

# IS YOUR SKIN REVEALING YOUR STRESS?

Our skin is the window to our inner body. Everyone knows what stress feels like and anyone from young adult to mature, talks about being stressed! Our society drives us to the breaking point. So many people are faced with daily challenges that continually clobber the mind and body. Stress is the source of many illnesses and major diseases. What most people forget is what effect stress has on our skin's complexion.

- Stress causes our complexion to either become dull, lifeless or greyish in colour. Stress triggers the pituitary gland which signals the adrenal glands to produce androgens and cortisol (stress hormones). The release of these hormones during stress acts as a vasoconstriction, (narrowing of the blood vessels) and asphyxiates the skin's oxygen and blood circulation. This choking effect brings to a halt the elimination process of toxins or waste that must be expelled through the skin. Asphyxiated skin causes wrinkles and dehydration.

- The androgen and cortisol hormones thicken the hair follicle's lining, stimulates the sebaceous glands to secrete more oil causing clogging of the pores resulting in blackhead and whitehead formation. If inflammation occurs, which it usually does, bacteria remains trapped and this is when acne forms.

- Other visible signs and known skin disorders linked to stress are rosacea or couperose which are tiny blood vessels found on the surface of the skin, usually on the nose and cheeks. The adrenal glands produce adrenaline hormones which make the heart beat faster forcing contraction in the tiny blood vessels. There is either too little or too much blood flow to the skin causing the blood vessels to constrict or dilate abnormally and finally rupture.



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- While under stressful situations, our facial muscles which are attached to the skin will cause our face to frown or wrinkle. This frowning motion will gradually become etched on our faces due to repeated motion and / or loss of elasticity in maturing skin.

We can improve our skin's health and most of these conditions by avoiding the reasons causing the stress in our lives. However, if that is not possible, try incorporating a regular exercise routine which will oxygenate the skin. Also, eating a balanced diet with plenty of water will reduce stress and help maintain the health of the skin.

To bring back life to the skin cells and calm your mind, try a relaxing or therapeutic facial. Facial massage will increase blood circulation and stimulate the lymphatic system to eliminate toxins. It will reduce the visible signs of stress such as wrinkles and dehydration. Above and beyond massage there are facial therapies such as biostimulation and micro currents that will further enhance the skin's function, waste elimination and circulation creating a visible tightening, toning of muscles and an overall healthier glow.

To de-stress and nourish our inner mind and body, I always encourage my clients to accompany their facials with a treatment of reflexology. New to my clinic is "Realm of the Senses" by Anka Brckovic, a Certified and Registered Reflexologist, Aromatherapist and Acupuncturist. Reflexology will relax and improve circulation throughout the entire body. Therapeutic Aromatherapy employs essential oils with massage and will take your mind to another realm. Anka also offers Cosmetic Facial Acupuncture, a safe non-surgical method of reducing the signs of aging and stress.

A licensed skincare professional can remove blackheads, massage temples, rehydrate dry skin or control oil-production; only you can properly manage your stress. A Clinical Day Spa can offer a peaceful sanctuary where you can relax and forget about your worries. Make a good choice today and ensure that your skin is revealing a balanced lifestyle.