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Eat yourself clever: Intelligent nutrition with *Patrick Holford*



Treatment of the month...

Shirodhara

When I was invited to try out an ayurvedic shirodhara treatment – which involves pouring a steady stream of warm oil over the forehead – I feared it might be akin to Chinese water torture. However, when I met my therapist, Dr Rohan Nagar, he allayed my fears, explaining that this gentle treatment is particularly beneficial for calming the mind and helps soothing stress.

After an initial consultation with Dr Nagar, the treatment began with a head and neck massage followed by the shirodhara. At first the sensation was rather odd and tickled a bit, but I soon got used to it and eventually it became something of a meditative experience. There was something about the rhythmic flow of oil that seemed to calm my chattering mind.

Afterwards my hair looked like an oil slick, but a refreshing shower soon sorted that out, and I headed off into the evening feeling thoroughly soothed and relaxed.

Costs £100 for 60 minutes at Shymala Ayurveda Spa, west London. Call 020 7348 0018 or visit shymalabayurveda.com.

Q&A

THE BEAUTY AND THE BRAIN DOCTORS



Our stateside agony aunts Dr Debra Luftman and Dr Eva Ritvo answer your beauty dilemmas

Q My normally glossy hair has become limp and dry but my demanding job means that I don't have any time to hunt for haircare. Is there a natural fix?

A First of all, it's worth getting your hair healthy. From a psychological standpoint, hair is a major marker of attractiveness and health. Also, unhealthy hair is often a harbinger of some deeper issue, such as low thyroid function, that you should see your physician about. Hypothyroidism can be detected with a simple blood test and is easily treated. Your hair may also be telling you that your diet is deficient in some way, which means that seeing a nutritionist might be a good idea. As for natural quick fixes, try taking 5mg biotin supplements to strengthen hair by thickening the hair shaft. Also, hair masks with natural ingredients like olive, sweet almond extracts, fruit acids and vitamins lock in moisture. Finally, you could spread avocado, banana or olive oil into your hair, but there's a less messy way to use food that works from the inside out. Walnuts,

peanuts and sunflower seeds all contain essential fatty acids that add sheen to your hair.

thebeauty prescription.com

“Are you suffering from dry lips? Exfoliate dead skin with a sugar and oil mixture”

QUICK FIXES

Reduce your double chin by using your thumbs and middle fingers to grab some skin and pinch along your jaw line. Do this a few times a day and you should see a difference!



Bharti Vyas is one of the UK's leading holistic beauty therapists and ayurvedic experts

Music to our ears!

KT Tunstall doesn't miss a beat when it comes to natural beauty and invests her money in the multifunctional balms from Soil Association-certified company Balm Balm. “I love Balm Balm! It's such a great idea,” she says. “It's currently my facial moisturiser and hair shiner!” KT likes to zap her balm in the microwave with a little neroli oil for a fresh moisturiser. At *NH* we heat our lip balm, £2.99, with a little eucalyptus oil to combat winter sniffles! For more information on the variety of balms available, visit balmbalm.com.



Here's a body scrub I made earlier

Jo Fairley, co-founder of beautybible.com, makes her body scrub from half a cup of grapeseed oil, a quarter of a cup of granulated sugar and a quarter of a cup of Maldon sea salt in a wide-mouthed jar with 20 drops of her favourite essential oils. “It does double-duty because the oil stays on the skin's surface and acts as a moisturiser, so you don't need to apply lotion after,” says Jo. For an exotic fragrance, take Jo's advice and mix ylang ylang oil with orange oil.