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10875 Main Street ~ Suite 205 • Fairfax, VA 22030 • USA

703-359-6000 FAX: 703-934-5490 EML: mktgsols@mktgsols.com

Prevent and Reverse The Signs Of Aging Help Clients Take Good Care Of Their Skin

By: Shannon Barnes

Skin is the largest bodily organ and it reflects a person's health. If a person's skin looks unhealthy it can often mean that the person as a whole, is unhealthy. This may be due to poor diet in terms of their daily eating habits or just generally not taking good care of their body. Everything we eat and drink will affect the appearance of our skin so it is very important that both skin and body be cared for everyday. We must be the ones to teach our clients and patients daily techniques on how to professionally keep their skin looking healthy, glowing and youthful.

If your clients are not eating plenty of healthy foods, then their skin will show it. If they are drinking too much alcohol or smoking too much, the same results will take place. That is why it is important to educate your clients about taking care of their skin on a daily basis to prevent aging. They can do this by eating wholesome foods, drinking plenty of water, cleansing properly and avoiding numerous toxins that will keep their skin from looking and feeling it's best. As estheticians and spacare professionals, you should be a fountain of knowledge from which your clients can absorb information. Your skincare consultations should not just include information about the latest products you get in, but about each of the steps involved in how to take care of their skin on a daily basis. Clients should be able to come to you with any skincare questions or confidential bodycare challenges they have. As a skincare professional, you should be knowledgeable enough to answer questions, offer suggestions and advice.

In the past few decades, skincare technology has been rapidly advancing. We have learned a lot about skincare damage prevention, anti-aging techniques and how to help turn back the hands of time when it comes to skin. As a skincare professional you should have a solid understanding of the many revolutionary new treatments and equipment available today as well as what they can realistically do to benefit your client's skin. The skincare research and data we have access to today is much more advanced than 50 or even 10 years ago. The great news is that we can use this advanced technology to significantly improve our skin now and well into the future. People no longer have to have a face lift to see significant changes in the visible age of their skin. Specialty products that contain ingredients like Hydroxy Acid, and effective Vitamins can greatly improve the appearance of our skin. We have learned that aging is not simply a natural process over which we have no control. Through preventative measures we can change the way our skin has been known to age.

Anti-Aging Through Daily Prevention Techniques

Now that we know more about what is good for skin and the elements that prematurely age it, we can do something about it. The knowledge that is available to us could prove invaluable to a client who does not understand how to best take care of his or her skin. If the client is still young they can be taught early to treat their skin as a jewel. If good care is taken early then the young person will never have to reverse the damage that could occur throughout the years. If you are dealing with a mature client, it is not too late for them to start treating their skin right and start doing what they can to reverse some of the damage that has already been done to their skin. Though we all know about the basics of taking care of skin and preventing problems down the road it is good to review these simple ideas often, just for reinforcement.

Share these daily prevention guidelines and rituals with your clients:

- Avoid exposure to the sun
- Drink plenty of water
- Use sun block for skin and hair
- Eat plenty of healthy vitamin-enriched foods
- Avoid smoking
- Avoid excessive drinking
- Use a professional chemical exfoliant
- Use a professional skincare regimen at home between clinic / spa visits

It has been found that much of the cumulative damage that causes people's skin to age prematurely is from excessive sun exposure. Daily inadvertent exposure to the sun, even on cloudy days and during the winter causes significant damage over the years. There is also the obvious damaging practice of baking in the sun. You should strongly

recommend that your clients minimize their sun exposure while on vacation. Recommend that they use the proper sunscreen if they are going to be in the sun for a long period of time and to reapply the sunscreen often. This is a good recommendation for anyone. The simple look of a tan is a sign that damage has been done to skin, but a burn indicates extensive skin damage has occurred. The best advice you can give is certainly to avoid the sun as much as possible but at a minimum you should take precautions by always using sun protection, limiting sun exposure, and making certain that you never burn.

