

## Natural Remedies for the Skin



**Everyone wants to look good.** And when it comes to skin care, people are increasingly looking at “natural ingredients”. We tend to associate “natural ingredients” with being safe and free of chemicals. This may not be entirely true. There is a wealth of information on a variety of “natural” remedies in print and the internet. How do we tell which of them work?

- **Aloe**

**The Good:** Full of moisturising properties. It is perfect for all skin types. It has a soothing effect on the skin and has been used traditionally to claim the inflammation following sunburns.

**The Bad:** Aloe is prickly. Take care when removing the skin.

- **Cucumber**

**The Good:** Also rich in moisturising properties. It also helps to claim inflammation and soothes the skin. Commonly cut into slices and placed over the eyes. Some find it very useful as a moisturising, anti-aging eye treatment. Cucumber has also been used to treat sunburns.

- **Lemon & Lime**

**The Good:** Nothing.

**The Bad:** It is a very bad idea to use them on the skin. Lemon and lime juices are highly acidic and can significantly alter the skin pH, disrupting its normal function. For individuals with sensitive skin, it can aggravate the skin and cause a dermatitis. Lemon and lime juice also contains chemicals (naturally occurring) that can cause skin inflammation and blisters when the skin is exposed to the sun.

- **Coconut Oil**

**The Good:** It is claimed to possess anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties. It is also claimed to be rich in anti-oxidants that helps to reverse the signs of aging. More importantly, it does not alter the skin’s natural pH and works well as a moisturiser both for the face and body.

- **Celery & Parsley**

**The Bad:** Pretty much like what limes and lemons can do to your skin. Celery

and parsley can give you a nasty rash when you apply them crushed onto your skin together with sun exposure.

- **Tofu**

**The Good:** Tofu or silky beancurd is rich in plant oestrogen. Oestrogen has been shown scientifically to reduce the signs of aging. That is why many women notice their skin becoming dull and wrinkled after menopause.

**The Bad:** What is unknown is how much of the plant oestrogen will get into the skin to effect its benefits when tofu is applied directly on the skin.

- **Honey**

**The Good:** Honey is claimed to have natural healing properties that help calm the skin and promote faster recovery. It is also claimed to be antibacterial which helps with wound healing. It has been used for centuries as a topical antibacterial agent.



This article is written by Dr Gavin Ong, Medical Director at The Skin Specialist. He is a specialist in dermatology with many years of experience in all skin conditions and adept at managing skin conditions affecting the skin, hair and nails in both children and adults.

His main areas of interests include general dermatology, facial aesthetics and sexual health. He is able to manage conditions affecting the skin, hair and nails in both adults and children. He performs skin surgery for skin cancers and other benign skin conditions.

Dr Ong was trained in the National Skin Centre and was a consultant dermatologist before

joining The Skin Specialist, a Singapore Medical Group (SMG) clinic.

He was awarded the Ministry of Health’s Health Manpower Development Award where he pursued a Fellowship in Sexual Health and HIV Medicine in St Stephen Centre and Chelsea & Westminster Hospital in London, UK in 2013. He became the Deputy Head of the Department of STI Control (DSC). Dr Ong was also a visiting consultant at Tan Tock Seng Hospital & Khoo Teck Phuat Hospital.

