIENTS HAVE BEEN USED FOR YEARS—IN SOME CASES, FOR CENTURIES—TO AID IN KEEPING PEOPLE BEAUTIFUL. WITH NATURAL AND ORGANIC FOOD BECOMING INCREASINGLY POPULAR, SOME CONSUMERS ARE NOW LOOKING FOR SIMILAR THINGS IN BEAUTY PRODUCTS. THE ABILITY TO PRONOUNCE THE INGREDIENTS IN YOUR FACE WASH, SHAMPOO AND DEODORANT IS BECOMING A REQUIREMENT. WITH THE INCREASE IN DEMAND, HOWEVER, COMES AN INCREASE IN VARIETY, AND THE SHEER NUMBER OF BEAUTY PRODUCTS THAT CLAIM TO BE NATURAL CAN BE OVERWHELMING. HERE, FIND 26 TIDBITS OF INFORMATION TO HELP YOU NAVIGATE, ARRANGED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.

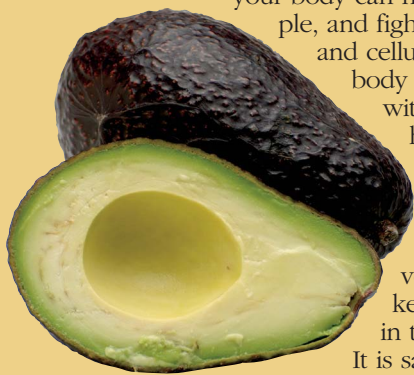
A is for *Aromatherapy*

Aromatherapy involves the use of volatile plant oils for physical and psychological benefit. The most common use of aromatherapy in the United States is heating oils to release their fragrances into the air. The most important thing to remember when utilizing aromatherapy, according to aromaweb.com, is to make sure you are using high-quality essential oils with no artificial ingredients. Because of aromatherapy's popularity, some companies are creating "fragrances" and labeling them as aromatherapy. To get the full benefits, however, the oils need to be pure, or blends from pure essential oils. Check ingredient lists carefully, and avoid things with chemicals or "fragrance" listed.



B is for *Body care*

Although you might be very choosy about the products you use on delicate facial skin, your body needs a little TLC also. Using the right products for your body can help keep skin supple, and fight wrinkles, sagging and cellulite. For example, body creams and lotions with avocado oil will help prevent wrinkles. The avocado oil is very rich and nourishing, and is great for aging and very dry skin. To keep body skin soft in the bath, try milk. It is said that Cleopatra bathed in milk to keep her skin soft. Another option is to look for products that use goat's milk, cow's milk or oat milk. There are also commercially made bath milks available.



C is for *creams*

Creams, for the face or body, make fantastic cleansers as well as moisturizers. Cream cleansers are a good option for everyone, as liquid cleansers can be alcohol-based, which dries out the skin. The variety of creams available can be overwhelming, so look for those containing ingredients beneficial to your skin type. Avocado oil is good for dry skin; lavender or rose oils work for normal skin; and rosemary as an ingredient is superb for oily skin. If you have problem skin, try looking for products that contain comfrey.



D is for *Dead Sea salts*

The Dead Sea is the saltiest body of water on earth at 33 percent salt. Oceans are only 3 percent salt. Because of this, and because the salt is made of so many minerals, Dead Sea salt has unique therapeutic properties not found in other salt products. It is said that Dead Sea salt can strengthen skin tissue, maintain the chemical balance of the skin, improve circulation and help eliminate toxins. Dead Sea salt can be found in a variety of beauty products, and the salt can be purchased in bulk online. Even if you don't want to spend money for Dead Sea salt, regular sea salt can be used for a simple body scrub, a great way to exfoliate your entire body. Simply mix two cups of sea salt with one-quarter cup of water, and then rub it all over your wet body, resting for a few minutes when you're done to allow the salt to work. This is best done in a tub or shower. Be careful not to use salt on your face or in any cuts.

