



PO Box 449, Pewaukee, WI 53072  
support@beautyce.com / 888-290-9739

## **Skin Care for the Mature Client: Facials and Beyond** Angelica Jungbluth

### **CE CREDIT: 8 HOURS**

**This material is provided for licensed estheticians and cosmetologists. Reading the material and practicing the steps for safe services on a mannequin or model should take 8 hours.**

### **Learning Objectives**

At the end of this course, the licensee will be able to:

- Identify characteristics of mature skin
- Recall each step of a standard facial
- Distinguish between considerations and concerns that pertain to mature skin, and recognize the relevant equipment and treatments

### **Course Outline**

I. Introduction

II. Facials: A Foundation

Consultation, Cleanse, Steam, Exfoliation, Massage, Mask

III. Mature Clients: Additional Facial Considerations

Equipment, Additional Facial Treatments

IV. Mature Clients: Specific Skin Concerns & Treatments

Adult Acne, Rosacea, Itchy Facial Skin, Wrinkles

V. Mature Clients: Alternative Treatments

Laser Skin Treatments, Microcurrent Therapy, Cannabidiol (CBD) Creams and Oils

VI. Conclusion

## **Introduction**

To begin with, let's bust a myth: although it may be hard to believe, estheticians are not magicians! The aging process is natural and can't be reversed through miracle treatments. There is no way to give our mature clients their youthful skin back.

That said: we can absolutely do things to help our mature clients' skin look and feel better! While aging skin is one of the most complicated types of skin to treat, it can also be one of the most lucrative. But to be successful, you'll need advanced knowledge of skin science, as well as a grasp of available methods.

The process begins with understanding the characteristics of aging skin.

### **The Skin: A Review**

As you know, the skin, with an area of about 20 square feet, is the body's largest organ. Together with its accessory structures (the hair and nails) it makes up the integumentary system.

It has 6 basic functions: sensation, secretion, absorption, regulation, protection, and excretion.

1. Sensation: nerve endings located in the dermis transport stimuli, permitting the experience of touch: heat/cold, pressure, pain, etc.
2. Secretion: sebum – oils that, combined with perspiration, create the acid mantle – is produced by the skin
3. Absorption: the skin allows water, oxygen, and nutrients, as well as products such as body washes, lotions, etc. to pass through its pores into its tissues.
4. Regulation: the skin can release (via sweat from the sweat glands) or retain (by holding extra blood in its vessels) heat in response to external temperatures.
5. Protection: the body's first line of defense, skin protects it from bacteria, pollutants, and other harmful environmental influences.
6. Excretion: the skin releases wastes like toxins, perspiration, and salt through its sweat glands and pores.

The skin has 3 layers: the epidermis, the dermis, and the subcutaneous layer.

The epidermis is the outermost layer, and is often referred to as the cutis, cuticle, or scarfskin. It has four ("thin skin") or five ("thick skin") distinct layers. All of the

layers except the deepest contain cells called keratinocytes. These cells create and hold a protein called keratin, which give the hair, nails, and skin the traits of water resistance and hardness.

1. The stratum germinativum (or stratum basale) is the lowest level of the epidermis. It consists of a single layer of, mostly, basal cells. These cells are constantly undergoing mitosis (cell division); as new cells are formed, the older ones are pushed towards the upper layers of the epidermis, becoming keratinocytes. This process, called keratinization, takes about a month, though the length may vary depending on health, area of the body, and age. Among the basal cells are 2 other types of cells: Merkel cells, which help to stimulate the sensory nerves that create “touch,” and melanocytes, which create melanin, a pigment that influences the color of the hair and, along with hemoglobin and carotene, the skin.
2. The stratum spinosum is the layer above the stratum germinativum. It contains 8-10 layers of keratinocytes, joined by interlocking structures called desmosomes, which give them a spiny appearance. In this layer, the keratinocytes absorb (via melanosomes) and distribute melanin, begin to create keratin, and release a glycolipid (a carbohydrate-attached lipid) that helps the skin as a whole to resist water.
3. Above the stratum spinosum we find the stratum granulosum. It contains 3-5 layers of keratinocytes, which are flatter, with thicker cell membranes, than in the previous layer. These cells produce the proteins keratin and keratohyalin in large quantities, which (together with the cell membranes) are left behind as the cells die and give this layer its grainy appearance.
4. The stratum lucidum is a thin, smooth layer found only in the skin on the palms of the hand, the soles of the feet, and the digits. The keratinocytes in this layer are dead, flattened, and packed with eleiden (a clear protein derived from keratohyalin), rendering them nearly transparent.
5. The uppermost layer of the epidermis is the stratum corneum. It typically contains 15-30 layers of dead, dry keratinocytes, which act as armor for the layers below it, and help to keep them from dehydrating. These cells regularly shed and are replaced from below; again, this process usually takes about 4 weeks.

