If we were to ask you, “Do you think your skin needs a moisturizer?” you would probably say, “Yes”. Everybody needs a little moisturization now and then, right? And some of us need it more than others. It may be that your skin feels dry and rough. Or maybe every time you wash your face with soap, your skin tightens up and starts itching. Or maybe even though there are no apparent signs of dryness, your skin just looks dull and greyish.

With a wide selection of different moisturizers readily available, it may be tempting to just grab a product that says “moisturizer” especially if it promises deep hydration and instant smoothness… But let us shed some light on the rather complicated issue of cosmetic moisturizing. In this lesson, we’ll discuss five little known facts about cosmetic moisturizers that may save you from making costly mistakes.

DRY SKIN — DRY STRATUM CORNEUM

When you experience symptoms such as roughness, itchiness, redness and tightness after cleansing, it is easy to believe that your entire skin is dehydrated. However, such symptoms are usually caused by dehydration of the upper layer of the skin – the stratum corneum. As you will remember from our first lesson, your skin is covered with flat keratinous scales glued together by lipids. Those scales are basically empty sacks filled with a hard protein called keratin.

Normal stratum corneum contains Natural Moisturizing Factor (NMF) —which is a selection of water binding molecules such as minerals, lactic acid and amino acids. When you wash your face or take a stroll in fog or humidity, they attract water making keratinous scales soft and flexible. You see, your skin’s keratin, as any other protein, is soft and flexible when it is well hydrated, but becomes hard and brittle when it dries out (think of beef jerky—this will give you an idea of what happens to your skin’s proteins when they dry out).

As long as the keratinous scales remain soft and flexible, you can smile and frown and make faces without even noticing that your skin is wearing the keratinous armor.

However, if you tend to overuse hot water and soap, your NMF may be depleted. In this case, every time you wash your face, your keratinous scales will first swell with water and then quickly dry up becoming hard and brittle. This rapid transition from soft to hard is what creates the feeling of tightness. Just think of what happens to wet leather when you let it dry. So remember—your skin needs NMF to stay soft and smooth. If your skin feels dry, think about restoring your NMF in the stratum corneum.
BIOLOGICAL OILS ARE BETTER THAN COSMETIC MOISTURIZERS

For thousands of years, our ancestors used biological healing oils to improve the health of their skin. Archaeological evidence reveals ancient peoples in Egypt, China, Assyria, Sumeria, Crete, and Babylonia were adept at extracting and blending aromatic plant and biological oils—using them as ointments, fragrances, and incense for both medicinal and religious purposes. However by 1920, the cosmetic industry began advertising the idea that these oils harm the skin and merchandised the use of oil/water/detergent mixtures instead.

The truth is that when your skin lacks its Natural Moisturizing Factor, the worst thing you can do is to try to force more water into a dry stratum corneum. It won’t hold; it will just swell the scales and then evaporate leaving your skin even thirstier.

On the contrary, biological healing oils will help prevent water loss from the stratum corneum, soften and smooth out the hard keratinous scales, preventing them from hardening and cracking. As more water rises from the dermis, your skin will moisturize itself naturally while feeling wonderfully smooth and soft.

The worst thing about many cosmetic moisturizers is that they actually disrupt your skin’s water-holding barrier in order to bring more moisture inside. This makes your skin look great right after you apply the product—soft and smooth. However, underneath all this glamour, your skin still cries for help. Sure, it temporarily looks great. But without its protective barrier truly fortified, your skin becomes dependent on the false moisturizers. When you stop using them, it looks even worse.

EXFOLIATION CAN HELP RESTORE WATER BALANCE

As you were reading about Natural Moisturizing Factor, you may have been wondering where it comes from. As it turns out, it is produced from broken down keratinous scales during the skin renewal process.

In healthy skin, special proteolytic enzymes break down links between keratinous scales partially dissolving the scales themselves. The resulting amino acid mix becomes a part of NMF. Thus, the quickest way to restore NMF is through regular and gentle exfoliation. For this purpose, lactic acid is best since it is one of the components of NMF and has excellent moisturizing properties.

OILY SKIN MAY NEED OIL TOO

Many cosmetic moisturizers boast “oil-free” formulations as a lure for those who are afraid of unsightly comedones. You may be surprised to find out that in a scientific study of comedogenic cosmetic products, the strongest comedone-inducing substances were not natural oils, but fatty acid esters and other chemicals that impart the soft feel to oil-free cosmetic formulations.

Unfortunately, oily skin often becomes dehydrated when people use alcohol and acetone-containing cleansers to remove excess oil. Frequent use of hot water and soap contributes too. These products disrupt the skin’s protective and water-holding barrier, causing dehydration of the epidermis. If you overuse hot water, soap and astringent cleansers on your oily skin, use exfoliating hydroxy acids to help your skin make more NMF and apply biological healing oils such as squalane to restore the barrier and maintain natural water balance.
COPPER-PEPTIDES RESTORE WATER BALANCE FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Your skin may be dehydrated even if it doesn’t feel rough and dry. As we age, our skin starts losing very important molecules—proteoglycans and glycosaminoglycans. These substances act as molecular sponges taking up water and holding it inside your dermis.

The most popular glycosaminoglycan in the dermis is hyaluronic acid which is often found in cosmetic moisturizers. However, large molecules of hyaluronic acid applied topically cannot penetrate the skin. Moreover, when pure hyaluronic acid is injected into the skin, it is quickly dissolved by dermal enzymes. That is why all “wrinkle filling” products based on hyaluronic acid usually contain a chemically modified form that dissolves more slowly. It plumps up the skin, at least temporarily, but does nothing else.

Since SRCPs (Skin Rejuvenating Copper-Peptides) have been scientifically proven to help skin produce the water-holding molecules of the dermis, with copper peptide based products you can avoid chemically modified skin plumpers and plump your skin with its own proteoglycans instead, providing a more natural and lasting way of true moisturization.

IN CONCLUSION

Before buying a moisturizing product, first think of what type of skin dryness you may actually have. If you have surface signs of skin dryness such as rough, dull, and itchy skin that feels unpleasantly tight after washing, your skin probably is lacking in Natural Moisturizing Factor. Use exfoliating hydroxy acids such as lactic acid to bring more NMF into the skin, apply biological healing oils and use copper-peptide based creams to encourage natural inside-out moisturizing. If you have oily skin, use exfoliators with lactic and salicylic acids, apply pure squalane to restore the barrier and use copper-peptide based serums to reduce skin oiliness and to encourage barrier formation. Finally, if your skin feels lax and lifeless, in addition to exfoliating products and biological healing oils, use copper-peptide based creams or serums that contain ingredients for younger-looking skin such as DMAE, marine algae polysaccharides and hydrolyzed collagen and elastin.

During your journey with us through our online skin care course, we welcome you to see what our biological skin moisturizers can do for the healthy look of your skin today!

Part 6: Course Recommendation

Dry skin on the body and dry lips can be solved using botanicals proven to moisturize all day long!

For body skin, use our soft skin solution with light fragrance: Calypso’s Replenishing Youth Factor Oils offer the skin on your body moisture supplemented with a light essential oil and pheromone fragrance.

Moisturize your lips with Dr. Pickart’s Lip Replenisher to prevent dry, cracked lips. Healthy skin never looked so beautiful—Call 1-800-405-1912 for more personalized suggestions and assistance.