When we as skincare professionals make these kinds of general recommendations, yet it is important to remember that we must properly present these suggestions, by explaining several key benefits that specifically meet each of their skincare challenges. Always personalize and customize your skincare consultation message. Attempt to offer more than what will appear as generic advice. If your client ignores your advice, we obviously cannot scold them or inappropriately make them feel bad about their bodycare behavior patterns. Remember that it is their choice. They come to you to relax and enjoy as well as improve their skincare ...not to feel awkward or guilty.

Water is also essential to skin's health, as well as all bodily functions as well. Water is one of the most important elements to ensure well-hydrated skin. We must advise our clients to make sure that the skin is hydrated from the inside is just as important as maintaining hydration on the skin's surface. Advise your clients to drink at least 8 to 10 glasses of purified water each day to maintain healthy skin and all other bodily organ functions.

Eating healthy food on a daily basis is equally important for the health of your client's skin. While improper eating habits well will not stop the aging process, it is an important tool that can be used to prevent premature aging. When the body is receiving all the essential vitamins, minerals, proteins and nutrients it needs -- you are enabling your skin and body to function well everyday. Less stress and strain is forced on the body when it has all the energy and nutrition it needs.

Professional Skincare Regimens

An important part of general daily maintenance for your clients skin is consistent skincare. Skincare can be a one step process but the addition of specialized products and treatments to a cleansing routine will greatly improve short-term results. The long-term results can also be extremely impressive. Generally basic skincare is seen as cleansing, toning and moisturizing. This is a simple routine that everyone should perform daily on their skin. You should, however let your clients know that when they do not add specific personalized treatments to their regimen they are missing out on many effective anti-aging ingredients and products that are essential for significant positive results. Remind them not to forget the rest of the skin on their entire body! It is just as important to cleanse, exfoliate and moisturize the rest of your skin too!

Anything that increases a person's overall health and well-being, will benefit their skin. Regular exercise, maintaining low stress levels, avoiding excessive smoking and drinking will have positive effects on your client's skin. So explain to your clients exactly how to keep all of these ideas in mind, no matter what your age, because it's never too late to take care of your skin!

There are many skincare treatments and procedures that can take five to ten or more years off of the age of your skin's appearance. Many of these must be done in a salon, skincare clinic, spa or a doctor's office, yet there are also many treatments that clients can do at home too. You must educate them on some of the basics, which include moisturizing, hydroxy acids, and vitamin therapy.

Antioxidant Vitamins

There are four major antioxidant vitamins that have proven effective to reduce the signs of aging as well as prevent further damage to skin. These include Vitamins A, C, E and Selenium. There are several kinds of damage that can be prevented or reversed through the use of antioxidant treatments. These include damage from the sun, smoking, and other free radical related challenges. Free radicals cause problems for skin when oxygen molecules are oxidized. However, there are other environmental factors that can cause this kind of oxidation to occur. All of these can be taken internally. Selenium is not really found in any topical products on the market right now. These anti-oxidants have similar benefits for the skin and body, but some have other added benefits, which are important for your clients to know about.

Vitamin A or retinol is a popular vitamin used in skincare products today. This vitamin in its pure and undamaged form has proven to thicken the skin through an increase in collagen production. Vitamin C is the most popular and most talked about anti-oxidant vitamin available for skincare. This vitamin is excellent for the skin for many reasons. It has anti-inflammatory properties, neutralizes free radical damage and it has been proven to reverse the signs of aging by stimulating both collagen and elastin growth. Vitamin E is an antioxidant found in vegetable oils. It has the same benefits as the other anti-oxidants. Selenium is a mineral that has the same benefits as other antioxidants, while it has been shown to reduce the risk of several different types of cancer.

There are other problems with antioxidant vitamins that are in pill form and in different topical formulations. With vitamins that are in pill form, it is hard to gauge how much of each vitamin is actually being absorbed by the body and used to aid the skin. With various topical skin treatments there are other challenges with the stability of the vitamins. Stability is often

a problem with vitamin C. This means that the effective form of the vitamin breaks down when exposed to air. This means that many of the Vitamin C products that are available are not effective or beneficial, as you would expect.