The dermis is composed of 2 layers of connective tissue, creating a mesh of collagen proteins (which are strong and flexible) and elastin fibers (which are soft and pliable). It helps to support the epidermis, and provides the overall structure with elasticity. Within the dermis are blood vessels, lymph vessels, and nerves, as well as hair follicles. It also holds both the sudoriferous (sweat) and sebaceous (oil) glands. The sudoriferous

glands excrete waste products and assist with the regulation of body temperature. The sebaceous glands secrete sebum. Sebum and sweat, mixed, create the skin's acid mantle – a very fine film on the skin's surface that protects it from dirt and debris, minimizes drying and chapping, and helps to keep it smooth.

1. The thick, dense reticular layer is a tight, net-like mesh of collagen and elastin fibers. The elastin gives this layer elasticity; the collagen binds water and lends both structure and strength, with strands extending into the papillary layer above and the subcutaneous layer below. This layer is well-supplied with nerves and blood vessels.
2. Above, the thinner papillary layer consists of a looser mesh of collagen and elastin fibers. This layer of the dermis projects into the stratum germinativum of the epidermis in finger-shaped folds called dermal papillae, strengthening the connection between the layers. It holds many small blood vessels, as well as nerve fibers, lymph vessels, a few fat cells, and fibroblasts (which produce the collagen and elastin fibers).

Below the dermis, the subcutaneous layer (or hypodermis) is made up of loose connective tissue (collagen and elastin) and adipose tissue, which stores fat, cushioning and insulating the skin as a whole. It connects the upper layers of the skin to the fascia, and contains larger blood vessels and nerves than the dermis.

### **Mature Skin**

What changes as we age, and why?

Skin ages at different rates due to both external influences and internal factors – some of which can be modified. Exposure to extreme climates, too much sun, wind, and polluted air can all hasten the aging process. In addition, general poor health, disease, and emotional problems can contribute to the skin appearing older; likewise, extreme weight loss tends to cause loss of muscle tone and lined and sagging skin, which also gives the skin an “aged” appearance. Finally, some medications, a poor diet, smoking, and misuse of alcohol can also affect the skin's appearance.

Overall, the connective tissue in the skin changes: collagen and elastin production both lessen with age, reducing both the skin's strength and its elasticity. Let's also revisit each layer.

In the epidermis, while the number of cell layers stays the same, the overall thickness lessens. In addition, there's a decrease in the number of melanocytes, while those that remain are larger. This leaves the skin thinner and paler/clearer, with the potential for large spots of pigment.

In the dermis, blood vessels become more fragile, increasing the chances of bleeding under the skin and bruising. The sebaceous glands produce less oil, and the sudoriferous glands produce less sweat, which can leave the skin dry and itchy, and make body temperature harder to regulate.

In the subcutaneous layer, the fat thins: the loss of padding may increase the chances of skin injury, while the loss of insulation again makes it harder to regulate body temperature.

Taken together, this means several things:

First: Mature skin is often dry. This is due to the body's natural aging process: as a person ages the body's processes slow down, and cells are not replaced as rapidly as they once were. (This can be exacerbated by simple dehydration: drinking enough water can improve the color and texture of the skin over time by ensuring cell turnaround. A simple rule of thumb is "drink half your body weight" – for example, if you weigh in at 120 pounds, you would need to drink 60 ounces of water a day.)

Second: Mature skin often lacks elasticity. As you know, you can test the elasticity of the skin simply by taking a small section of the facial skin between the thumb and forefinger and pulling gently outward. When the skin immediately returns to its previous shape, it has good elasticity; if the skin is slow to return to its previous shape, it is lacking in elasticity.

Third: Mature skin is often fragile. It's thinner, so pressure, rubbing, or pulling may cause skin tears and/or broken blood vessels. Likewise, it also heals more slowly – up 4 times, in the case of wounds.

In light of these facts, our treatment goals for the mature skin are 1) educating the client as to changes they can make in support of their skin health, 2) hydrating the skin, and 3) firming the skin, to help with elasticity. And we need to do so gently.

So let's talk facials!

## **Facials: A Foundation**

A beauty treatment for the face that nourishes the skin by cleansing and exfoliating, facials have become some of the most popular treatments in salons and spas today. Why do women and some men get facials? Many reasons, ranging from pampering to help with specific skin issues. Facials can help reduce the occurrence of blackheads and blemishes, moisturize the skin, tighten the skin, and even out skin tone, in addition to reducing stress, promoting blood circulation, and making your clients feel fabulous.

Giving a great facial requires understanding the anatomy of the skin (which you do), proficiency in skin analysis (encompassing all four steps: look, feel, ask, and listen), a detailed knowledge of skin care products and equipment (including keeping up with technological advances), and knowledge of massage techniques (the power of touch is a core element in any great facial). And on a practical level, you'll need access to things like a steamer, towel warmer, magnifying lamp, etc.

