



Hormones and Skin

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C
Interviewing **Trevor Cates**



Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Welcome back to the Reverse Autoimmune Disease Series Summit, everybody, Summit Series. We're on round five of this. This is our fifth iteration, healing the energy body. And I'm delighted to bring you one of everyone's favorite speakers to talk about hormones and skin, Dr. Trevor Cates, who is the author of the USA Today bestselling book "Clean Skin From Within", and founder of the Spa Doctor natural skincare line. She was the first woman licensed as a naturopathic doctor in the state of California, and was the doctor in several world renowned spas in Park City, Utah. She continues to help women from around the world with a focus on skin and hormones, and she's been featured on various TV shows, and is the host of "The Hormones, Health and Harmony" docu-series, "The Woman's Doctor" podcast, and the public television special "Younger Skin From Within." Her natural skincare line is sold online and is popular with celebrities like Zooey Deschanel, makeup artist Georgie Douglas, and everyday folks around the world. Her next book, "Natural Beauty Reset: The seven day program to harmonize hormones and restore radiance" is now available for pre-orders on Amazon, and hits bookstores in September, which I guess is gonna be beyond the listening of this, but hits bookstores now. And Dr. Cate's goal is to inspire and empower women to find the keys to harmonize their hormones and open their eyes to their natural beauty. Their beauty has always been there. Sometimes we just need a guide to help illuminate the path. Welcome to this series.

Trevor Cates

Thank you, it's great to be here with you. Yes, my book just came out September 13th. So I need to make sure you have an updated bio.



Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

I know. Yeah, I was like, oh no, it's already hit the bookstores. So you know, that last line, that you already have the beauty that's within and just need the path illuminated, I think it's really beautiful and poignant because so many people are shown through airbrushed images in the fronts of magazines, right, that their skin is not beautiful enough. So how do you speak to that?

Trevor Cates

Yeah, I know. It is a really interesting question. The reason why I really wanted to write a book, a whole book around, you know, called "Natural Beauty Reset" has to do with the, when I was interviewing different people for, it started with customers, and then it ended up in the docu-series, is one of our favorite questions to ask, which is, when did you realize that you're beautiful? And we weren't asking, are you beautiful, or do you think you're beautiful? But, when did you realize you are? And the answers to that were really interesting from people, because some people said, you know, this is when it happened for me. And then some people would say, well, you know, I'm still trying to figure that out. And you know, everything in between, and really it is a thing where you, you know, and I had lots of people actually cry when I asked the question. Like you're telling me I'm beautiful, you know? Yes! And I know, it is a challenging thing. Skin can be really brutal, especially for women, but men also.

And what we do is we, you know, because our skin issues are right on the surface, are harder to hide than other issues. Like if we're in pain, we may be able to kind of hide that and kind of fake it. But certainly, you know, it's not always easy to do that. Skin issues, they're just right there on the surface. And while women can wear makeup to cover it up, you can use selfie filters and things like that, it is right there. And so when you're with someone, it gives you information. And as physicians, as doctors, we look at our patient's skin and we say, okay, well, this is a sign that something's outta balance. So dry skin means this, you know, it could mean you have hypothyroidism. What other symptoms might that person have, might that patient have? You're having acne breakouts and they're along the jawline. Let me think about maybe hormonal acne and look at your hormones. But unfortunately, most people don't really think about skin in that way. So people oftentimes will think, okay, well, I just need to use a topical to suppress it, or something just to cover it up, not realizing that your skin is actually giving you really valuable tools and information about your overall health, including your immune system.



Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Oh, it's so true. I think that, you know, the filter thing is kind of damaging these days. You know, I talked about airbrushed magazines, and I remember reading a story a long time ago, many, many years ago, where Cindy Crawford, I guess, is from somewhere in the South, I think Georgia, and she'd gone back home, and her mom had said, hey, can you just like, at least one day put all of your stuff on so that people believe that you're my daughter? Because she looked so different from, you know, what the glossy pictures showed on the magazine. So there's kind of a weird ideal that we have for what beauty is, and that these natural aging processes, right, are not acceptable. But at the same time, we have things that we can do to make that be a little more graceful, right? And so one of the things that you're talking about with autoimmunity, there are so many skin things that will show up autoimmune, right?