E is for *Essential oils*

Essential oils are not really oils, but the liquid from distillation of leaves, flowers and bark of plants. They are highly concentrated and contain the essence of what the plant is made of. Essential oils, unlike perfumes or fragrances, do not contain any artificial ingredients, and have various therapeutic qualities. They are usually used through aromatherapy, applied in diluted amounts to the skin or used in lotions, creams, soaps and other beauty products. If you purchase a bottle of an essential oil for use in homemade cosmetics, there are a few safety precautions to take. Gill Farrer-Halls, in the "Natural Beauty Recipe Book," suggests these safety tips:



- NEVER TAKE ESSENTIAL OILS ORALLY, AND AVOID CONTACT WITH YOUR MOUTH AND EYES.
- DO NOT APPLY UNDILUTED ESSENTIAL OILS TO THE SKIN, AS SOME CAN CAUSE SKIN IRRITATION.
- WHEN MAKING HOMEMADE BEAUTY PRODUCTS, DO NOT INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF ESSENTIAL OILS CALLED FOR IN THE RECIPES.

F is for *Faces*

Your face is the first thing people see, and your facial skin is bombarded daily with pollution. Taking care of your face is often a No. 1 priority. Although facial products have hundreds of ingredients, a few are more commonly found, and each has a different therapeutic value.

Cucumber IS A NATURAL ASTRINGENT AND CLEANSING AGENT.

Palmarosa IS AN ESSENTIAL OIL THAT STIMULATES HEALTHY CELLULAR REGENERATION, KEEPING SKIN CLEAR AND FRESH.

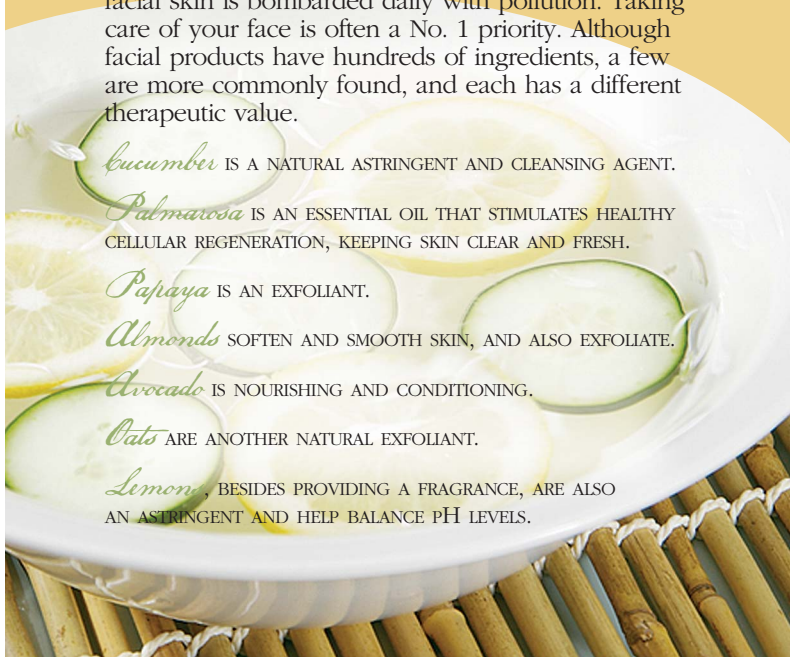
Papaya IS AN EXFOLIANT.

Almonds SOFTEN AND SMOOTH SKIN, AND ALSO EXFOLIATE.

Avocado IS NOURISHING AND CONDITIONING.

Oats ARE ANOTHER NATURAL EXFOLIANT.

Lemon, BESIDES PROVIDING A FRAGRANCE, ARE ALSO AN ASTRINGENT AND HELP BALANCE PH LEVELS.



G is for *Gargling*

Gargles and mouthwashes are not something most people think of as "natural," but there are some available. They are also easy to make, if you can't find something you like in the store. These can help with oral hygiene, especially gargles containing ingredients, such as peppermint, spearmint, cloves, wintergreen and parsley. Some of these herbs can even be used alone, in lieu of mints or gum. Chewing fresh parsley or wintergreen, or dried fennel or cloves will help freshen breath.