Take the time to research all of the different professional Vitamin-enriched product variables on the market today. There are a few special Vitamin C products that work beautifully and are extremely effective. For example, one of these is the Vitamin C Product created by Clinitone Skincare. This product is Vitamin C in a unique crystallized form. These crystals enable the vitamin to capture and maintain all of its wonderful healing properties without breaking down. Marcia Avis, founder of Clinitone Skincare explains, "Clients often have questions about how to use the product because it is in a crystal form and you cannot just apply them alone. We recommend mixing the crystals with just about any other professional skincare product medium. You can mix them with a lotion, a glycolic acid product or a vitamin serum. Our crystals are the perfect rare formulation to be mixed simultaneously with a glycolic acid that enhances the penetration of the vitamins enabling them to go even deeper into the skin's layers. Few skincare lines can mix vitamins with glycolic acid in this manner! We explain that it is very important to apply this mixture to their skin, right after combining the two. This way you get the best results!

Every professional skincare system is different and has its own unique chemical design characteristics. You should carefully follow your manufacturer's recommended advice.

Emollients and Moisturizers

Essentially these two are one and the same in terms of what they do for the skin. Emollients are usually in an oil form while moisturizers can contain a combination of ingredients including emollients and/or humectants as well as other ingredients. Emollients tend to be heavier and work more as a lubricator that forms a barrier from the environment on the skin's surface. Some ingredients that are termed emollients include: shea butter, different nut derived oils, avocado oil, jojoba, cocoa butter, and various plant oils. These are just a few of the large range of emollients that can be used as a lubricator for the skin.

Though the words moisturizer and emollient are often used interchangeably, a moisturizer is usually different than an emollient. An emollient is usually only one ingredient by itself, a moisturizer can be just one ingredient or a combination of ingredients like the blended formulations we often use on our clients skin. When a single ingredient is termed a moisturizer, it can mean that it is an emollient or a humectant. A humectant is an ingredient that draws natural moisture from the air and environment to the skin in order to maintain the skin's moisture, rather than just coating the skin with an oily substance like an emollient. Often the more emollient a moisturizer is, the better it is for very dry skin. Humectants are usually better ingredients for normal to slightly dry skin.

The subject of emollients versus moisturizers can often be confusing. Many people use the terms in slightly different ways. This does not mean the way they are using the term is wrong, simply that their interpretation of two very similar ideas may be slightly different. In any case, moisturizers are only for the purpose of softening and smoothing the skin temporarily. On their own, they do not do anything for the visual appearance of wrinkles in terms of getting rid of them. However, moisturizers do make wrinkles look smoother and they plump up the fine lines in the face. Unfortunately, if the skin becomes dried out again, it will look just the same as it did before the moisturizer. This is important to explain to clients who use a moisturizer. They need to understand that they must use it consistently to get the results they expect. The same rule applies with their entire facial routine. When moisturizer is applied consistently the moisture level in the skin stays high and the skin will look smooth, supple, and radiant all the time. So, moisturizer does have a positive effect on fine lines and wrinkles the benefits are only temporary if it is not used daily.

Alpha and Beta Hydroxy Acids

These are wonderful ingredients to use on your client's skin. They exfoliate the very top layers of the skin and benefit an array skincare challenges. This type of professional product can reduce the appearance of fine lines, clarify acne prone skin and reveal softer skin under some of the driest faces. The Alpha Hydroxy Acids are great for any skin type. They efficiently exfoliate the top layers of skin. Glycolic Acid is the most popular and one of the stronger forms of this kind of acid. Beta Hydroxy Acids or Salicylic Acid can benefit any skin type as well. However, they are recommended mostly for skin that is prone to acne breakouts. This is true because the Beta form of hydroxy acid is able to absorb into the pores. This means that more exfoliation takes place inside the pore, which helps to unclog them. There are no strict rules as to which type to use, because they can both benefit any skin type. Generally, the Alpha Hydroxy Acid is recommended for dry skin or normal skin. Beta Hydroxy Acids are recommended for oily and blemished skin.

