

Beauty With Shahnaz: Watching Your Back

By: Shahnaz Husain

Our back is very rich in oil glands and that is why wrinkles are rarely seen on the back.

The oil glands, however, make the skin prone to blackheads, spots and pimples. Sun-exposure can also result in tanning or pigmented patches, making that area look blotchy.



Please send your questions and comments to beauty@citymasala.com.

BACK CARE

Pay extra attention to the back while bathing. Use a long-handled brush, *loofah*, or a rough washcloth to scrub the area gently. This keeps the pores clean. Clogged pores can lead to blackheads and pimples. If you have dry patches, massage sesame seed (*til*) oil before you bathe. A lemon-turmeric cream also helps to lighten dark areas.

A body scrub, just like facial scrubs, works wonders for the skin. Make one at home by mixing rice flour with yogurt. Apply the scrub on the skin with a long handled brush and scrub gently with the brush and then wash off with water. This helps remove dead cells and makes the skin clearer and brighter. Scrubs help to dislodge and discourage blackheads. Almond meal (ground almonds) mixed with rose water may also be used as a scrub, but for oily and pimple-prone skin, yogurt and rice powder work better. You may also use ready-to-use scrubs that are available.

Sometimes, an acne condition can spread to the shoulders and back. In such cases, it is better to use medicated and specialized products to control the condition. We advise the use of a medicated cleanser, which contains ingredients like eucalyptus and clove. At night, an anti-

HOMEMADE MASKS FOR THE BACK

- Mix 1 egg white, 2 tbsp yogurt, 2 tsp each fuller's earth, one tsp honey and 1/8 tsp baking soda - apply on the back and wash off after 20 minutes. This mask helps to tighten the skin and improves texture.
- Squeeze the juice of one lime into a bowl, add a glass of boiled whole milk and a tsp of glycerin to it, stir well and let sit for half an hour. Apply on the back and other parts of the body. Wash off after half an hour.
- To remove tan, mix 4 tsp oatmeal with one tsp each of yogurt, lemon juice and egg white - apply on the back and wash off when it dries.
- Mix *besan* (gram flour) with yogurt and add a little turmeric; the paste should be thick and should not drip - apply half an hour before you shower.
- On pigmented (dark) patches, first use a scrub gently and in circular movements. Then apply one part honey mixed with 2 parts lemon juice on the dark patches. Wash off after 20 minutes.
- For pimples and spots, mix cinnamon powder with lemon juice and apply directly on the eruptions. Sandalwood paste may also be applied.

acne lotion should be applied and left on overnight. If there are dark marks left by acne and pimples, an anti-blemish ointment should be rubbed into the area and left on. Scrubs may also be used on the scars left by pimples. As a home remedy, apply yogurt everyday on the back and wash off after 20 minutes. Yogurt has a healing effect on acne and also restores the normal acid-alkaline balance.

COVERING UP TO BARE

If you have pimples on your back and wish to wear an outfit that is cut low in the back, have a spouse or friend apply some foundation which can be water-based or cake type. Avoid creamy concealers or foundation on acne. You can also use a foundation in the same way to conceal blemishes. It should be one shade lighter than your normal skin color. Pat into the skin and then apply loose powder on top, blending the powder with the rest of the skin. What you must bear in mind is that the concealer or foundation, which you use to conceal pits or acne scars, can be two or three shades lighter than your skin color. Then apply your normal foundation over the entire back, setting it with powder. You will need help so make sure you have a friend over! ☺

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