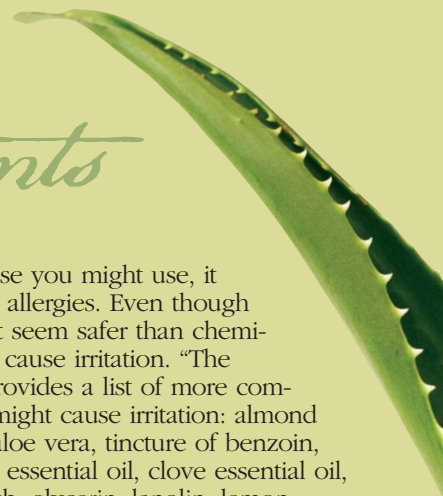


H is for *hair*



Natural products for hair are abundant, and many are well known. For example: Lemon juice and sunlight to lighten hair, a beer rinse for bouncy hair, and eggs or mayonnaise for conditioning. Beyond that, herbs and other natural products found in shampoo and conditioners might only seem to add scents. In fact, certain hair types respond to particular ingredients. Greta Breedlove, in her book "The Herbal Home Spa," lists a variety of ingredients to look for, like comfrey root and avocado for dry hair, dandelion for normal hair, watercress or strawberry leaf for oily hair, egg or raspberry to get shine, yogurt for manageability, olive oil for softness, peppermint or vinegar to fight dandruff, basil or rosemary for growth, chamomile for blonds, lavender for brunettes, beets or calendula for redheads and indigo or sage for those with very dark hair.

I is for *irritants*



As with anything else you might use, it is important to test for allergies. Even though natural products might seem safer than chemical products, they can cause irritation. "The Herbal Body Book" provides a list of more common ingredients that might cause irritation: almond essential oil or bitter, aloe vera, tincture of benzoin, chamomile, cinnamon essential oil, clove essential oil, cocoa butter, cornstarch, glycerin, lanolin, lemon essential oil, lemongrass essential oil, lime essential oil, orange essential oil, any synthetic essential oils, tangerine essential oil and vinegar. A patch test can help determine if you'll have a reaction. To do a patch test, make a paste with 1 teaspoon of the herb in question added to boiling water, or for essential oils, dilute 1 drop with 1 tablespoon of water and saturate a cotton ball. Then apply either the paste or the cotton ball to your inner elbow, cover it with a bandage and leave on for 24 hours. If your skin develops a rash or redness, do not use products with that particular ingredient.

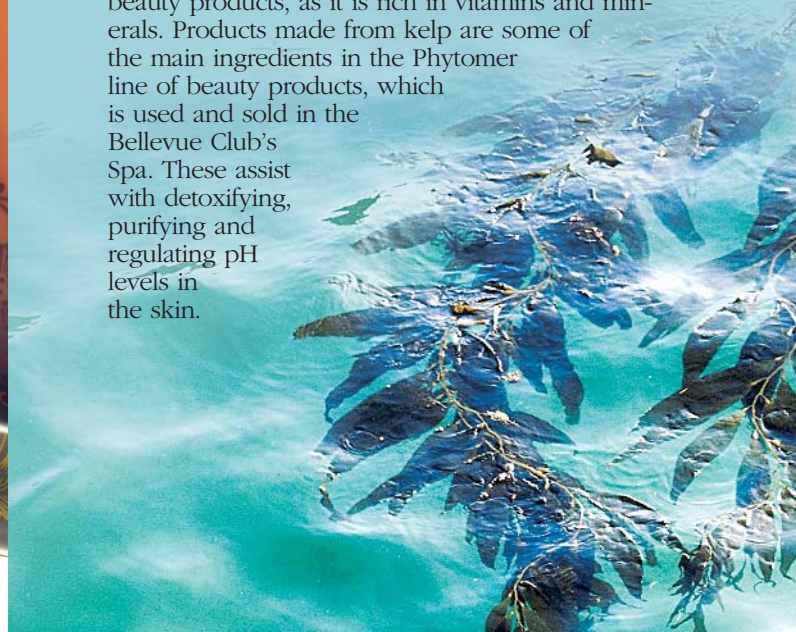
J is for *Jasmine*



Jasmine grows mainly in France and Morocco, and is used for its calming properties. It can be consumed as jasmine tea, or added to beauty products in its essential oil form. Jasmine is also an antiseptic and has softening qualities. As an added plus, it smells nice. Jasmine essential oil, however, should be avoided if you are pregnant.

K is for *Kelp*

Kelp, like other algae, grows in nutrient-rich waters, making it a common ingredient in many beauty products, as it is rich in vitamins and minerals. Products made from kelp are some of the main ingredients in the Phytomer line of beauty products, which is used and sold in the Bellevue Club's Spa. These assist with detoxifying, purifying and regulating pH levels in the skin.