These ingredients are almost magical when used consistently in the right concentration and formulation for your client's skin type. Often clients will not be happy with the results they get from a particular product. The reason is they are probably not using it appropriately and consistently. For the proper results from skincare, it must be used regularly. This consistency is what we must stress to our clients, during our skincare consultations. If your client has never used one of these products before -- or recently, it is important to let them know that there may be a purging stage where the skin will breakout. Explain that this is because of all the dirt and clogged pores clearing out, which often will cause pimples. After this phase is through, the skin will be glowing and much clearer than it was before. If you carefully explain all of this when

giving each client their service and products, they will expect a realistic change – rather than instantaneous miracles. This should ensure their continuous use of your services and the professional product system, even though a few minor problems may become apparent. Most skin will breakout a bit, when placed on a prescribed new deep cleansing regimen.

There are also many hydroxy acid products on the market that do not work as effective exfoliants, because there is not enough of the active ingredient present in the formulation -- or the pH of the product is not balanced correctly to make it an effective exfoliant. Most professional products are effective in this respect, yet some are not and your clients should be warned that many standard retail brands are a waste of money, since they may not solve the skincare challenge that they were purchased to improve.

Consultative Selling Techniques

Take the time to explain the benefits for your skincare treatments during each step of the service, while your client is in your facility. Use this valuable time to educate your clients while also demonstrating how to take advantage of your professional products and services.

- 1. ASK Specific Skincare Questions:** Ask about their skincare needs, challenges, problems and wishes. Listen carefully, while asking as many clarifying questions as you can about their lifestyle, home skincare regimens and desires.
- 2. ANALYZE Each Challenge:** Ask more questions about each of the needs, desires and problems they have.
- 3. ANSWER With Skincare Solutions:** Offer professional advice and prescriptive recommendations for how to maintain healthy skincare through the use of a proper product regimen. Offer complimentary advice on their positive lifestyle actions, while recommending a decrease or elimination of our lifestyle actions. Personally customize a complete skincare and bodycare system, while taking the time to explain the specific key benefits for why they should use product. Explain and demonstrate exactly how to use each product. Explain how they should complement their homecare skincare systems with in-salon or in-spa service treatments, like therapeutic facials, body treatments, microdermabrasion and any other services that you offer. Devise a professional prescription type of sheet for your clients to review and keep, for both their home and clinic treatments.

Anti-Aging Prevention Through Professional Support Systems

It's plain to see that for anyone, prevention is the best way to combat aging skin. For clients who want to smooth and help reverse the signs of aging without major treatments or cosmetic surgery, there are some excellent treatments available today, for them to experience. It is important to make sure that the professional product systems that you select to use for services and to sell for homecare use, are high quality -- from cleansers, toners, hydroxy acids, vitamins and moisturizers to all of their other treatments. That does not always mean the most expensive or most well known brand. Do your research and ask other skincare professionals what their favorites are. Find out which companies offer modular systems, so you do not need a huge stock keeping and inventory system. Look for manufacturers and distributors that offer advanced education, hands-on training seminars, marketing, advertising, PR and merchandising support.

Invest in special anti-aging service menus and brochures for your clinic. Briefly explain the benefits for each service, while offering a series of treatments. Use photographs to illustrate before and after results. Create exciting point-of-purchase signs, counter cards, window banners and prescription pads to visually illustrate your anti-aging services. Approach the local newspapers, magazines and TV talk shows offering yourself as an anti-aging skincare expert.

Read every professional cosmetic, skincare and spa publication that you can subscribe to. Attend special anti-aging workshops that are available at regional, national and international conventions. Never stop learning about new anti-aging service techniques, equipment and products that come out. Staying well-educated with the best anti-aging skincare solutions will keep your clients coming back to you, for the answers they really need. This should give you a great starting point for determining which line will be best for your business. When you really know your subject and are honest, people will respect your opinion. They will even try all of the professional products that you recommend. So read, take classes, and constantly research about skincare so you will be known as the best expert anti-aging esthetician, in your local area!

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EDITORIAL NOTE: Shannon M. Barnes is a Marketing Coordinator at Marketing Solutions in Fairfax, VA. Marketing Solutions is a complete marketing, advertising, public relations, and consulting services agency specializing in the professional beauty business. Shannon has been involved in the professional beauty business for 10 years, and has written articles for numerous national beauty publications. For more information, contact Marketing Solutions at 703-359-6000 or email MktgSols@MktgSols.com.