

Consultation and Skin Analysis

Learning Objectives

On successful completion of this unit the candidate will be able to:

- Recognise some common skin types.
- Describe structure and function of cleansers, moisturisers and exfoliants
- Investigate how these products affect different skin types.

Identifying the client's skin type correctly is essential to allow the beauty therapist to provide suitable treatment, and also to suggest the most appropriate products.

The three important steps for facial examination are:

Questioning

In order to discover the normal skin care routine of the client and the products they use, questioning is very important. The client has to understand that the skin's condition is likely to need several treatments to become clear. Additionally, the possible time period and treatment plan cost should be discussed in detail before the treatment is started.

Visual Examination

The visual examination must be done in good light; the skin should be free from makeup and cleaned properly. The therapist should identify and record problem areas such as an oily T-zone and black heads.

Manual Examination

Manually examining the face provides indications about the texture, elasticity and warmth of the skin. The skin's warmth shows good blood circulation in the face. Examining and feeling the skin can provide information about the texture. Any lumps under the skin can be identified and would require further examination.

Tip:

For testing skin tone, lift the skin gently between two fingers at the cheek and then let go. Good skin tone will go back to the original shape at once.

What to Look for in a Facial Treatment

The contra-indications relevant to all kinds of facial treatments are:

- Conjunctivitis;
- Sunburns;
- Cuts on the skin;
- Severe eye infections;
- Bruising;

- Known allergic reactions; and
- Scar tissue (less than six months old).

When the beauty therapist examines the skin and discovers any contra-indications, treatment must not be provided at all. This is for the protection of the therapist and the client, along with other clients who could be at risk for cross-infection. Since a risk is present that infections may spread if any treatment is provided, all kinds of treatment must be avoided.

The Consultation

During consultation, the beauty therapist discusses with the client and explains what each treatment involves, the time duration, the after-care and additional precautions that the client must take at home. The client must also be informed about the cost for individual treatments or for an extensive treatment programme, if required. This will help the client to decide if she is willing to make the financial expenditure required.

Keep the following points in mind while providing consultation for facial treatments:

- Note down personal details about the client and ensure that no contra-indications are present for facial treatment.
- No treatment should be given if any contra-indications are present.
- Information about the client's general health and skin care routine can be gained through questioning. The beauty therapist must then explain the treatment required, the required after care and expenses involved.
- Professional and honest advice should be provided.

Remember:

A golden rule during consultation is to check things out when in doubt.

Recognising the Skin Types

It is important for a beauty therapist to recognise the skin type of a client to select the right facial treatments and suitable skin care products, which is only possible after the client's skin has been assessed completely. Diagnosing the true skin type is usually quite difficult because skins always react to products, environments and different life styles.

Four main kinds of skin are:

- Normal;
- Dry;
- Oily; and
- Combination.

Normal Skin

Normal skin is generally known as balanced skin as it is not too dry or too oily. This skin type has the right balance of oil and moisture to keep it soft, making it smooth and fine textured, with no pores being visible. Normal skin feels firm when touched. Skin pigmentation is coloured evenly and the skin generally has no blemishes.

Skin of this type has the tendency to become either slightly greasy or somewhat dry. Assuming that it will always remain normal is not accurate. Normal skin should feel warm when touched.

During skin analysis, the clients should be asked the following questions:

- Is this the condition of your skin usually?
- Do you think that you have any problem areas?
- In the past, have you had problem areas?
- What products and routines do you use for your skin?

Dry Skin

Dry skin is the type that lacks moisture and oil. The pores are tight and small, and the skin contains poor moisture content. Dry skin has the tendency to be sensitive. Wrinkles appear quickly on dry skin and result in premature aging.

Questions to ask:

- Do you feel that your skin is tight?
- Does your skin feel sensitive in cold and hot weathers?
- Does your skin flake?

Tip:

Dry skin can get worse if washed with tap water, as it contains chlorine and salts. If a client has severely dry skin, advise them to avoid using tap water on the face.

Greasy Skin

When sebaceous glands have an overproduction of sebum, it can cause skin to become greasy. Such skin has a thicker appearance in comparison to normal skin. The pores are larger and moisture content is much higher. This results in an excess of sebum production and dead cells get embedded in the sebum. Greasy skin has sluggish lymph and blood circulation. The shine in the skin is caused by excess sebum production. If the skin becomes exceedingly greasy, different kinds of skin disorders can occur.

Questions to ask:

- Are you prone to blackheads and pimples?
- Do you usually have shiny skin?
- Do you find it difficult to keep makeup on your skin?

Combination Skin

Combination skin is generally partly dry and partly oily, being a combination of both. The oily sections are usually the forehead, nose and the chin, known as the T-zone. The cheek area is often dry or normal. The T-zone pores become enlarged and the pores in the cheeks remain small or medium sized. Skin in oily areas becomes sallow while the skin in dry areas becomes thin. Skin tones in dry areas become poor but the tones in oily areas remain good.

Questions to ask:

- Does your nose shine often?
- Are you prone to blackheads in the T-zone sections?
- Is your skin in the cheek areas tight or dry?

