# Taming tan

With the scorching summer heat comes a classic South Asian problem - tanning of the skin. Excessive exposure to ultraviolet rays accelerates the melanin production in the skin, thus causing tanning. While natural dark skin is rather beautiful, tanning is hardly a blessing.

The consequences of tanning are actually more than 'just getting a little darker.' In fact, tanning can be the root of a lot of other skin problems such as acne, pimples, wrinkles, dark spots and even hyperpigmentation. Luckily, a few steps can go a long way in tackling the merciless summer sun.

Firstly, always carry an umbrella or a hat to protect yourself from the sun. The lighter the tan, the easier it is to remove! And do not, under any circumstances, forget to put on sunscreen in all areas of your body that will be exposed to the sun.

Direct eye contact with the sun must be avoided and so, now is the time for you to show-off your funky shades!

For tan removal, popular choices include products that give an instant result such as bleach or other chemical laden cosmetic items. However, these may have damaging effects in the long run, as they ruin the delicateness of the skin and may even cause allergic reactions. This is where DIY home remedies come in. With natural ingredients that are easily accessible, these remedies will make it super easy to have healthy skin this summer!

# CUCUMBER, ROSE WATER AND LEMON JUICE PACK

Both cucumber and lemon are natural bleaching agents, as they contain vitamin C which is a powerful antioxidant. The cucum-

ber juice and rose water act as cooling agents to soothe the blemished skin.

Mix equal amounts of cucumber juice, lemon juice and rose water in a bowl and apply it on the tanned spots with cotton. Then, wash it off with cold water after ten minutes. Refreshing on the skin, this pack can be used every day. However, remember to use sunscreen with high SPF as the acidic nature of the lemon juice can make the skin more sensitive to the UV rays of the sun.

### GRAM FLOUR (BESAN) AND TURMERIC FACE PACK

Not only does turmeric reduce pigmentation and tan on the skin, but it also adds a healthy glow to it. Gram flour, on the other hand, works wonders in removing dead cells and exfoliating the skin. To make this pack, take two tablespoons of gram flour, a pinch of turmeric, one tablespoon of milk, and one tablespoon of crushed orange peel in a bowl. Then, add cold rose water and mix them to make a paste. Apply this paste onto the affected areas and wait until it's dry. Finally, remove the pack by scrubbing gently. Use this pack every alternate day for effective results.

#### PAPAYA AND HONEY FACE PACK

We all know how amazing papaya is for the skin. Not only does it have enzymes with skin-lightening properties, but it also



exfoliates and reduces scars and blemishes. On the other hand, honey helps in moisturising and softening the skin. So, for this pack, mash ripe papaya pulp and add a bit of honey to it to make a paste. Apply this on your clean face and let it dry for 30 minutes, before finally washing it off with water. You will be left with softer, healthier skin and this

## TOMATO, YOGHURT AND LEMON JUICE FACE PACK

is perfect for even darker tans.

This face pack works wonders in removing dark spots and pigmentation from tanned skin. Moreover, tomato juice works as a natural toner to shrink open pores whereas yoghurt helps in moisturising the skin. Firstly, mix two tablespoon of tomato pulp, one tablespoon of lemon juice and one tablespoon of yoghurt in a bowl.

After applying it on the tanned areas, wait for 30 minutes before washing it with cold water. The tomato juice may feel itchy in the beginning, but with regular application, this will wane. This face pack is more suited to those with oily skin as it will also reduce the oiliness and leave a softer smoother skin.

In case of severe tan, it is advisable to consult a dermatologist and have it checked out. The physician will be able to prescribe stronger medicines if needed and can identify any underlying problems if there are any. For a daily basis, though, these packs are enough to keep your skin protected while you go out there and conquer the heat!

By Adiba Mahbub Proma Photo: Collected

# Daytime Skincare During Summer

Once again Baishakh has taken over the country in all its sunny glory. It's time for us again to indulge in what we do best-devour the delicious summer fruits, stash up the water bottles in the freezer, get drenched even after a brisk ten minutes' walk... but most of all praying for a few drops of rain. Amidst all the chaos, we forget the most important part of our body that suffers the most in the heat- the skin. While easy solutions of bleach or parlour sessions can be quick fix-ups, they are not long lasting and quite pricey for an average Bangladeshi woman. But fret not, here are some tips which can be nourishing, long lasting and already available in your home!

## COVER UP (AS MUCH AS YOU CAN)

This might sound challenging but when you're out, the scorching rays will not be forgiving at all. Since the skin has such a large surface area, dust can settle down and accumulate easily. Wear full sleeves if you are expecting to be out for a long time. Covering the neck is crucial as well since most tans occur around it and leaves a very distinguishable mark. Covered shoes are essential during long hours outside as the feet are prone to get visibly dry and hence get seri-

ously tanned. Applying a sunscreen can be useful, depending on the sensitivity of the skin. However, long hours of sunscreen can block the pores and lead to pimples.

### **DIET ESSENTIALS**

In summer, the body loses a lot of water which leads to dry and unhealthy skin. The smartest way to regain the lost fluids is by consuming juicy fruits such as watermelons, lemons, pears and mangoes; like a gift from mother nature, summer fruits are loaded with natural fluids which contains much less calories than fizzy drinks do and are also good for the digestive system, which is directly linked to the skin. However, to be on the safe side, keep the fruits five minutes under running water or half an hour submerged in clean water to get rid of any associated chemicals. Switch to the juice of coconuts, which is both healthy and extremely hydrating, instead of dyed fizzy drinks which are not advantageous to your skin at all. Avoid oily foods, greasy skin products, or anything that has to do with oil on the skin's surface, especially on the face. Oil blocks pores and does not get off your skin easily which often leads to breakouts. Lastly, drink water every hour like clockwork. If possible, set alarms to remind yourself.

### TAN REMEDIES

This is one of the major consequences of many working Bangladeshis during summertime. Even an hour outside in Grishhokal for a couple of days, can leave distinguishable tan marks especially around the face, neck and feet. Ice cold water is a great at cooling sunburns and severely tanned skin, if immediately applied on the affected area. Cucumbers and lemons are powerful and natural bleaching agents and can be even better if combined; so is turmeric and tomato paste. Honey can naturally and effectively get rid of scars, while yogurt and milk can hydrate and moisturise the skin far better than any beauty soap, if applied regularly.

#### **SHOWERING PRINCIPLES**

Instead of soaps, which are harsh on the skin, use a good exfoliant to remove dead cells from the skin. After shower, pat your skin dry with a clean towel. While the skin is still wet, apply moisturiser all over; this is because the skin produces more oil when it becomes too dry which can lead to excessive oil formation on the surface of the skin. Drying the dampness between your toes is also a must as your feet are prone to grow fungal infections very fast.

### WHAT'S IN YOUR BAG?

Yes, I said bag and not a purse, because it is crucial to be well equipped during the summer for the sake of your skin. A water bottle, a cotton handkerchief and lip balms are essential for any kind of travelling, be it long or short. Besides these keep a face powder, a face-wash, and an umbrella at all times. A trick for your face powder to last longer is to mix it with talcum powder. The excess of talcum powder can be brushed off, and although you may look like a Japanese Geisha for some time, it's going to save a lot of hassle of several reapplication of the face powder during the day and also prevents breakouts in your face.

Us Bangladeshis are born to thrive in the warmth of the sun, my Nanijaan says. Recently the plethora of dust, the absence of the soothing shade under a tree combined with the searing heat can be quite a challenge, even to us. The skin is just a small part of our body and yet it presents us to the whole world, creating a distinct impression. With the proper care, it can thrive as well and make you more confident.

### **By Dania Manal**