



DONNA PACE, RHN,
CERTIFIED ESTHETICIAN

Insider secrets for natural beauty

Q | I have an extremely oily T-zone that just won't quit. Any natural methods to help this?

- Jordin, Montreal

A | Dear Jordin,

A variety of factors can influence sebum production, including heredity, hormone production and improper skin cleansing and maintenance. It is also very common for the T-zone to be oilier than the rest of the face. The key to achieving healthy, balanced skin is to use the right products to help your skin maintain the ideal amount of oil. A gentle skin-care regimen (rather than using oil-reducing products) will help to stabilize oil production. Start with a natural foaming cleanser with an essential oil such as tea tree to avoid stripping your skin totally of oil – a naked skin will start to overproduce oil in order to compensate. Follow with a toner containing essential oils of witch hazel (not the one from the drugstore), geranium and ylang-ylang. Their astringent properties make them good candidates for balancing oily skin. Exfoliation with gentle fruit acids reduce the feeling of oiliness on the skin as they can help exfoliate materials lodged deep within the glands as well as reduce the presence of oils. Apply a light moisturizer and, depending on the season (usually winter), the non-oily parts of your face may need to be treated differently. For a quick fix, try using blotting papers. They are excellent for reducing the shine that may develop on the skin throughout the day.

Q | You give out such great advice, so I'd like to know: what are your beauty bag must-haves for summer?

- Geri, Winnipeg

A | Dear Geri,

Happy to hear that you finding the information valuable. In the summer, I would say sunblock tops the list of what I carry around with me anytime, anywhere. Sun damage is the number one cause of premature aging so I always start my day with an application of loose mineral powder and reapply throughout the day. Loose minerals are made up of micronized titanium dioxide which guards against the damaging effects of ultraviolet rays. It's also so light that it can be layered over and over again for a continuous protection and a natural-looking finish.

Another thing I can't live without (especially since I limit sun exposure) is a natural-base bronzer because it refracts light for that sun-kissed glow, day or night. Look for one that comes in a quad of colours for more variety as your skin tone changes. If you opt for a mineral base, you can use it not only as bronzer, but also as an eyeshadow or blush – added versatility with one product gives the most for your money. Last, is a tinted lip sheer containing hyaluronic acid that adds colour to my lips while keeping them well moisturized after swimming. ♥



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