As a professional, you'll have your own style when doing facials; in addition, every one of your employers will have their own perception of the "standard facial." In general, though, facials consist of deep cleaning pores with a cleanser, using steam, removing dead skin cells via exfoliation, applying massage, addressing hydration via a mask, and finally discussing specific skin concerns. (Note that depending on each client's needs, you may do an exfoliation or mask or both.) We'll take a look at each step, considering ways to combat the signs of aging as we go.

Also note that, throughout the facial, the thinner skin under the eyes needs special attention. Many clients treat this area just like the rest of the face, causing dark circles and crow's feet. We can help them combat these effects by using (and recommending) eye creams formulated for this sensitive area. Also, applying cucumber slices, if available, during the facial will help soothe the eyes: the vitamin K hydrates tired skin while reducing dark circles and wrinkles.

While specific treatment facials all have their own timeline, most skin care specialists recommend a standard facial every 3-4 weeks, as that's about how long it takes for skin cell turnover. Facials may need to be restricted or adapted in the presence of eczema, dermatitis, psoriasis, acne, rosacea, cuts, abrasions, broken skin, bruises, swelling, recent scar tissue, or recent sunburn. Facials are contraindicated in the presence of facial cancer, severe eczema, severe psoriasis, or severe acne, fever, viruses like colds or cold sores, bacterial infections like conjunctivitis or styes, fungal infections like ringworm, head lice, undiagnosed lumps, broken bones, fresh bruising, open sores, or bleeding; likewise, clients under the influence of alcohol or drugs shouldn't receive facials. Additional restrictions and/or contraindications should be dealt with on an individual basis, consulting a client's physician as necessary.

## **Consultation**

Just like all services, a facial begins with the consultation. A consultation form that your clients can fill out prior to their services is an excellent way to gather the information you need. In addition to basic identifying information (name, address, phone number, etc.) you may wish to include questions like:

- Have you had any allergic reactions to chemical or products?
- How would you describe your skin type?
- Which skin products are you currently using?
- Do you have any specific issues you would like addressed today?
  - Skin: dry, oily, shine, blackheads, wrinkles, rosacea, sun damage, uneven skin tone, other
  - Lips: dehydrated, cracked, other
  - Eyes: wrinkles, dark circles, puffiness, other
- Does your job require you to be outside?
- Have you ever had a facial before?
- In the past month, have you had a chemical peel, laser, or microdermabrasion? (These treatments are great for breaking through dead skin cells, but if a client has had them recently, you would not want to repeat them.)

## **Cleanse**

This step gets your client's face completely clean, removing all makeup. Prior to beginning, ask your client to take off any clothing that covers the chest area – a good facial includes the neck and shoulders – and provide a drape of some sort. Settle your client into a comfortable, reclined position (on a massage table, in a chair, etc.) Secure the hair off the face using a headband or towel wrapped snugly.

There are many different types of cleansers, and you'll quickly establish preferences. It's worth mentioning briefly, though, that facial cleansers are generally designed to cleanse the face but not the eye area – so at least one additional cleanser for the eye area should be used. Apply cleanser with clean warm hands, moving slowly up the sides of the face to the forehead, always using an "up and outward" movement. Use new cotton pads, and the same movement, for removal. By contrast, when removing eye makeup, use a gentle downwards sweeping movement: the skin around the eyes does not have much elasticity and can easily slacken if it is regularly stretched by using a back and forth movement. This is particularly important to note when working with mature clients.

Once it's clean, examining the skin using a dermascope (a lamp with a magnifying lens) will help you to determine its overall condition, enabling you to examine it more thoroughly for pore size, oil distribution, pigmentation, sun damage, oiliness/dryness rough spots, etc.

## **Steam**

Next, steam is applied directly to the face, either with a hot, moist towel, or a professional steamer. Steamers gently direct the steam towards the face, ideally from approximately 15-18 inches away – the steam should be warm but not hot. They come in a variety of sizes and models. In addition to the water compartment (only distilled or filtered water should be used so as to not damage the machine with minerals and calcium deposits), steamers usually have a compartment for aromatherapy, and may also have a feature for essential oils.

Steaming relaxes the client and loosens the facial muscles. It also helps dilate the pores, improving circulation, releasing toxins via sweat and loosening blackheads (which can ameliorate adult acne), and increasing product absorption. In addition, with the mature client, steaming can soften whatever wrinkles are present.

However, it's important to remember that in some cases steam can aggravate sensitive skin and cause dehydration. If your client has eczema, rosacea, or any fungal infection, the use of steam needs to be limited to a few minutes.

Typically any necessary extractions are done at this point, while the pores are open.

## **Exfoliation**

You'll next remove any dead cells on the surface of the client's skin via exfoliation. This makes the skin smoother, gives it a brighter, fresher appearance, and, again, increases product absorption. (You may wish to recommend that clients also exfoliate at home, to help keep pores unclogged and avoid breakouts.)

