

Home remedies for hyperpigmentation – natural skin lightening



Sensitive skin is something most of us suffer from, and most of us go to extreme measures to make sure our skin is healthy, but in the summer sun even our extreme measures tend to surrender. Most of us religiously take care of our facial skin, but at times realise we are missing out on the rest of the body. Body parts such as elbows, napes of necks, knees and underarms tend to suffer from hyperpigmentation more than other parts of the body. This is mainly because skin in these areas is different in texture and is more prone to patchiness.

The skin in our joints is different in the sense that they are folded, which is necessary to allow movement, and also because they are always in contact with other objects, such as resting elbows on desks, knocking with knuckles, friction of collars with the neck and friction of underarms with the body. All these together make the skin thicker which means it requires extra care and protection for it to be equally healthy and radiant like skin in other parts of the body.

Fear not, this extra care won't break the bank. There are various at home remedies you can try that will gradually reduce patchiness and pigmentation. First, let's see what not to do. Because the skin is thicker most of us tend to over exfoliate, scrubbing away thinking it will reduce the darkness. Unfortunately that is not the case. It will only end up making skin tougher and darker, maybe even bruised, which in Asian skin like ours helps intensify pigmentation. Now for what you can do. Here are a series of methods and ingredients that will help lighten these hyperpigmented areas and all you have to do is make a trip to the kitchen!

1. Exfoliation is the key, as long as it's not too harsh. This will help brush off layers of dead skin cells that make the area patchy and leave a soft smooth surface for further remedies to work more effectively. Sugar scrubs are very effective mixed with olive oil or honey or any other medium to make it less harsh. Soft hand cleansing with natural ingredients is always better than chemical exfoliates.

2. Mint leaves are known to be full of oils and brightening properties. Boil mint leaves for a good few minutes, add lemon juice to the water to make it stronger, and apply it on the affected areas using cotton balls. Do not wash it off immediately, but let your skin absorb it, and then wash off. This helps even out skin tone.

3. The yoghurt in your refrigerator is more useful than you think. Yoghurt has amazing brightening properties and helps immensely with sunburn. Yoghurt mixed with white vinegar creates a paste which will help lighten pig-

mented areas a lot. Using this regularly will give you quick results.

4. We Asians cannot survive without this ingredient, and it's stocked up in every home kitchen. This is an ancient method used by our mothers and grandmothers. Turmeric, as we all know, helps even skin tone. Mixing raw turmeric juice with milk and massaging it on the affected places will help improve skin texture and eventually even it out. Do this as frequently as you want, as there are no side effects or harshness whatsoever.

5. Aloe vera gel also has naturally brightening and lightening properties which too help even out skin tone. Other than that, aloe vera gel has cooling properties which help calm irritated skin and also promotes repair of damaged skin cells. Cut open an aloe vera leaf, extract the gel and apply to pigmented skin. Doing this once a day everyday will give you visible results.

4. Baking soda is an unusual ingredient, but very effective for this purpose. This can be used with a variety of other ingredients as a medium. Mix it with water, rose water, honey or milk, make a paste, and apply to needed areas. Wash off after few minutes or once the paste is dry. Baking soda gives very fast results compared to some other methods. Twice a week is good enough as too much would mean excess exfoliation.

5. Lemons and limes are a natural bleaching agent. This alone is usually hard to use or apply, so use lemon juice as a medium for other ingredients which will help boost the lightening process. You could also cut a lemon in half, dip cut side onto sugar, and use it as a

scrub. Honey is one ingredient that works like magic when mixed with lemon juice.

6. Oils. Last but not least, moisturising is a must. After all the remedies and exfoliation, you cannot miss this crucial step moisturise. Coconut oil and almond oil are great natural moisturisers. After all the other remedies are done, massage oils onto effected areas. Almond oil helps even out skin tone while coconut oil has vitamin E which prevents dryness and also has skin lightening properties.

Other than these tips, always remember to cleanse regularly with mild cleansers or natural cleansers to prevent build-up of dirt, and wear sunscreen routinely to prevent more sunburns. These natural methods of improving skin texture is always much better than chemical products, as they have no side effects and no one will become resistant to them upon increased use. Take a walk on the natural side, and let nature help you with your skin problems.

By Anisha Hassan
Photo: Collected



Get rid off your stubborn fat :

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Men and women are different and will store fats in different parts of their body due to evolutionary reasons. Women have wider hips and pelvis but men on the other hand are predisposed to store fat in the belly and neck area while women are likelier to store in their hips, arms and thighs. Another thing you need to realize before you start Weight Reduction plan is that **there's no such thing as spot reduction**. You can't just burn fat from one part of your body to get your desired result. Believe me, regardless of your gender or body type you can get rid of these deposits of fat pockets without resorting to invasive methods like liposuction or tummy tuck. **Remember, getting healthier is a lifestyle, not a weekly or monthly affair.**



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... and remember :
"Healthy **eating** + less **stress** + adequate **sleep** + right **workout** = keeps a '**healthier you**'.



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