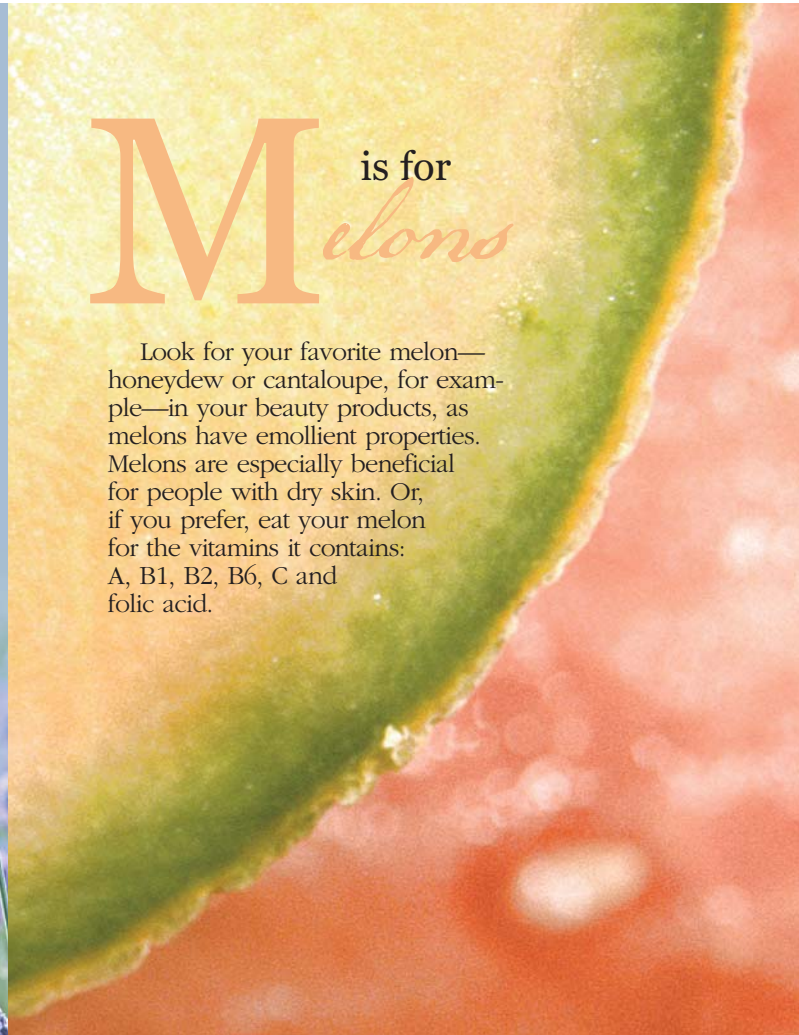
L is for *Lavender*

Lavender is a popular ingredient for a variety of products, not all of them beauty-related. Because of lavender's distinctive scent, it is often used in potpourri, candles, lotions and creams, shampoos and soaps. In fact, lavender is from the Latin word "Lavare," which means "to wash." This makes sense, as lavender has antiseptic properties and was once used to cleanse wounds. New research also shows lavender eases anxiety and insomnia.



M is for *Melons*

Look for your favorite melon—honeydew or cantaloupe, for example—in your beauty products, as melons have emollient properties. Melons are especially beneficial for people with dry skin. Or, if you prefer, eat your melon for the vitamins it contains: A, B1, B2, B6, C and folic acid.



N is for *Nutrition*

Nutrition is important to keep you feeling and looking beautiful. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is going to help provide all the minerals and vitamins your body needs, as well as give you energy for your day. For beautiful skin, try to eat fish, flaxseed, dark orange and dark green vegetables, hazelnuts and almonds.