Physical exfoliation is the classic gritty scrub, which incorporates grainy substances like sugar, jojoba beads, etc. to scour away dead skin cells. This works best on non-sensitive skin. Another alternative is chemical exfoliation, which uses low percentages of very gentle acids to loosen the bonds between dead skin cells and the epidermis. While the term "chemical" may concern some clients, chemical exfoliations are actually an excellent option for sensitive skin, as there is no scrubbing or grittiness. In addition, they stimulate collagen production, reduce wrinkles, and firm the facial skin.

In general, chemical exfoliators will incorporate alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) or beta hydroxy acids (BHAs). BHAs tend to do the best job of deeply penetrating pore-clogging materials, suiting them to clients concerned with blackheads, whiteheads, and large pores. AHAs, on the other hand, clear the top layer of skin of debris. They work best on clients concerned with signs of aging, sun damage, uneven texture, and pigmentation. When using AHAs, consider products that also contain lactic acid and glycolic acids: these acids help kill bacteria and support cell turnover by removing dead skin cells.



## **Massage**

At this point, a facial massage can both stimulate facial muscles (which helps tone the skin) and relax the client. Additional benefits of massage include stimulating blood circulation, helping to slough off dead skin cells, reducing puffiness and sinus congestion, relieving muscle tension and pain, and – once again – increasing product absorption.

You'll swiftly establish preferred techniques and movements; as a rule of thumb, though, try to create a sense of balance by using the same number of movements on both the left and right side of the face. Likewise, to optimize your client's relaxation, as well as your connection with them, it's best not to remove your hands from their face once you have started the massage.

NOTE: if your client is ill, massage may be too stimulating and can make them feel worse. Discuss the situation with the client, confirm that they're under the care of a physician, and be sure to follow all of their physician's guidelines.

## **Mask**

If your client's skin needs additional attention, you can apply a mask. There are many different kinds to choose from, depending on your clients' needs and skin type – but each has a specific cream or gel applied underneath, and each is left on for a specific amount of time. The usage of towel warmers is very common in all facials – moist, warm towels soothe and soften the skin, and are particularly useful in removing facial masks. (Be aware that plastic melts in towel warmers, so use heat-resistant dishes.)

Cream masks add moisture and/or nutrients to the skin. They work well for skin types ranging from normal to dry, and their hydration boost can be particularly helpful to the mature client.

Gel masks add moisture to the skin without adding oil; they're lightweight, soothing, and have a cooling effect (you can even refrigerate for extra cooling). They're recommended for dry and sensitive skin, but my experience has shown that they're also great for acne-prone or combination skin.

Clay masks absorb oils and tighten the skin, making them ideal for normal to oily skin types; they are not recommended for clients with dry skin. Mature clients in particular may love the tight feeling a clay mask gives their skin. You'll need to use a warm (not hot!), damp towel to remove this mask.

Non-setting masks, usually made from natural ingredients like cucumber or aloe, are designed to stay moist and very hydrating, nourishing the skin rather than giving it a deep cleaning. They tend to be kind to sensitive and dry skin, and are beneficial to aging skin as well.

Seaweed masks come in powder form, and are either mixed with water or serums. The seaweed mask forms a seal that helps the skin's absorption of the serum or cream that is applied underneath. In addition, they're said to have anti-inflammatory properties. They hydrate and repair, which can be particularly beneficial for mature skin.

Paraffin wax masks have a hydrating, plumping, and softening effect on the skin, creating a glowing complexion, and can be particularly beneficial to clients with dry, mature skin. The paraffin should be melted at just higher than body temperature, and you'll always want to test its temperature before beginning: it should be warm to the touch, not uncomfortably hot. It will become hard as a candle once applied to the skin, trapping the heat underneath and promoting the penetration of ingredients deeper into the skin. Paraffin wax masks give quick results, making them great option for clients who want to look their best instantly for special occasions, but the results only last for a limited time. These masks are not recommended for oily or sensitive skin, or skin with blemishes: the heat may be too stimulating, causing redness or irritation.

## **Mature Clients: Additional Facial Considerations**

When working with mature clients, it's important to have up-to-date knowledge of hormone replacement, diet, and lifestyle influences, because all affect the quality of the skin. While a detailed discussion of these topics is part of pre-licensing education, and a complete review is beyond the scope of this course, we'll touch on a few key pointers:

- Decreased estrogen production during menopause causes both collagen and elastin levels to decline, making the skin thinner and less elastic, causing wrinkling and sagging.
- The use of alcohol contributes to dehydration, making fine lines appear more prevalent.
- Smoking deprives the skin of nutrients like vitamin C, which helps protect and repair skin damage. In addition, the carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke displaces the skin's oxygen, while the nicotine it contains reduces blood flow, combining to leave the skin discolored and dry.
- A chemical response in the body caused by stress makes the skin more sensitive and reactive, increasing the odds of inflammation, and acne flare-ups, aggravating already-existing conditions like rosacea and eczema, and causing skin problems to heal more slowly.

### **Equipment**

In addition, it is important to be aware of, and know how to safely operate, the various implements and machines that may be particularly relevant to the mature facial.

