

HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

By MaryThé

Feel that you've indulged yourself a little too much lately? Is your body stiff and tired? Have you put on a few extra pounds? How about the skin? Is the skin showing signs that might've resulted from changes in eating habits or your home care regimen? Is your body screaming for balance? Have you taken the time to listen to and address its needs?

As expectations to look good increase during the holidays, this is not the time to have any serious skin care treatments like Intense Pulsed Light, laser, and chemical peels - wait until after the holidays. All these procedures require thorough understanding,

conscientious preparation and care afterwards - and come with potentially serious risk factors - let's not add more undue anxieties!

Holidays tend to take a toll on the skin, though the signs may not show for a few weeks. Wearing more make-up and being too tired to wash it at night can lead to clogged pores, reduced oxygen flow and the build-up of toxins. And richer meals and sweets can create skin breakouts. Proper daily cleaning of the skin is therefore essential, preferably before going to sleep.

After the holidays, a deep cleansing facial and a mild peel are definitely advisable to help clean excess oils that clog the pores. Look into treatments and products that soothe and calm the skin, enabling its recovery to a natural, healthy state. This can also be a time to experiment with new, fashionable make-up colors to look younger and more alive.

Cutting down on sugar at this time can really help your skin repair itself much faster. Did you know that excess sugar can have harmful effects on the skin and other parts of our body? Studies show that Asians are 3 to 5 times more likely to contract diabetes than average white Americans because of the increased sugar intake due to the adoption of western lifestyle and eating habits. The result is a dramatic growth in the number of diabetic Asians in the US, Europe and in Asia. For more information, contact the Joslin Diabetic Center at Harvard Medical School - www.joslin.org. Maybe then you'll think twice before reaching for a soft drink or that extra sugar in your coffee?



Here are several common-sense suggestions we all can benefit from in the holiday period - without feeling totally deprived. To achieve a healthy balance, give the body a chance to realign and repair itself - set aside enough time to sleep and rest. Eat food that is easy to digest such as simple, hearty soups. Drink plenty of water to help lubricate joints and flush out toxins. Exercise regularly - stretching, strengthening and balance are all critically important. Yoga or Pilates exercise classes with professional guidance will reduce the risk of injury. If you have any real health problems, do check with your GP or Traditional Chinese doctor. Lastly, remember that a dose of simple self-control can help with just about everything. Always strive for balance in life.

Celebrating the holidays is something we all look forward to. With proper planning and respect for the beauty of our skin and our health, we all can have a great time, with no guilty feelings. Start the New Year with loving and happy thoughts.

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