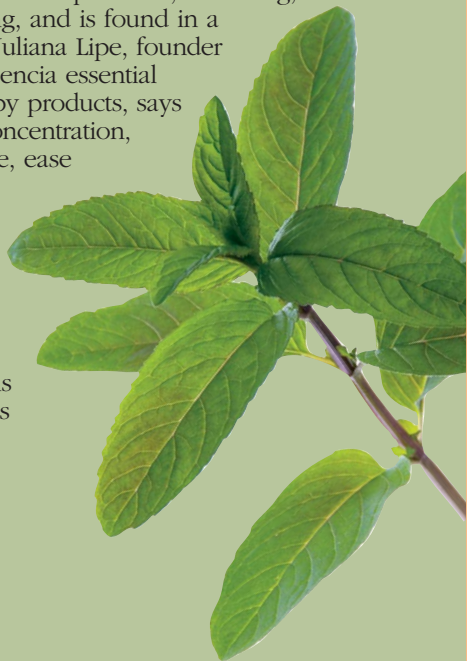
O is for *Organic*

The words organic and natural are often thrown around in relation to beauty products and food. The definitions, however, are important. First, know that there is currently no regulation for beauty products, unlike drugs, which are tested and regulated by the FDA. Know what you are buying and where it comes from—read ingredient labels carefully. Also, know what "organic" means and what "natural" means. Organic, usually in relation to food, means the food was produced according to the United States Department of Agriculture guidelines. If something is labeled organic, it is susceptible to these regulations, and has legal implications for misrepresentation. Something labeled "natural," on the other hand, has no regulating body, and is not subject to laws. Natural, in general, means the food or ingredient was minimally synthesized, but because there is no regulation, it's left to the manufacturer to determine "minimally."



P is for *Peppermint*

Peppermint, as well as spearmint, is cooling, soothing and uplifting, and is found in a variety of products. Juliana Lipe, founder and co-owner of Essencia essential oils and aromatherapy products, says mint can improve concentration, relieve mental fatigue, ease muscle aches and soothe irritated skin. Spearmint in particular, says Juliana, is beneficial for people suffering from acne, as it fights surface bacteria, controls infection and reduces redness.



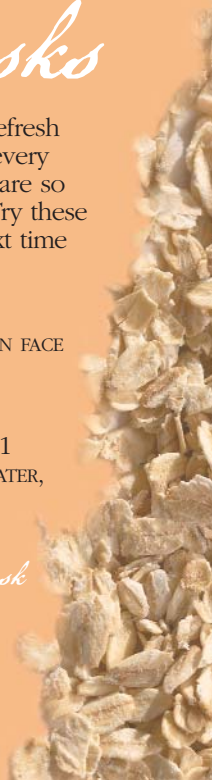
Q is for *Quick face masks*

Face masks are a great way to soothe, refresh and tighten skin. There is a face mask for every skin type available for purchase, but some are so easy there is no need to buy it in a store. Try these from the "Natural Beauty Recipe Book" next time your face needs a little pick-me-up:

Avocado Enriching Mask PEEL AND MASH ONE AVOCADO, THEN APPLY THE MASH TO A CLEAN FACE FOR 10 MINUTES.

Honey & Almond Moisturizing Mask COMBINE 1 TEASPOON OF WARMED HONEY WITH 1 TABLESPOON OF GROUND ALMONDS AND WARM WATER, CREATING A SPREADABLE PASTE. APPLY THIS TO A CLEAN FACE FOR 10 TO 15 MINUTES.

Yogurt & Oatmeal Deep Cleansing Mask MIX 1 TABLESPOON OF GROUND OATMEAL WITH 1 TABLESPOON OF YOGURT. ADD 1 TEASPOON OF WARMED HONEY AND BLEND, AND THEN APPLY TO A CLEAN FACE FOR 10 TO 15 MINUTES.



R is for *Recipes*

The Internet is full of recipes to make your own beauty products. For the most part, these are simple recipes that use ingredients you probably already own. Many include essential oils, however, which can be an expensive investment and need to be stored in specific ways to maintain potency. If you do want to try creating your own products, check out the aforementioned books or these Web sites:



www.makeyourcosmetics.com

www.mybeautyrecipes.com

www.free-beauty-tips.com/home-made.html

S is for *Spa at the Club*

Next time you're at the Club for your workout, stop by the Spa to make an appointment for a massage or facial. These services can keep you beautiful—through massage by relaxing your mind and muscles and through facials by using one of the many products containing natural ingredients to work on your skin from the outside without harsh chemicals or surgery. One product line already mentioned, Phytomer, uses ingredients from the sea to help remove toxins, fight wrinkles or blemishes, hydrate the skin and restore the skin's natural pH level. Phytomer has a variety of products, and the aestheticians at the Club can find the perfect combination for your skin.