A vacuum machine, or suction machine, has two purposes: to suction dirt and impurities from the skin, and to aid blood circulation. In addition to improving the overall look of the skin, it is thought to particularly help with laugh lines.

A rotary brush is primarily used to exfoliate the skin; it will also help to soften excess oil, dirt, and cell buildup; and the revolving brush will also create a pleasant massage for your client. Rotary brushes should be used with water or cleansers. Allow the brush itself to do the work – don't apply pressure – and be careful to avoid the eye area. Besides providing a deep clean to the skin, using a rotary brush with the mature client can increase circulation, decrease puffiness, and give the face a nice fresh glow.

A magnifying lamp (or loupe) can give you a closer look at the skin, helping you analyze and treat skin conditions – useful for all clients, but particularly relevant to mature ones. Most lamps come in 30, 50 or 100 power magnification, with 50 being the most common. Since you'll be using this lamp often, you'll want to invest in a good-quality lens with no distortion in order to ease eye strain and make it easiest to see the skin. Note that prior to using a magnifying lamp, you'll want to cover the client's eyes with cool cotton rounds, to protect them and keep the client comfortable.

The Wood's lamp uses ultraviolet, much like a black light, to allow a more in-depth look at the skin, highlighting issues such as acne or bacteria, lack of hydrations, dead skin cells, and sun damage that are not yet visible to the naked eye – again, particularly useful with mature clients. Treat the Wood's lamp carefully, as you would a magnifying lamp: place small eye pads over your clients' eyes before using, keep the light a minimum of 4-5 inches above the clients' face, and be very careful not to have the light on too long or touch the bulb, as it will get very hot.

A professional paraffin wax heater is another common piece of equipment: it uses a thermostat to keep the wax temperature steady at just above body heat, it always delivers even heat, and it can be left on all day. As we've discussed, paraffin wax masks deliver several benefits to the mature client, so investing in a heater may be a wise decision.

Mature skin particularly benefits from the use of a high-frequency machine, which stimulates circulation, has an antiseptic effect, helps oxygenate the skin, and increases the skin's cell metabolism. It will also help coagulate and heal any open lesions after extractions. Lastly, it gives off a warm feeling that has a relaxing effect on the skin. Be aware that this machine gives off an ozone smell and creates noise: it's always nice to let your client know to expect both, and that they are completely normal.

Electrotherapy involves passing a low level current through the skin. It's said to help with tone the facial muscles, and is also very beneficial for better product penetration or exfoliating the skin. It can be especially effective on more challenging or mature skin. It's recommended to only use these machines for 5-10 minutes in any facial service, and clients should remove all jewelry, including piercings, prior to any electrotherapy. Most importantly, to prevent any harm, never use electrotherapy on clients who are afraid of electric current, as well as clients with pacemakers, heart issues, metal implants, braces, epilepsy, seizure disorders, or open or broken skin.

### **Additional Facial Treatments**

To give your mature client the most benefit from a facial you should consider high tech delivery systems. While standard emulsions disrupt and damage cells in the delivery process, a delivery system such as liposomes, or liquid-filled bubbles formed artificially to carry substances into the tissue, mimic cell membranes, increasing their compatibility with actual cells. Another delivery system, polymers (also referred to as microsponges) release substances on to the skin's surface at a very precise, controlled rate, minimizing any damage.

Hydrating facials reduce the skin's dehydration, both returning water content to the skin and locking in moisture. There are thousands of humectants (including natural ones like aloe vera and glycerin) with powerful components to work deep

into the skin and moisturize on a more intense level, as well as helping to prevent future water loss. A massage technique that stimulates circulation and tones up the muscles is the perfect finish! Mature clients will find that properly hydrated skin is smoother and softer to the touch; to help prolong the results, advise your clients to moisturize daily.

Finally, a few examples of effective formulas to benefit mature skin:

Green tea is one of the best antioxidants; it's also an antibacterial and an anti-irritant, and provides UV protection. To incorporate green tea into your clients' facials, try adding approximately 2 tablespoons of green tea into 1 cup of cleanser (it should look like a thick cleanser with lots of green flecks), and leave on for approximately 5 minutes. You can also add green tea to your steamer.

Licorice root, also known as sweet root and glycyrrhiza glabra, is an anti-inflammatory and a natural replacement for hydrocortisone (used to reduce rashes and redness). It discourages melanin production, so it can also lighten skin, and it contains vitamin K (used to produce blood coagulation), so it can be very helpful for clients with spider veins. To create a mask, mix licorice root powder with water to a paste consistency. In addition, should a client want to use it on a regular basis, glycyrrhiza glabra extract is added to some cosmetic formulas in active quantities.

## **Mature Clients: Specific Skin Concerns & Treatments**

Remember that severe cases of acne, rosacea, or psoriasis should be referred to a dermatologist, as should spider veins on the face, any suspected skin cancers, and any skin infection that could be a virus such as herpes.