Trevor Cates

Yeah, absolutely. And as you know, you have one autoimmune condition, it can show up as other autoimmune conditions. And people oftentimes will develop a number of them. And sometimes skin is one of the early ones. And so like, it could be eczema, atopic dermatitis, it could be psoriasis. Those are two of the really big ones that a lot of people will develop. Yeah, and rosacea is another one that oftentimes shows up in people with autoimmune conditions, or vitiligo, and even, you know, hyperpigmentation. It's just, you know, our body is constantly trying, our skin is our barrier to the outside world, and so it's constantly trying to adjust to what's around it, and then also balancing with what's going on internally. And so we just are constantly seeing things show up, and some people are more prone to this than others. I can say for myself, I, as a child, I had a lot of allergies and health issues that showed up on my skin. So I'm one of these people that whatever shows up internally, and my skin is just gonna show me and tell me, and I'm gonna react to everything. If it's not super clean and my gut health isn't in a good place, I'm gonna know it, if I'm gonna eat something. And so not everybody is quite as sensitive, but most people, if you pay attention, you can make that connection. So even in--

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

I get dots around my eye if I eat something that's not clean. And it usually happens if I am traveling. I'm still dedicated, I don't eat gluten, I don't eat anything, even on the road. I don't eat sugar. But sometimes they'll be some, you know, I just get this little breakout, and I go, well, something was somewhere, you know? Yeah.



Trevor Cates

Yeah, absolutely. And it also will give you indications that you're going in the right direction with your health. So if your skin is really healthy and glowing, then you could take that as feedback. Like feedback of what have I been doing? What have I been doing lately that really helped me get back on track? What have I been eating? Have I been sleeping better? What supplements have I been taking? What am I doing? Why is my skin looking so good? That's actually part of what led me to write my first book, "Clean Skin From Within", was I was putting people on a two week weight loss program at the Waldorf Astoria. And then at the end of the two weeks, they would say, gosh, I've lost all this weight, Dr. Case, but what surprises me is my skin. I didn't know that my skin could look this good. And so that's when I realized that, you know, there was this need for this message to get out there about the clues that are on the surface of your skin.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Well, you mentioned earlier about hormone related issues with skin. So what do hormones have to do with skin health?

Trevor Cates

Yeah. So there are a lot of hormone skin connections, and a lot of times people think about sex hormones. So certainly as we, you know, go through transitions like puberty, when we have hormone sex, hormone changes, teenagers will oftentimes notice breakouts. And so that's one thing. But it's not just for puberty, right? A lot of women in perimenopause will start to notice shifts in their hormones that will cause more breakouts that maybe they didn't experience since they were a teenager, or maybe for the first time ever. And then there are also things, like I mentioned, thyroid. If your thyroid is off, that can also show up on your skin. If it's low, you might have dry skin. If you have hyperthyroid issues, then you could be noticing more oilier or more acne prone skin. And then even adrenals, our adrenals, our cortisol levels. So when our cortisol levels go high, and they stay high especially, can lead to more inflammatory skin issues. Especially if you have a tendency to things like rosacea, or acne, or eczema, that you can notice flareups with those, because of the increase in cortisol. And even melatonin has, you know, it's oftentimes just thought of as the sleep hormone, but it actually has a role in protecting our skin and our health, and it actually works like an antioxidant in the body. So a lot of really powerful hormones that play a role in our skin.



Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

So, you know, you mentioned, I'd love to go through specific, like, what does this mean around the jawline?

Trevor Cates

Yeah, so different skin issues. So some of the common skin things that people oftentimes will notice is a lot of times women will break out along the jaw line. And so that can be a sign of hormonal acne, especially, or you know, that your hormones are related. And so if you're noticing that, especially at certain times of the month, that you're getting a flare up. Maybe it's right before your period, you might get a flare up in acne, and then that might be related to your hormones. If you're getting acne more around your mouth, it could actually not be acne. It could be perioral dermatitis. It could be something different. Or it could be acne, but it might be more related to something that you're eating and that it's causing you to break out around your mouth. Some people will get breakouts around their hairline, and sometimes that has to do actually with the products that you're using, like your hair care products.

A lot of women will, you know, start to use more hair care products in their hair, and it's touching their face as they're spraying their hairspray, or their products are getting and clogging their pores. So it could be related to that. Or if you've changed up your shampoo or different things, it's something to look at, but those are some of the common things with acne. But another common things that I see with a lot of people, and people oftentimes will stop me, like, what are these little bumps on the backs of my arms? And it's a condition called keratosis pilaris, and it's very common. And a lot of people think that they need to just use more moisturizer, or they need to exfoliate their skin more. But it actually is oftentimes due to an essential fatty acid or a zinc deficiency. So it might be actually be a nutritional deficiency. That can be another thing that shows up on the skin.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Or candida.

Trevor Cates

Yeah, so yeah, candida usually shows up a little bit differently, but yeah, you could have candida overgrowth, and that can definitely show up on the skin.



Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

So that leads us to the role that the microbiome plays from the gut, right, in skin and hormones?

Trevor Cates

Yes, absolutely. The gut skin connection is really, really important. And it is one of the biggest things that I talk to. For people who have skin issues, talk to them about their gut. And the research does show there's gut skin connection, gut brain skin connection, and of course, gut hormone connection too. So we really want to look at what we can do to improve our gut microbiome, because that in turn is going to impact our skin microbiome. And it really is any number of skin conditions. So what can happen is it, you know, the skin has its own microbiome. It has its own balance of microorganisms that live on it, protect it, and keep it in this balance. Just like the gut has its own balance of microorganisms in it that help keep it working optimally, where our skin has that too. And as I mentioned before, our skin has this barrier function to it. And part of that barrier function protecting us from the outside world are these microorganisms.

So there are things that we do internally, from the inside out, our gut, that can impact our skin microbiome. And then there are also things that we do externally that impact our skin microbiome. And so we really wanna do both. So I know for many years of my practice, I've been a naturopathic doctor for 22 years. For many years, I was just focusing on the inside out, because as a naturopathic doctor, I wanted to help people just from the inside out. And then I started to shift about 10 years ago. I started to see, wow, what we put on our skin and our environment physically can impact our skin microbiome too. So it was really important to do both. And oftentimes people will say to me, well, I don't think there's anything wrong with my gut because I don't have any digestive symptoms, but they might have skin issues. And I want people to realize that if you have gut dysbiosis issues, it can show up as skin issues, and you might not have any digestive or gut symptoms.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

I actually wanna highlight that for a second. Like, let's draw it out like we're doing a sports replay, because this is really, oh, it's a key point! You know, if your microbiome is not healthy, it isn't necessarily true that you're going to have digestive issues that are overt. Instead you can have covert issues in your immune system, you know, as well as with your skin, your hair, your nails,



you know, it's just like eyes, your thyroid. So it's not necessarily just going to be about your bowel movements. Right?

Trevor Cates

Right! And I sometimes was surprised with some of the tests that I would do with patients, and not really thinking, I'm like, well, let's do a gut microbiome test, and just see if you have got gut dysbiosis issues, but because you don't have any of the typical symptoms, it's probably fine. But they had acne, you know, really, pretty significant, moderate, or maybe some people even severe acne, and then we would definitely find dysbiosis issues. And sometimes it was, it was usually when it, that bad, it's usually a combination of not enough of the good bacteria, as well as some imbalance of commensal bacteria, the bacteria that are normally there, but should be in check, and they should be in a certain range, or actually some presence of harmful bacteria. Of bacteria that should not be that present. So pathogenic bacteria, or also things like candida overgrowth. So those are things that definitely have shown up. And then sometimes what's been interesting is after we treat it, they say, you know what? My digestion is actually better. And I said, well, you never mentioned that it was bad? And they're like, well, I wasn't having symptoms, but I didn't know that I could just feel this comfortable. They didn't even realize!

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

They didn't know what their optimal actually felt like.

Trevor Cates

Yeah.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

And then there's another issue. And in fact, the environmental working group has a whole thing about this. You know, about the skincare products that are some multi billion dollar industry. And, you know, there are clean ones, and then there are ones that are not so clean. And why is that something that we should monitor?

Trevor Cates

Yeah, it's really important, and I think particularly people who have issues with their immune system. I mean, it's really important for everyone. But when your immune system is



compromised in some way and you're working on balancing it, the last thing you want is to throw additional toxins or interfering factors into the equation. And oftentimes we see with issues with skin, and skin dysbiosis, kind of like gut dysbiosis, we see leaky skin, which is kind of like leaky gut in that that barrier function is not working the way it's supposed to. So your skin is more reactive, it's more permeable. And so what we wanna do is get it built back up. So the last thing you wanna do is be putting toxic ingredients on your skin, 'cause you could actually absorb more of those into your bloodstream. And I think a lot of people forget what we put on our skin can get into our bloodstream, but there have been numerous studies, especially on endocrine disrupting chemicals, these group of chemicals that have hormone disrupting effects on the body, that there are many of these in personal care products, and that they actually can get into circulation from personal care products.

Like, for example, fragrance oftentimes contains Diethyl phthalate. Diethyl phthalate is a plasticizing agent, phthalates are plasticizing agents and known endocrine disrupting chemicals. They're used in fragrance to help the scent last longer, but they are these group of endocrine disrupting chemicals, and research has shown that they do show up in human samples. So they do get absorbed from personal care products. So we wanna be really careful not to add these things in, to worsen and cause our immune system to be like, what is going on? Because constantly, as you know, you talk about the immune system, when our body gets exposed to anything, it's trying to figure out, is it mine, is it a foreign invader? Is it good or is it bad, right? And so when it gets exposed to a lot of these chemicals, it's either gonna think it's foreign and fight an immune response against it, which then leads to more inflammation in the body. Or if it recognizes it as its own, like this is what happens with endocrine disrupting chemicals, is the body will go, oh, that looks like estrogen.

