

What is Skin and Why Does It Matter?

Pangea Organics Skincare

Skin as an organ: Skin is the largest organ of our bodies. It is the first line of defense of our immune system and our last organ of elimination. Skin is permeable and can absorb many things, but if it is healthy and we're doing a good job of deterring things that are unhealthy then skin can actually help in preventing us from becoming diseased. On the other end of the body's process, anything that has gone in (by consumption, inhalation and absorption) eventually comes out through the skin. Skin is a clear indicator of general health, which is why it is crucial to use skincare products that are, at the very least, not harmful to us – and, at best, actually good for us.

The skin has five layers in the outermost part known as the epidermis, as well as two layers beneath the epidermis: the dermis and the subcutaneous. Skincare products are meant to affect only the epidermis, and most affect only the outermost layer of the epidermis, the stratum corneum.

Facial skin: Facial skin is very different than that of the rest of the body. First, facial skin is thinner and more delicate than the skin on the rest of the body, and therefore needs to be treated more gently. Second, the pH of facial skin is more acidic than the body. It ranges from about 4.5 – 6.2 on the pH scale, with about 5.2 – 5.5 as optimal pH. The reason for the special acidity of the face is that most of the body's orifices are located on the face. These openings to the body require a special defense against pathogens such as, harmful bacteria, viruses and parasites. This extra acidity, called the "acid mantle," provides just such defense.

Please note: When we refer to facial skin we really mean an area slightly wider than the face. The term "face" extends down to the neck and includes the region of décolleté. When we treat our skin with products, the area from the décolleté up through the neck and face are what require "facial" or "skin" care products and not "body" care.

Natural protection: Our skin creates its own natural protection. In the world of biology it's called "sebum," which is more commonly known as "oil". We all need sebum in our skin because it is nature's protection from environmental damage and aging, and it helps to fend off disease. As with anything in life, too much or too little sebum is not a good thing.

Additional protection: Although we may not think of it in such a positive light at first, the "T-Zone" is an area of additional protection on the face. T-Zone refers to the area of the face from the chin up through the nose between the brows and into the center of/across the forehead, forming a "T". Because facial orifices are located in this region, more sebum is necessary here to provide extra protection.

What's your Type?

Pangea Organics Skin Types

Skin typing: Skin types are pre-determined by genetics and are based on the amount of sebum produced by the sebaceous glands in the skin. Sebum resides mostly in our pores, but is also present (and necessarily so) in between the cells of the epidermis. Additional factors in skin typing are: the amount of water present in the skin, the proclivity towards infection and the proclivity to react to, or produce, irritation and inflammation.

All skin types, except for the naturally balanced, have an imbalance due to a combination of factors, including: oil production within the skin, hydration from within and/or from without as well as overall predisposition to infection or irritation. In addition to the inherent tendencies our skin has, we must also deal with environmental stressors. These internal and external factors (stress, diet, exercise, medications, alcohol, harsh weather, pollution, UV radiation, chemicals, products we use, allergens, etc.) all compound the proclivities of our skin and sometimes make it seem impossible to achieve balance.

However, help is on the way. Through enjoying a healthy lifestyle and taking good care of your skin, you should be able to achieve and maintain beautiful balance of the skin. If you find that you have consistent challenges that are not addressed by healthy lifestyle and a good, healthy skincare routine, you may want to see a doctor to address any possible underlying causes.

DELICATE *aka Sensitive*

Diagnosis: Sensitivities are reactions to environmental and internal conditions. Delicate skin is easily irritated and/or inflamed, but can take up to 48 hours to produce a reaction. Irritation can take on the form of redness (erythema), blotchiness, flaking and rash. Delicate skin usually has a genetic predisposition, but is also affected greatly by environmental stressors, such as, UV radiation, chemicals, products, internal stress, heat and cold, etc.

Treatment: Delicate skin needs to be treated very gently with non-irritating and soothing products. Occasionally a person's skin is so reactive that it requires non-allergenic products with no fragrance or essential oils. Gentle cleansing and minimal exfoliation are required, and hydration is a must, but neither can be overwhelming. Products that are primarily soothing and smoothing are best. Ingredients that will help sensitive skin have properties; such as: sun protecting, demulcent (soothing), mucilaginous, calming, anti-irritant, anti-allergenic, anti-inflammatory, healing, skin conditioning (softening), protecting and emollient. We recommend:

CLEANSER: [Egyptian Calendula & Blood Orange](#)
TONER: [French Rosemary with Sweet Orange](#)
CREAM: [Malagasy Ylang Ylang & Linden Flower](#)

THIRSTY *aka Dry or Dehydrated*

Diagnosis: Dry skin is tight and can be flaky and rough to the touch with no noticeable moisture. It can also be easily irritated or inflamed. In cause, dry skin is different than dehydrated skin, but both may produce the same symptoms. Causally, dry skin is lacking sebum (oil), whereas dehydrated skin is lacking only hydration (water). Dry skin is characterized by small to invisible pores with minimal sebum. Dehydrated skin can be seen in all skin types, but is most commonly found with dry skin. One telltale sign of dehydrated skin is a noticeable pinching of the skin in the forehead next to the eyebrows. Temporarily dry and dehydrated skin can be caused by many circumstances both internal and external, such as, weather, topical agents, medications, caffeine, alcohol or not drinking enough water. Dry skin can also be caused by using products that are too harsh and strip the skin of its natural oils. This can happen even to naturally oily skin.