Activity 1

Observe the skin of your family members closely. What do you see? Note down your observations about their skins.

Activity 2

Look at your own skin very closely in strong light and determine your skin type.

Additional Characteristics

Sensitive skin condition is usually associated with dry or pale skin, which lacks sufficient production of sebum. The skin mostly looks flushed and has the tendency to become coloured very easily. Sensitive skin frequently reacts to beauty products used in salons. Such skin feels warm when touched and usually has broken capillaries in the cheek region.

Questions to ask:

- Is your skin usually dry?
- Does it look red, particularly in the cheek areas?
- Does your skin have a tendency to suffer from allergic reactions?

Dehydrated skin is a skin condition in which skin tissues have lost water. All skin types can suffer from dehydration due to the use of products that are very harsh for the skin, or because of exposure to central heating or extreme temperatures. Dehydrated skin shows fine superficial lines very clearly and frequently has broken capillaries.

Questions to ask:

- Are you consuming sufficient quantities of liquid?
- Have there been any recent changes in your diet?
- What skin care products do you use?
- Describe your skin care routine.

Tip:

Clients identified to have dehydrated skin must be advised to drink six to eight glasses of water per day. This will enable them to replenish moisture content in their bodies.

As skin matures, wrinkles start being formed, the epidermis becomes thinner, there is a lack of springiness and, also, reduced support from the muscles below. As the sudoriferous and sebaceous glands gradually become less active with age, this skin type is usually dry.

Congested skin pores get blocked. Sebum and sweat cannot flow down the skin's surface and can appear and feel coarse and lumpy. White heads and black heads are visible indications of such skin types. Congested skin condition occurs due to poor makeup removal routines, use of wrong products and because of excess sweat.

Infected skin virus fungi or bacteria can often cause infections. Irritation and swelling are visible signs. Another common symptom is the presence of pus.

To take care of the skin, some of the important things to do are:

- Establish good nutritional habits;
- Avoid stress;
- Use suitable skin products; and
- Always avoid any type of damage to the skin.

| Reasons for Skin Damage | How to Recognise the Symptoms |
|---|---|
| Steam and heat | Over stretching the skin causes damage. |
| Incorrect use of skincare products | Incorrect use of skin care products may cause comedones to form or lead to oversensitive skin. |
| Excessive Heat | Results in dehydrated skin and skin burns. |
| Pollution from traffic, chemicals and the thinning of the ozone layer | Results in dehydration, blocked and clogged skin and over activity of the sebaceous glands—all of which cause more problems. |
| Excessive exposure to artificial light or the Sun | Excessive wrinkles or lines and pre-mature aging cause a breakdown in elastin and collagen—both of which protect the skin. Uneven pigmentation can also happen. |

Facial Products and Their Functions

A large variety of products are available in the market that can be used to make facial skin conditions better:

- Toners;
- Cleansers;
- Moisturisers;
- Masks;
- Massage products; and
- Exfoliates

Tip:

While providing treatments to sensitive skin, always select products that do not contain common allergens like alcohol, lanolin or mineral oil. Such products are usually referred to as dermatologically tested or hypoallergenic.

Cleansing Products

Different cleansing preparations are used by beauty therapists. These varied formulations have been designed to be suitable for various types of skins and include:

- Cleansing creams;
- Cleansing milks;
- Cleansing lotions;
- Cleansing bars;
- Foaming facial cleansers; and
- Eye makeup removing products.

Any cleansers chosen should possess the following characteristics:

- They must remove all makeup, dirt and grease.
- They must cleanse skin thoroughly.
- They must be pleasant to feel.
- They must be easily removed from the skin.
- pH balance should be present.

The alkalinity or acidity of a substance is measured by the pH scale. The pH of acids is less than seven, while the pH of alkalis is more than seven. Neutral substances have a pH of seven. In order to avoid skin irritation, beauty therapists should preferably use products with a pH between 5.5 and 5.6. Alkalis harm the skin's protective covering made of sebum and make it appear and feel dry.

To discover whether any liquid substance is alkaline or acidic, a simple test can be done with litmus paper, as it changes colour according to the pH.

- In the presence of an alkali, the litmus paper will turn blue.
- In the presence of an acid, the litmus paper will turn blue.

Cleansing Creams

The key ingredients are:

- Waxes;
- A combination of various oils;

- Water;
- Preservatives;
- Fragrance; and
- Emulsifiers.

The ingredients are prevented from separating by the emulsifiers, such as water or oil. Waxes provide a creamy texture, while water provides a texture for easier slip and spreading, while also cooling the skin.

Cleansing creams have thicker and richer emulsion in comparison to cleansing milks. Creams are thus more effective while removing oil and grease-based makeup from the skin. To treat very dry skin, to deep cleanse and to remove makeup, cleansing creams are the best options.

Cleansing Milks

The key ingredients include:

- A mixture of oils, generally mineral oils;
- Emulsifiers;
- Detergents;
- Large portions of water; and
- Smaller portions of waxes in comparison to cleansing creams.