### **Adult Acne**

Turns out the root causes of acne are pretty much the same for the young and old: overproduction of oil, skin cells that form a plug, over-active skin bacteria, and/or inflammation of the skin. But mature women in particular may have additional issues, as hormone fluctuations during menstruation and continuing into menopause can cause adult acne. Family history is a big predictor; other causes of adult acne include stress, which can boost oil production, and the use of anti-aging creams, sunscreens, and perfumes, which can clog pores. In addition, smokers have a greater risk of an acne flare-up, and some preliminary research even suggests that our western diet, high in sugars, dairy products, and saturated fats, could promote acne by stimulating insulin and/or insulin-like growth factor (proteins with high sequence similarity to insulin).

As always, giving the proper analysis to your client and recommending the appropriate products for skin type can help. But remember to find out which medications, if any, have been prescribed, as this will inform your work. For example, you'll want to avoid using strenuous exfoliation if your client is taking Accutane or Retin-A, as excessive exfoliation may cause severe redness and swelling.

Mild acne with some redness and swelling can benefit from a once-a-week acne treatment facial by removing blackheads, making the face feel smoother and softer. Possible treatments include alpha hydroxy acid used in conjunction with beta hydroxy acid, which works to slough old cells and keep the follicles open while peeling away the surface of the skin so that new, more evenly-pigmented skin can take its place; oxygen therapy treatments, which reduce bacteria, oxygenate, and open impacted follicles for easier extraction; and spot blemish treatments: products such as tea tree oil and benzoyl peroxide applied directly to the blemishes after cleansing.

Using products to reduce oil and remove dead skin cells and hydrate the skin will help with breakouts – both in the salon, and at home. Recommendations might include vitamin C for its antioxidant value and healing effects, zinc for its anti-inflammatory properties, and/or B-complex for overall skin health and increased protection against skin bacteria. Of especial note is vitamin A, an antioxidant with exfoliating properties. In fact, topical Vitamin A (also known as retinol) is specifically used in acne treatments as it stimulates new cell production and helps clear the skin in general, making it also well-suited to aging skin which is why it is used in acne treatments. In addition, you can suggest oil free products to your clients, so that their routine at home doesn't aggravate their acne, and

also emphasize the need for daily exfoliation, stress reduction, good nutrition... and regular facials.

### **Rosacea**

A chronic vascular disorder described as tiny red facial veins and congestion of the skin, rosacea appears primarily on the cheeks, forehead and nose. There are different types, which you should be able to recognize:

- Type 1 – associated with facial redness, flushing, and visible blood vessels
- Type 2 – associated with acne-like breakouts; often affects middle-aged women
- Type 3 – a rare form causing thickening of the skin on the nose
- Type 4 – symptoms are centered on the eye area

It is important to note clients can have more than one type at the same time.

There is no cure for rosacea, but it can be controlled, mainly by avoiding triggers. While clients with more severe cases should be instructed to consult with a dermatologist, facials can often soothe mild cases by calming the skin and decreasing inflammation.

To minimize the chances of causing irritation, skip the steaming! Any kind of heat or steam may cause a flare-up; in fact, heat is one of the most common trigger factors cited by the National Rosacea Society. You'll need to choose fragrance free, sensitive skin-friendly products to use on your clients with rosacea, and eliminate the toner from your routine. Also avoid products that contain alcohol, menthol, or witch hazel, and eliminate all exfoliating products. After the facial, use a bit of warm – not hot – water to clean the skin, gently pat dry, then apply a super hydrating moisturizer lightly to avoid clogging pores and creating further irritation. You can also advise your client to avoid direct sunlight, wearing sunscreen, and drinking alcohol, all of which can cause a flare up.

### **Itchy Facial Skin**

Usually skin itches due to a shortage of its natural oils, leaving it prone to dehydration. There are many causes of this shortage and the resulting itchy skin, including not drinking enough water, too much sun tanning, smoking, exposure to very dry air, and stress; in addition, the loss of oil glands due to age is common.

Because of the lack of moisture in the skin, its natural exfoliating cycle slows down. In response, facials that include enzymes will help with all the itching. Enzyme exfoliation gently breaks down keratin protein, the "glue" that holds dead dry itchy skin cells together, helping to shed them and create smoother skin. Consider working with fruit enzymes like papaya, blueberry, or pineapple.

Another treatment for itchy skin is the paraffin wax mask as it will help moisture penetrate the skin, leaving it feeling hydrated and refreshed.

Because dryness and itchiness are very common to mature skin, in addition to salon treatments, you will want to recommend to your client the proper moisturizer to use on a daily basis.

### **Wrinkles**

As we've discussed, the aging process causes skin to become thinner, usually drier, and less elastic, rendering it less able to protect itself from damage like creases and lines. Environment, overall health, and lifestyle choices also play a role in the development of wrinkles. Whatever the cause, when wrinkles are your client's main concern, you have a number of options.

