

# Local Dermatologist on the Importance of Skin Care

November is National Healthy Skin Month



It doesn't matter the season, healthy skin is always in fashion. The American Academy of Dermatology has designated November as National Healthy Skin Month to draw attention to the importance of healthy skin and skin care. Sunil Dhawan, MD, a Fremont-based dermatologist with the Center for Dermatology, Center for Dermatology Clinical Research, and member of the Washington Hospital medical staff explains that healthy skin is your body's first layer of protection. Keeping your skin healthy does more than make you look good. It contributes to your overall health.

"Most people care about their appearance, and healthy skin is a big part of that. But healthy skin also protects you from infections and helps regulate your body's temperature," says Dr. Dhawan. "And some skin conditions, such as psoriasis, can be an indicator of inflammation or illness elsewhere in the body."

There are certain activities that age the skin more quickly and that can create serious health risks. These include smoking, drinking too much alcohol, and using tanning beds. Nicotine and other chemicals in cigarettes damage the skin and result in early signs of aging and wrinkles. Too much alcohol can lead to redness and water retention in the face, as well as other more serious conditions like jaundice and cellulitis. Indoor tanning devices have been linked to significantly higher incidences of skin cancers.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that skin cancer is the most prevalent cancer in the United States, with approximately 4.3 million adults treated for basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas every year. The American Cancer Society estimates that from seven to eight thousand Americans die from melanoma annually.

"There is really no such thing as a safe or healthy tan," says Dr. Dhawan. "So-called 'base tans' will not protect you from burning. In fact, indoors or outdoors, tanning is one of the worst things you can do to your skin. All shades of skin are susceptible to damage from UV rays, so everyone needs to take precautions when spending time in the sun."

Dr. Dhawan explains, "There are two types of UV or ultraviolet rays that damage skin, UVA and UVB. UVA rays, whether from the sun or an artificial light source, penetrate deep into the skin causing it to age more quickly and increasing the likelihood of skin cancers. UVB rays are what cause burning and immediate damage to skin." Many sunscreen products list a sun protection factor number, or SPF, which usually indicates how well the products serve as a barrier against UVB rays. "To get the best protection from UVA and UVB rays at the same time, you will need to choose a sunscreen that offers broad-spectrum protection, has a 50 SPF or higher, and includes zinc oxide or titanium dioxide in its ingredients."

Keeping skin healthy is not just about avoiding UV rays and applying plenty of sunscreen. In the winter, skin can dry out easily when too much time is spent in overheated rooms. Dr. Dhawan recommends the following tips for keeping skin healthy at any time of year:

1. Avoid over using soap on the skin, which can be drying and make skin susceptible to rashes. "In the winter when your skin gets very dry, you only need to use soap on your scalp, face, underarms, and in the groin area," says Dr. Dhawan. Too much soap strips your skin of its natural barriers to bacteria and viruses.
2. Keep your showers brief and the water at a warm, not hot, temperature. Long, hot showers are tough on skin, and can lead to itchiness and rashes. "In winter," says Dr. Dhawan, "you do not want to spend more than five or ten minutes in the shower."
3. Moisturize your skin at least twice a day. Creams tend to have less water in them than lotions, and will provide a thicker barrier. Expensive creams are not always better, as some contain too much perfume and other additives that can be harmful. "Among the best moisturizers are Vaseline, coconut oil, and shea butter," offers the doctor.
4. Try to limit the amount of time you spend in the sun between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., especially if you are at a higher altitude where UV exposure increases. If you

*All shades of skin are susceptible to damage from UV rays, so everyone needs to take precautions when spending time in the sun.*

—Sunil Dhawan, MD

are skiing or hiking in the mountains, it is very important to remember to reapply broad-spectrum sunscreen frequently.

5. Stay hydrated with plenty of water. In the winter, you may find yourself consuming lots of hot coffee and tea, but those drinks do not offer the same level of hydration as water. Dr. Dhawan recommends eight glasses of water a day.

6. Eat nutritious, unprocessed meals which are good for your overall health, but especially for your skin. "Meals that avoid red meat and are high in grains, fruits, vegetables, and olive oil, even a little bit of wine, are excellent for your skin health," says

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**Coming Soon!**



**Happy Heart: Treatment Options for Aortic Stenosis**  
**Dec. 1, 3:30 p.m.**  
Blood flow from the heart to the rest of the body is reduced with narrowing of the aortic valve. This condition is aortic stenosis. Acclaimed cardiologist will share symptoms and treatment options.



**Diabetes: Understanding and Controlling Complications**  
**Dec. 8, 6:30 p.m.**  
Diabetes complications reach much further than low blood sugar levels. Endocrinologist, Prasad Katta, MD, will share tips to control complications.

**Other Video Topics:**

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# Ohlone Community College District Board of Trustee Appoints Interim President-Superintendent

On October 12, 2022, the Ohlone Community College District Board of Trustees announced the appointment of Mr. Anthony F. DiSalvo as interim President/Superintendent of Ohlone College, replacing Dr. Eric Bishop.

With over 25 years of community college experience, Interim President DiSalvo has been with Ohlone College since May 2020, as Vice President of Academic Affairs-Deputy Superintendent. Prior to Ohlone, he served as Vice President of Academic Affairs at Copper Mountain College and as an academic dean at Chaffey College and College of the Desert, both located in Southern California. Interim President DiSalvo began his community college career as a Professor of French and Spanish at Frederick Community College in Maryland.

"As a first-generation America born to non-English speaking immigrant parents, I understand the power of a culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse community college that prides itself on transforming the lives of all the communities it serves," says interim President DiSalvo.

The search for a new President will begin this month. The Ohlone Community College Board of Trustees has contracted with the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) to conduct a national search for qualified candidates. A search committee representing both the college and community interests is being formed to recommend the most qualified candidates to the Ohlone Community College Board. The Ohlone Community College District Board hopes to appoint a new president by July 2023.



If you have any questions please reach out to Greg Lawson, Ohlone College Director of Communications & Marketing at glawson@ohlone.edu or 510-659-6438. #WeROhloneCollege

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Dr. Dhawan. "People who eat high calorie and high carbohydrate foods tend to have worse psoriasis, eczema, and acne. Their way of eating is not helping their skin and it contributes to other health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and cardiovascular disease."

Dr. Dhawan notes that for some people, staying out of the sun may reduce their amount of vitamin D, which is critical to a body's ability to absorb bone-strengthening calcium. Low levels of vitamin D have also been linked to a higher risk of breast cancer. While your body makes vitamin D when your skin is exposed to sunlight, vitamin

D is also found in many foods and is easily available as a vitamin supplement. However, too much vitamin D can be harmful, so be sure to check with your doctor before starting supplements.

"Those who worry too much about vitamin D deficiency are missing the point. You can take vitamin D supplements and solve the problem. The real risk is skin cancer. The bigger epidemic is melanoma, which is killing people," warns Dr. Dhawan.

There is a lot you can do on your own to keep your skin healthy. Many rashes and insect bites can be treated

with over-the-counter antihistamines and hydrocortisone ointment. "However, if you find a sore or lesion that suddenly appears or is changing in size, shape, or color, you should consult a dermatologist right away," cautions Dr. Dhawan. "Likewise, if you find the discomfort from a rash or bite is not diminishing or is keeping you from sleeping, you should not hesitate to seek medical advice."

For additional information about skin care and common skin ailments, you can find many helpful links on the Center for Dermatology Cosmetic & Laser Surgery's website <https://centerforderm.com/patient-resources/>.



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