T is for *Time*

There is a lot of information about creating your own beauty products, but gathering ingredients and making these takes time. If time is at a premium, find some favorite commercial varieties with one or two natural ingredients or stop by the Spa for an Express Manicure or Pedicure, chair massage or a refresher facial. Taking the time to pamper yourself can have a significant impact on your well-being.



U is for *uv*

By now you're probably aware of the harm ultra-violet rays can cause to your skin. Although very fair-skinned people probably need commercial products with SPF, others might be able to use a homemade version of sunblock for short periods. "The Herbal Home Spa" has a few good recipes to try. There are several natural products that offer some sun protection, and they might surprise you. Black tea, for one, contains tannic acid, which absorbs UV rays. And sesame oil offers the highest radiation absorption of any vegetable oil. If the damage is already done, aloe vera works well for soothing itchy, sunburned skin and St. John's Wort can help repair damage to skin. If you have age spots, freckles or other skin discoloration, find products that contain lemon essential oil. As with your hair, lemon can help lighten dark pigment.



V is for *Vodka*

Besides making your own lotions, creams, soaps and shampoos, you can also create your own mouthwashes and deodorants. That's where the vodka comes in, as it's often the main ingredient for these homemade products. Although they might not work as well as commercial products, natural mouthwashes and deodorants don't contain chemicals. And in the case of deodorant, it still allows the body to perspire, releasing toxins. Here is a recipe to get you started:

Cinnamon Spice Mouthwash PUT 1 TABLESPOON OF CINNAMON CHIPS, 1 TABLESPOON OF WHOLE CLOVES, 1 TEASPOON OF ANISE SEED AND 1 TEASPOON OF GROUND NUTMEG INTO A JAR AND POUR 1 CUP OF VODKA OVER THE SPICES. SHAKE THE JAR DAILY FOR TWO WEEKS, THEN STRAIN AND POUR INTO A DARK AMBER BOTTLE. BECAUSE THE MOUTHWASH IS CONCENTRATED, BEFORE USING DILUTE 1 TABLESPOON INTO 1 CUP OF WATER.



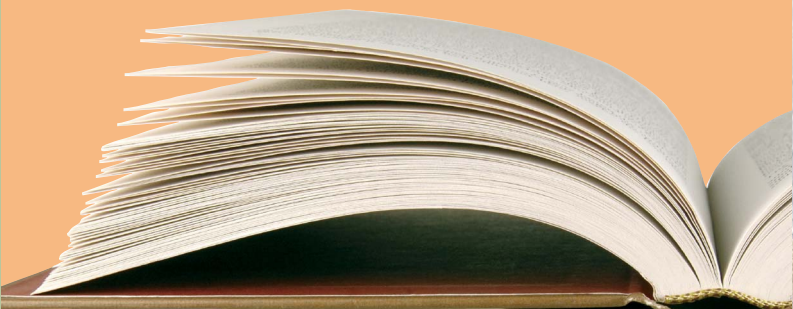
W is for *Water*

In addition to good nutrition, water is essential for having beautiful skin. Drinking eight glasses of water a day will keep you hydrated from the inside, so you won't have to rely on moisturizers. Water also aids in ridding the body of toxins.