During a facial, exfoliation becomes the most important step: wrinkles hold dead cells and other cellular debris which can make them look more pronounced. You will want to use a chemical exfoliate to get deeper into the skin's layers.

Looking for bigger guns? A chemical peel, which enhances the strength and barrier function of the epidermis, is one of the most effective facial treatments there is. Chemical peels resurface the skin: after a thorough exfoliation, a chemical solution is applied to remove the top layers, and the skin that grows back is smoother and younger looking. These treatments work well for wrinkles, acne, skin discoloration (like age spots), and scars.

Here, the consultation is of the utmost importance: your client may be fearfully picturing the skin melting off her or his face (not an unusual reaction for someone who has never had one). Even if they're less "horror movie," you'll want to address any concerns your client may have. You'll also want to manage your client's expectations, to make sure they are realistic, and to help you determine what type of chemical peel would best suit.

As an esthetician, you can perform light (superficial) peels; medium depth and deep peels are generally done by plastic surgeons, as they may require a sedative to relax, an anesthetic, and/or prescription painkillers afterwards. However, you should have an awareness about all three, in order to discuss them with your clients and make referrals as warranted.

Light peels use an alpha or beta hydroxy acid to remove cells from the epidermis. Following a light peel, the skin's reaction is much like sunburn: your client will likely experience redness and some peeling for about 3-7 days. Also, they should stay out of the sun for several months post-peel, as the brand new skin is fragile. Light peels can safely be performed monthly; best results are seen over time, after multiple peels.

Medium peels, on the other hand, typically use trichloroacetic acid. They remove cells from the epidermis, as well as portions of the upper dermis. Stinging and burning during the procedure is not unusual; recipients may have the option of a sedative before the procedure, as well as painkillers afterwards; ointment may



also be applied to soothe treated areas. Initially, treated skin will be red and swollen, as the swelling goes down, a crust will form, and may develop blotches. Crusted areas should heal in 7-14 days; redness can last for months post-procedure. Sun exposure should be avoided for several months. Medium peels can be repeated every 6-12 months if necessary

Finally, deep peels use carbolic acid. They remove cells from the epidermis, as well as portions of the upper, mid, and lower dermis. Recipients usually receive a local anesthetic and a sedative pre-procedure, and painkillers afterwards; a dressing is also applied. Severe redness and swelling is common post-procedure, and many recipients prefer to recover at home until new skin begins to form (about 2 weeks). Cysts and/or white spots may continue to form in treated areas for several weeks, and redness may last for months. Sun exposure should be avoided going forward. A deep peel should only be done once; on the up side, they can have dramatic and long-lasting results – possibly up to 10 years

Chemical peels are not recommended for clients who have skin sags, bulges, and/or deep severe wrinkles; cosmetic surgery may be an option in these cases. It's also worth noting that some skin types may develop temporary, or possibly permanent, color change in the skin.

Clients who are interested in dramatic results can also be referred to a dermatologist to discuss dermabrasion. This intense exfoliating technique removes the outer layers of facial skin with a rotating tool, exposing new, smoother layers of skin. Like deep peels, they typically require anesthesia; post-procedure, the skin may be pink or swollen and feel as if it is tingling or burning for up to a week. It may ooze or crust during the healing process, which takes about 3 months. Contraindications include inflammatory acne, recurrent herpes flare-ups, radiation burns, or burn scars; dermabrasion is likewise not recommended for people with very dark skin.

You also have the option of suggesting either over-the-counter or prescription retinoids to your clients. These topical, vitamin A-based drugs first appeared in the early 1970's (Tretinoin, or brand name Retin-A, was the first), and were used to treat acne. Since then, they've been used in treating psoriasis, warts, wrinkles, and blotchiness/brown spots caused by overexposure to the sun. Today, retinoids used in the treatment of wrinkles range from retinyl palmitate (over-the-counter and the least potent) to tazarotene (the strongest, available by prescription only).

Retinoids encourage surface skin cells to turn over and die more quickly, allowing new cell growth underneath. They also inhibit the breakdown of collagen, help to thicken the deeper skin layers, and inhibit the production of melanin (great for those brown spots!). Typically new users apply a pea-sized amount of product every other day, then work up to a daily application. Most

users experience some initial redness and peeling. The skin should be clean and dry prior to application, and the use of additional skin care products made with benzoyl peroxide, sulfur, resorcinol, or salicylic acid should be avoided due to the potential for severe skin irritation. In addition, retinoids increase the skin's sensitivity to sunlight, so users should be diligent about sunscreen use.

## **Mature Clients: Alternative Treatments**

Your state's licensing body determines which treatments you are able to perform – some of the following may not be included. However, just like deep peels and prescription retinols, you should be aware of them to allow you to refer your mature clients effectively, and work with them safely both pre-and post-treatment.