Treatment: Thirsty skin needs extra care because it lacks the protection that a normal amount of sebum provides. To correct this imbalance, thirsty skin needs stimulation of the sebaceous glands to produce more sebum, as well as additional moisturizing ingredients applied topically. Ideally, these moisturizing ingredients will have both humectant (hydrating) and occlusive (emollient) properties to draw water into the skin and then keep it there. The best moisturizers for thirsty skin contain both hydrating and emollient ingredients. Cleansers should be gentle and non-stripping; Toners should be mild; and Moisturizers should be richer than for other skin types. Additionally, the rough characteristic of thirsty skin requires a moderate amount of exfoliation to make it smooth again. The most important properties of ingredients for thirsty skin are: sun protecting, emollient, softening, skin conditioning, sebum increasing (balancing), protecting and nutritive. We recommend:

CLEANSER: [Egyptian Calendula & Blood Orange](#)
TONER: [French Rosemary with Sweet Orange](#)
CREAM: [Italian Red Mandarin with Roses](#)

BALANCED *aka Normal*

Diagnosis: Balanced skin feels comfortable with occasional imbalances toward oily in the T-Zone, dryness in the cheeks, or possible spot blemishes. It is moist to the touch, supple yet toned, usually evenly pigmented, and has a good oil and water balance. Balanced skin is characterized by medium sized pores in the T-Zone changing to smaller toward the edges of the face. The test for the perfect amount of moisture is to be able to put the palm of your clean hand flat to your cheek and lift off feeling “tackiness,” or slight sticking to the skin. This is what we call “dewy”. The goal of all skin is to feel dewy to the touch.

Treatment: Maintenance and preventative care are the goals of balanced skin. A regular regimen of cleanse, tone, moisturize and minimal exfoliation should be all you need. The amount of hydration necessary for balanced skin will depend largely on the humidity of the climate. Properties most important to balanced skin types are: sun protecting, nutritive, skin conditioning (softening) and emollient. We recommend:

CLEANSER: [Egyptian Calendula & Blood Orange](#)
TONER: [Italian Green Mandarin with Sweet Lime](#)
CREAM: [Malagasy Ylang Ylang & Linden Flower](#)

COMBO *aka Combination*

Diagnosis: Combo skin can be dry, oily and balanced all at the same time, in different areas. The cheeks feel comfortable with moistness to the touch but not excessively oily, or can be dry and flaky. In the T-Zone, however, there is usually noticeable oil. This can create an atmosphere conducive to blackheads and blemishes. Combo skin overall is supple with an evenness of pigmentation. It is characterized by larger pores in the T-Zone changing to medium sized toward the edges of the face.

Treatment: Treating combo skin can be tricky since there can be many areas of the skin with different skin types. In effect, one must treat each area to balance the skin. Deep cleansing and regular exfoliation are necessary for combo skin to treat and prevent blackheads and blemishes, but are best kept to the oilier parts of the skin. The drier, more delicate parts of combo skin require more gentle treatment and more moisturizing. If you have combo skin, keep this in mind: you don't need multiple products to balance the skin, but you will have to adjust the way you use one product in each different area. Using products designed to balance sebum production (not just to increase or decrease it) is essential, and moisturizers should not be too rich. Watch for over-stripping and over-exfoliating; you may feel that you need more, but restraint is key because over-stripping and over-exfoliation can cause the sebaceous glands to produce more sebum. The properties of most benefit to combo skin are: sun protecting, sebum balancing, mildly astringent, hydrating, somewhat antiseptic and cleansing. We recommend:

CLEANSER: [Egyptian Calendula & Blood Orange](#)
TONER: [Italian Green Mandarin with Sweet Lime](#)
CREAM: [Nigerian Ginger, Sweet Lavender & Thyme](#)

OIL-RICH *aka Oily*

Diagnosis: Oil-rich skin is shiny and can be blemish prone or slightly blemished. It is characterized by large pores and excessive oil over most of the face. You know who you are: by about 10 AM you feel greasy. Oil-rich skin is more prone to blemishes and blackheads because the pores get clogged with oil and dead skin build-up, harboring bacteria. This excess of oil and build-up can make the skin appear thicker and dull.