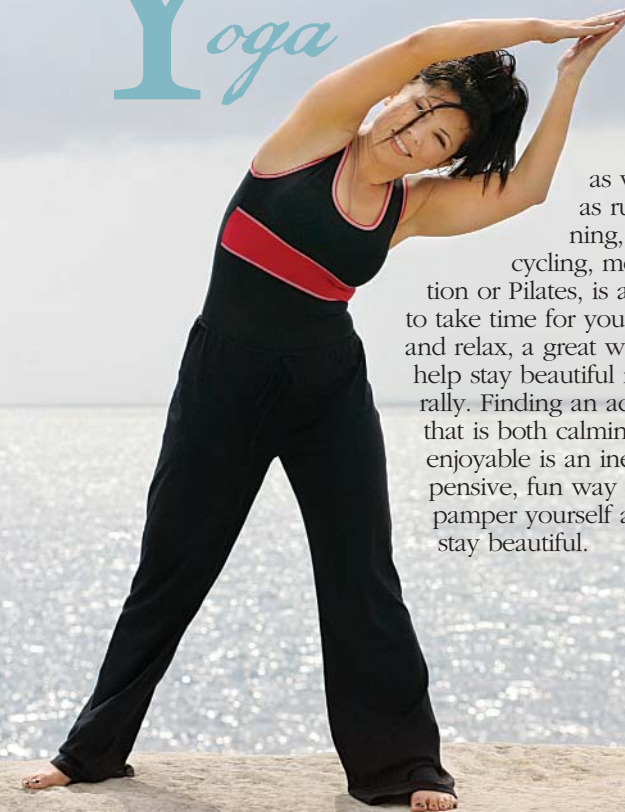
X is for *tra*

For even more information about natural ways to stay beautiful, PCC Natural Markets and Bastyr University sometimes offer classes on the benefits of herbs and other foods, as well as a variety of cooking classes, wellness classes and general information about living naturally. Both have classes and workshops listed on their respective Web sites. Also check out the books and Web sites mentioned in this article, or stop by the Club's Spa and get more information about the wide variety of products and services offered, many of which use natural ingredients.



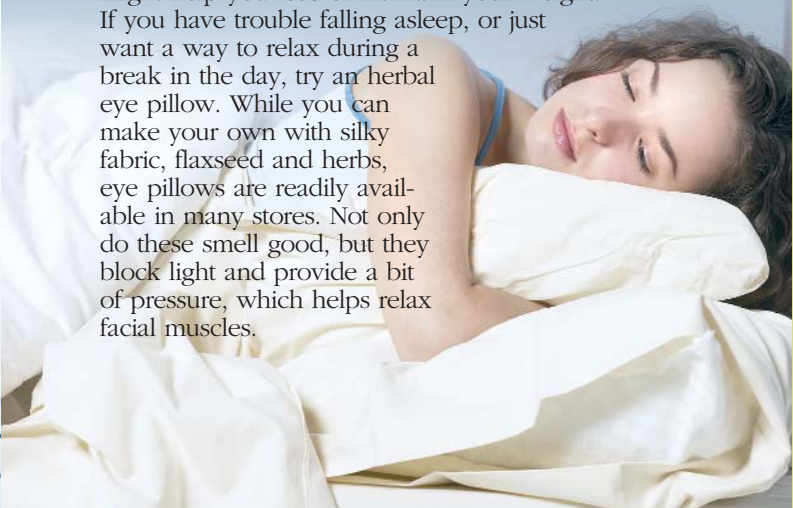
Y is for *oga*

Yoga, as well as running, cycling, meditation or Pilates, is a way to take time for yourself and relax, a great way to help stay beautiful naturally. Finding an activity that is both calming and enjoyable is an inexpensive, fun way to pamper yourself and stay beautiful.



Z is for *zzzzzzzzz's*

There might not be a more effective natural way to stay feeling and looking beautiful than getting enough sleep. During sleep, your body repairs and regenerates tissues, builds bone and muscles and strengthens the immune system. Some recent studies have even found evidence that getting enough sleep might help you lose or maintain your weight. If you have trouble falling asleep, or just want a way to relax during a break in the day, try an herbal eye pillow. While you can make your own with silky fabric, flaxseed and herbs, eye pillows are readily available in many stores. Not only do these smell good, but they block light and provide a bit of pressure, which helps relax facial muscles.



EVERY HERB, SPICE, FRUIT, VEGETABLE AND GRAIN HAS ELEMENTS THAT WILL AID YOUR BODY IN SOME WAY. FOR THE MANY LISTED HERE, THERE ARE MANY MORE THAT WERE NOT COVERED. JUST LIKE ANY OTHER PRODUCT, NATURAL BEAUTY PRODUCTS CAN CAUSE ADVERSE REACTIONS AND WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO WORK, SO TRY ONE OR TWO AT A TIME AND BE PATIENT. ALSO REMEMBER THAT MANY OF THESE PRODUCTS WILL SMELL GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT, BUT ARE NOT SAFE TO EAT, SO KEEP THEM CLEARLY LABELED AND AWAY FROM CHILDREN. TRY OUT SOME NATURAL BEAUTY OPTIONS TODAY FOR A BEAUTIFUL TOMORROW!