### **Laser Skin Treatments**

Laser skin treatments, which may also be called laser resurfacing, laser peels, lasabrasion, etc., speed the development of new skin cells and collagen by destroying damaged skin cells. The use of lasers – medical devices that produce focused streams of intense light – can transform the mature client's facial skin, addressing issues such as age spots, sagging jowls, wrinkles and fine lines, and more. Different skin conditions require different colors and intensities of light, so it is not uncommon to combine laser therapies and/or use multiple devices. Note that people with very dark skin may not be candidates for laser skin treatments; people with active acne lesions and active herpes infections should also avoid the process.

Laser skin treatments are classified into 3 major groups.

#### ***Ablative Lasers***

Producing results similar to those obtained through deep peels or dermabrasion, ablative lasers destroy targeted skin cells by heating the water in them to the point of vaporization. Anesthesia/sedation is usually necessary during the treatment; post-treatment, the target areas are often raw, uncomfortable, and/or weepy, and ointments and bandages may be applied for the first few days. New skin and collagen then form as the wound heals.

At present, ablative laser therapies can only be provided by physicians. That said, you may be providing clients with pre- and post-therapy skincare, and may also be asked to consult with the physician performing the treatment.

#### ***Non-Ablative Lasers***

Less invasive than ablative lasers, non-ablative lasers keep the epidermis intact by targeting deeper layers of the skin. Recovery time is shorter and side effects are milder; however, a number of treatments, often 2-5, may be necessary.

In most states, non-ablative laser therapies can only be provided by physicians. However, some states with two-tier licensing permit estheticians with "master" or equivalent designations to perform them; others are creating legislation that clarifies who may use cosmetic lasers, and under what circumstances.

#### ***Fractional/Fractionated Lasers***

The newest treatment, fractional lasers reduce surface injury and increase depth of injury by creating individual tiny, deep holes in the skin, leaving surrounding

areas intact and decreasing healing time. They can be either ablative or non-ablative.

If the terms of your license allow you to perform or assist with laser skin treatments, or if you simply wish to learn more about them, multiple opportunities exist to acquire training, ranging from classroom to hands-on, intensives to longer programs, etc.

### **Microcurrent Therapy**

Microcurrent was first discovered in 1830, and has been mainly used in the medical field: it has the ability to heal the body 250% faster than the healing process alone. Then a physician accidentally noticed his patients' faces were smoother and younger-looking after Bell's palsy treatments... and the rest is history.

Sometimes referred to as a "natural facelift" or facial "toning," microcurrent therapy is safe and painless. Two hand-held prongs deliver precise, very low-voltage electrical currents to the skin; these currents prompt the cells to repair damaged skin and stimulate collagen and elastin production, which helps plump the skin and eliminate fine lines and wrinkles. Per Joanna Vargas, founder of Joanna Vargas Salon in New York City, "According to studies, a microcurrent facial can increase collagen production up to 14%, elastin increases 48% and blood circulation goes up 38%." Results are cumulative with a high frequency of treatments recommended to start (as many as 10-15 in the first 6 weeks), then subsiding to a 3 month maintenance schedule.

Pregnant women, people with pacemakers or any kind of heart condition, and people with epilepsy or cancer should avoid microcurrent therapy. If your client is currently under a doctor's care, the doctor should clear them for microcurrent therapy prior to its being used.

This therapy can be delivered by dermatologists; estheticians in some states may also be able to specialize in microcurrent therapy.

### **Cannabidiol (CBD) Creams and Oils**

A new mover and shaker in the world of facials and skin care is CBD oil or cream, the current MVP of the wellness world.

Cannabidiol (CBD) is a non-psychoactive derivative of the cannabis plant. As more and more states pass laws allowing medical, and in some cases recreational, use of marijuana, CBD has been getting a lot of attention. While additional research is underway, preliminary results suggest it could potentially help people with a wide range of issues.

Focusing specifically on the beauty business, Board-certified dermatologist and specialist on the use topical cannabinoids in skin care Jeanette Jacknin states

that studies have shown that “affecting the endocannabinoid system – like with CBD – can help the skin look more radiant and youthful.” CBD has anti-inflammatory properties – it’s been observed to be particularly helpful with acne. It’s also an antioxidant, and as such may help counteract signs of aging caused by free radicals (molecules that contribute to visible aging). The combination of these two traits suggests that beauty products containing CBD can soothe and relax the skin, causing wrinkles to be less visible and giving the skin a firmer, healthier, younger appearance.

If you’d like to try CBD with your clients, you’ll want to confirm its legality: CBD products must contain less than 0.3% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) if your state doesn’t allow recreational use of marijuana. Oils, creams, and lotions containing CBD can be applied directly to the skin, focusing on any target areas.

## **Conclusion**

Salon skin care for the mature client must begin by addressing skin health, hydration, and elasticity. As the expert, you'll decide which elements of the classic facial should be altered in order to best support each specific client's goals; whether the final mask should be hydrating, firming, calming, soothing, or a combination of these effects; and whether an additional treatment or a referral might be called for.

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