Treatment: Balancing, in this case reducing, sebum production is key for the oil-rich skin type. It is important not to strip all of the natural oils; for if you do, the skin will just produce more sebum to make up for the lack it senses. If oil-rich skin is over dried, it will also become irritated and inflamed, inviting infection in the skin (acne). Oil-rich skin types must exfoliate (but not excessively) to remove the build-up of dead skin and oil; use products with ingredients that are antiseptic to fend off infection in the skin; and hydrate without adding too much oil. Like combo skin, it can be quite the juggling act. The properties most important to oil-rich skin are: sun protecting, exfoliating, sebum reducing (or balancing), astringent, antiseptic (antimicrobial, antibacterial), cleansing and detoxifying. Citrus essential oils are great for oil-rich skin. We recommend:

CLEANSER: [Egyptian Calendula & Blood Orange](#)
TONER: [Argentinean Tangerine & Thyme](#)
CREAM: [French Chamomile & Orange Blossom](#)

DEMANDING aka Acneic or Blemished

Diagnosis: Acne, known to be at least partly hereditary, can be particularly discouraging. Those with demanding skin can have any number of imbalances happening in the skin while also being particularly susceptible to any/all environmental factors. But, above all else, we have discovered that bacteria can cause acne. In fact, scientists have isolated a single bacterium, called *Propionibacterium Acnes*, that causes acne! Comedones, or blackheads, are also present in demanding skin, and are usually in the T-Zone. Typically, demanding skin goes hand-in-hand with oil-rich skin. Large pores clogged with sebum and debris have a tendency to get infected and, voilà, blemishes occur. However, a tendency to break out can accompany any skin type.

Treatment: It is necessary to treat the underlying skin type as well as the blemishes themselves. Treating the blemishes and preventing them are the job of antibacterials, antimicrobials and antiseptics. One other factor, equally important in treating and preventing blemishes, is inflammation. Inflammation in the skin, whether from spicy foods, red wine, medication or a particularly harsh product, will create an atmosphere that invites infection. Reducing the amount of inflammation in the skin will vastly improve demanding skin types. Drying blemishes is not conducive to balanced or dry skin elsewhere on the face and is not recommended except for spot treatment. Properties most important to demanding skin are: sun protecting, anti-inflammatory, anti-irritant, antiseptic (antimicrobial, antibacterial), nutritive, purifying, cleansing, detoxifying, lymph stimulating, cell regenerating and healing. We recommend:

CLEANSER: Egyptian Calendula & Blood Orange
TONER: Argentinean Tangerine & Thyme
CREAM: Egyptian Fennel with Rosemary & Mint

MATURE aka Aging

Diagnosis: UV radiation, and specifically sunlight, can cause damage to the epidermis (the upper five layers of the skin) as well as the dermis and subcutaneous layers resulting in: collagen and elastin breakdown, hyper- and hypo-pigmentation, wrinkles and even cancer. Poor elasticity in the skin caused by collagen and elastin breakdown results in sagging of the skin. Mature skin is sometimes also couperous, meaning that the capillary walls are distended, or broken from being weakened, and may produce overall redness. There are many stages of mature skin starting with fine lines around the eyes, nose and mouth, developing into pronounced wrinkles in the forehead and elsewhere, and sometimes ending in leather-textured loose skin with many wrinkles.

Treatment: Antioxidants are crucial in the treatment of mature skin. Slowing down the process of photo-aging (UV radiation damage) should be the main focus of anti-aging products. The second focus is hydration and the stimulation of sebum production. Sebum production slows down as we age. Sebum and moisture help to fill in wrinkles and fine lines on the face as well as plump out the skin. Toning the skin and evening pigmentation are important factors, as the skin naturally begins to sag due to collagen and elastin breakdown and age spots begin to appear. It is widely thought in the scientific community that elastin (the skin component that provides elasticity) cannot be regenerated in the skin. This means WEAR SUNSCREEN; prevention is key! As the cell turnover rate slows during our later years (45+ days in adults, in contrast to the 28-day turnover of a teen), it is crucial to stimulate and encourage this process. Twenty-one out of 61 ingredients (34%) in our skincare products possess cell-regenerating properties. Properties most important for mature skin are: SUN PROTECTING, anti-aging, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-wrinkle, cell regenerating, capillary strengthening, circulation stimulating, collagen producing, pigmentation evening, nutritive, emollient, sebum increasing (balancing), skin conditioning (smoothing & softening) rejuvenating and restorative.

*Please note: Pangea Organics Skincare products each contain an abundance of **ANTIOXIDANTS, 56 out of 61 ingredients (92%)**, meaning they are great warriors in the battle against aging and, hence, can each be used for mature skin. We strongly recommend using the products that are intended for your overall skin type (see detailed descriptions above).*