For dry skin treatments, particularly for dry skin that is sensitive or prone to sensitivity, cleansing milks are the best option. Cleansing milks are not a good option for very dry skin types. Cleansing milks are sometimes used for washing off skin. They are perfect for those who prefer a lighter feel on their skins, for greasier skins and also for younger skins.

Cleansing Lotions

The key ingredients include:

- Water and detergent solutions;
- Anti-bacterial agents;
- Fragrance; and
- Emulsifiers.

Since cleansing lotions don't usually contain oil, they are not appropriate for removing makeup. Instead, they are used to treat greasy skins. Cleansing lotions are also useful for cleansing normal skin types. They are ideal for blemished, problematical or younger skins.

Facial Washes/Gels

The key ingredients include:

- A mixture of wetting and cleansing agents;
- Water soluble elements and water; and
- Colours and conditioners.

Supplementary ingredients are selected for treatment of various types of skins. Such cleansers can be used quickly and offer suitable alternatives for clients who prefer washing their faces simply with water and soap. If the makeup is oil-based, cleansing milk should be used to remove it before using such cleansers.

Cleansing Bars

Soap is generally considered inappropriate for using on the skin, as its alkaline pH disturbs the skin's usual acidic pH balance. Insoluble salts are left on the surface of the skin by soap. Somewhat milder alternatives to soap are cleansing bars, which are recommended for skins that are not too sensitive—such as normal to greasy skins.

Eye Makeup Removers

Eye makeup removing products must be non-greasy, light and easily usable so that the skin is not dragged. Good eye makeup removing products dissolve the makeup instantly. However, special oil-based makeup removing products may be required for removing water-proof mascara.

Eye Creams

The key ingredients include:

- Oils;
- Herb and plant extracts;
- Vitamins;
- Oil in water mixtures;
- Methyl cellulose;
- Azulene; and
- Collagen.

Using eye creams regularly is very important in order to postpone the formation of wrinkles. The best time to start eye protection routines is before the formation of lines.

Toners/Skin Fresheners

The key ingredients include:

- Fragrance and water;
- Astringents like witch-hazel;
- Perfume and colour;
- Extracts from plants;
- Alcohol; and
- Humectants, like glycerine.

Skin fresheners and toners are applied to the skin with damp cotton wool in firm, yet gentle, strokes all over the face. All traces of grease get removed from the skin and it becomes ready to receive moisture.

Exfoliants

The key ingredients include:

- Sodium lactate;
- Detergent;
- Abrasive powders—like finely ground nuts, beads or olive stones;
- Kaolin or similar clay-based ingredients; and
- Additional moisturisers and vitamins.

Exfoliants help in removing dead skin cells that are present on the top layer of the epidermis. This improves the colour and texture of the skin, while stimulating the circulation. Exfoliates should be used once a week. There are several different kinds of exfoliates, such as vegetable or chemical based ones.

Pore Grains

Pore grains are the most common type of exfoliates, containing a liquid or cream base containing small spheres of crushed nuts or polished plastic. The exfoliant is massaged gently over the surface of the skin.

Clay Exfoliants

Clay exfoliants have a clay base that is applied just like a face mask. The mixture dries slowly and the clay absorbs the sebum and dead skin cells. When completely dry, the mask is removed gently with the finger pads. Facial brushing or mechanical exfoliation softens the skin as it removes dead skin cells.

Moisturisers

Moisturising Creams

The key ingredients include:

- Emulsifiers;
- A mixture of waxes and oils; and
- Humectants, like glycerine.

Moisturising creams contain nearly 15-30% oil and 70-85% water. They can be used during the day as well as at night, depending on the cream being used and the skin type. Moisturising creams are usually recommended for mature and dry skins. However, they should not be used in areas near the eyes.



Moisturising Lotions

Moisturising lotions contain approximately 10-15% oil and 75-85% water. Since they have a light liquid formulation, they are best for use beneath makeup. Moisturising lotions are recommended for young combination skin, greasy skin, normal skin and dehydrated skin.

Remember:

While using various beauty products, it is advisable to follow instructions provided by the manufacturer. These include instructions about how the product can be used safely, how it should be stored and how long the products can be left on the skin.

| Procedure | Action on the Skin | Products |
|---|--|---|
| Cleansing (in the morning and at night) | Removes dirt, dust and makeup from skin | Cleansing lotions, milks, creams, gels, cleansing bars |
| Day cream or moisturising | Keeps skin supple and soft; restores oil to skin | Moisturising creams, milks |
| Toning lotion (in the morning and at night) | Tightens skin; stimulates circulation | Skin tonic, astringent, toning lotion |
| Exfoliation paste (once a week) | Removes dead skin cells | Ready mixed granular paste, cleansing grains to make paste by mixing with water |
| Face mask (once a week) | Deep cleanses, smooths the skin | Clay masks, peel off masks, fruit masks, biological masks, thermal masks |
| Eye-makeup remover (night use) | Very gentle makeup remover | Lotions and creams and wash up gels |

Suggested Further Reading:

- ✓ *Aromatherapy for the Beauty Therapist, (1982), By Valerie Ann Worwood*
- ✓ *Beauty Therapy Resource Pack 3 (1992), By Joan Scott*