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## *Menopausal Skin*

In Spa Skin Care Interventions



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The effect of menopause on skin varies with individual responses to internal hormonal changes and aging. Signs can begin to appear in one's early 40s, but more often occur in their late 40s and 50s. The transitional period can last years and cause significant changes for women, both physically and emotionally.

Some of the physical symptoms that affect a woman's esthetic sense during menopause include sweating, dryness, accelerated skin aging and sensitivity. The reduced estrogen production in a woman's body can increase the presence of testosterone response and lead to unsightly effects like skin oiliness, sagging skin and even unwanted body hair growth.

Women also feel more sensitive during this period of their lives, as evidenced by the many satires, blogs and forums shedding light on its debilitating effects. Their skin thins and becomes more sensitive to the sun and the environment. It is more reactive and has long-lasting damage such as age spots and increased fragility. Hormone replacement therapies can cause new forms of skin acne such as tiny bumps or deep pustules. Increased sweating compounds these symptoms. The skin changes that can occur at this time of life are so significant that menopausal women often say that they just "don't recognize their skin anymore."

## **IN SPA INTERVENTIONS**

The wide variety of skin issues menopausal women face range from dryness, itchiness, oiliness and beyond; estheticians must be versed in various skin types to help these clients look younger. The main goals for this client demographic should be to stimulate collagen and elastin production, protect, seal and strengthen skin as well as reduce visual body hair growth.

The key to preventing skin degradation in menopausal women is to preserve weaning moisture and suppleness. Use nourishing moisturizers, serums and facial masks to insulate facial skin, and incorporate quality anti-aging ingredients such as paraffin, fruit oil masks, caviar serum, rosehip, olive, jojoba and coconut oils into facial protocols.

### **ESSENTIAL AMINOS**

Amino acids are the skin's building blocks; they protect against skin damage, repair and heal, prevent cell breakdown and moisturize. Collagen itself is comprised of amino acids.

Create an amino acid centric facial to rebuild crucial skin proteins and strength. Select products that incorporate key essential amino acids, particularly those that sit on the skin for prolonged periods of time such as serums, moisturizers and masks.



### **PROTECT**

Strengthen and protect skin with an anti-oxidizing facial. Antioxidants combat harsh external elements and protect delicate skin. They calm and revitalize skin texture. Vitamins A, C and E, green tea, algae and resveratrol are highly effective skin rejuvenators and perfectors. Antioxidants perform best when combined together, so offer a facial that combines several antioxidants, from cleansing to the final mask, for maximum results.

### **COLLAGEN BOOSTING**

Copper peptide treatments are an excellent way to stimulate collagen production. Copper is the key mineral in lysyl oxidase, an enzyme that weaves together collagen and elastin, so it also fights skin damage. Skin benefits from copper-based treatments include an immediately improved texture and a gorgeous glow.

### **RENEWAL**

Alpha-hydroxy acids, plant or milk-derived, dissolve dead skin and allow new skin cells to form in their place. AHA face washes or direct application allow for increased penetration of products applied thereafter to skin. Similarly, fruit enzymes break down the keratin protein in dead skin cells. These enzymes provide powerful antioxidants as they exfoliate, helping to protect the skin from further damage. Periodic enzyme peels provide significant results with little skin wounding and natural ingredients.

### **ENLIGHTENING**

Care Incorporate LED light into your anti- menopause facials. There are four different LED lights, all of different wavelengths and functions helpful to menopausal clients: amber builds new collagen and elastin; red reduces inflammation and promotes circulation; blue destroys acne-causing bacteria; and infrared accelerates skin recovery.

### **MASSAGE MAGIC**

Lymphatic massage promotes antiaging benefits by encouraging cellular waste disposal, increasing blood flow, promoting hormonal balance and reducing skin stress. Contour skin and counteract skin sagging by massaging it in an upward motion. Apply gentle pressure along lymph nodes and gently stretch facial muscles to encourage circulation. Counteract the buildup of skin lines by massaging in the opposite direction of line formation to tighten skin and relax frown lines.

### **HAIRY SITUATION**

Unwanted facial and body hair is another symptom of menopause. Hairs can be coarse or fine, moderate or abundant. This increase in unwanted facial hair may be accompanied by another unappealing hair related symptom — thinning scalp hair. Reduce unsightly new hair growths with in-spa hair removal treatment. Focus on gentle laser, electrolysis, threading, wax, plucking or IPL hair removal therapies. Address thinning hair via scalp treatments with intense massage and hair growth boosting keratin, amino acids and coconut oil to counteract hair loss.

## **MEDICAL ESTHETICS**

During menopause, the skin's natural hyaluronic stores diminish, causing skin to thin, sink and lose connective tissue volume. There are a number of medical esthetic treatments that can address these effects.

Skin fillers can increase skin fullness and soften wrinkles by lessening skin folds and replenishing connective tissues. They fill deep lines and inhibit muscle movement, preventing the formation of new lines. Injectables can plump and smooth skin for periods of three to nine months at a time, depending on the method used.

Various forms of radiofrequency technology also provide advanced benefits, such as tightening and toning loose skin, promoting collagen production and reducing jaw line visibility.

## **HOME CARE REGIMEN**

In order to preserve the effects of these targeted spa treatments, it is essential for clients to be on a preventative and restorative home care regimen.

To start, a hydrating cleansing regimen helps counteract menopause dryness and sensitivity. An oil-based or gentle cleansing mousse cleansing that incorporates nourishing oils and avoids heavy fragrances is ideal, as are soothing skin ingredients like aloe vera and calendula. Acne-prone skins can benefit from a salicylic-based cleanser to gently reduce oiliness.

Focus on antioxidizing and protecting skin to prevent further degeneration and encourage cell renewal. Recommend serums with vitamins A, C, green tea or resveratrol. Highly effective anti-aging ingredients include AHAs, retinols, peptides and hyaluronic acids, due to their ability to help regenerate skin's turnover process.

After regenerating skin, clients should hydrate to maintain skin plumpness, thickness and resiliency. Moisturizers and serums with hyaluronic acid and glycerin help soothe skin dryness. Advise clients to apply these topical products by massaging upward to build collagen and stimulate blood flow.

Sun exposure must be avoided! Because skin is thinner and more sensitive, sun exposure can wreak havoc on this more vulnerable skin. Heightened age sensitivities call for the use of broad spectrum SPF 30 with titanium dioxide and zinc to protect skin from both UVA and UVB rays. Menopausal skin is increasingly prone to deep brown spots, so protection is especially crucial, particularly if clients are using acids, peels or retinolbased products.

## **THE LIFESTYLE FACTOR**

To counteract menopausal skin issues, women must fight back with both internal and external change. Make sure you explain to your clients that a well-balanced anti-aging skin care regimen includes healthy and balanced lifestyle choices. They can achieve this with an antioxidant-rich diet high in anti-inflammatory ingredients, getting proper sleep, exercise and managing stress.

A combination of tailored spa treatments, home care regimens and a healthy lifestyle can all come together to make your clients look and feel more youthful, slow down their aging process and maintain their amazing glow!



### **About the Author**

Bella Schneider is the founder and CEO of LaBelle Day Spas & Salons and an international product formulator and distributor through Bella Schneider Beauty (BSB). In her 40 years of experience in skin care science, Schneider has been an innovator in ethnic skin care, peels and peer education.