So let me turn up our estrogen. So now the body starts acting like it has more estrogen in it, when it actually doesn't, it's actually a chemical. So it's so important for us to reduce our exposure to these, because we get exposed to them in our air, our water, our food, personal care products. So we wanna focus on the places where we have the most control, right? So like the personal care products we use, what we put on our bodies, especially if we have skin issues that have caused a breakdown down in that barrier function. And then of course, you know, also looking at things like avoiding pesticides in food, trying to get organic, and drinking filtered water, and making sure you're not getting lead, or mercury, or various heavy metals from your



environment. So all of that is important. And then also what we put on our skin can disrupt the skin barrier function. So there's the toxins, that component, and then there's also what you're putting on your skin has the potential to support your skin microbiome or disrupt it, or kind of be inert, so not really doing much. But oftentimes we're putting on things like, for example, there's an ingredient called Dimethicone, and it's known as an occlusive agent, which kinda helps trap in moisture on the skin. So it's used in a lot of moisturizers, a lot of makeup to give people that kind of dewy, glowy look, but it traps. When it's trapping in moisture, it's kind of like putting liquid plastic on your face, where your skin isn't going to be able to adapt to temperature changes. Think about if you had like plastic on your face, and you go to the gym and you try and work out, your skin is gonna overheat. And then when it's trapped under this layer, it can actually disrupt that skin microbiome, so then creating more of these imbalances.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

That's a great visual. One of the things that, you know, Ayurvedic medicine said 10,000 years ago, the sister signs of yoga, is that whatever you put on your skin, you're eating, you know? So I just kind of wanted to push that home a little bit more too, that, you know, we give medications as patches, right, you take hormone, you have a hormone patch you can slap on there, and it'll regulate everything. You can put a scopolamine patch on if you get seasick, and voila, no seasickness. And so the, you know, we have narcotics we give that way. So the idea that, oh, we can put our bug spray on and it's not going to influence the body, that we can put medications on those patches. It's just like you gotta make that connection, right? So anything that you put on your skin, you need to actually be able to recognize the ingredients as edible. So I think that's important, you know?

Trevor Cates

It really is. And, you know, I think a lot of times we're hoping that we're being protected, but unfortunately the FDA has only banned about 11 ingredients in personal care products, while in Europe, they've banned over 1000 ingredients in personal care products. So there are a lot of things that are used that are approved to use in personal care products, and I have to say, since, you know, I make a skincare line, I have the Spa Doctor products, and as a naturopathic doctor and a skincare manufacturer, it's an interesting thing, because it's, I'm just gonna be honest here. It's a pretty shady industry. And so the lack of regulation trickles down into everything. So it's a lot about just marketing hype. So people, companies now have jumped on the natural, you



know, like claiming everything is natural, but there's no regulation around the word natural, or the word hypoallergenic. So anyone could call their products that without having to go through any kind of regulations or testing, or even show that their ingredients are truly natural. Whereas, you know, but there are certifications or things that you can look to, like Environmental Working Group, ewg.org. They have a skin deep database where you can go in and you can do a search, and it gives a rating about ingredients, and even a lot of products, personal care or beauty products. They also have a verification. So like the Spa Doctor, my skincare line, we went through their verification process, and so we've been EWG verified. So there are independent agencies will do that. But unfortunately the United States FDA is not doing that.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

But we look awfully good all the way till we're done. You look fabulous, darling. So yeah, that's just so frustrating. So are there any other top kind of skincare ingredients, you mentioned one, that we can find a healthier alternative for?

Trevor Cates

Yeah, so with fragrance, that would be one, that would be a really big one. If you could only--

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Natural fragrance, everybody. No, no, no, right?

Trevor Cates

Yeah, you wanna look for organic essential oils. That's gonna be the best alternative, or fragrance free. You can also get fragrance free, and then get your own organic essential oils and add that, so you can make it whatever scent that you want it. And the Spa Doctor, we use in several of our products, we use an organic essential oil blend, and then some of our products are fragrance free. So people can choose what they like. And so they're also, you know, chemical sunscreen ingredients are another big one, because I think people are thinking, here I am doing a good thing. I'm putting this on my kids. I'm putting it on me, and you know, we're spraying it, and we're rubbing it on all summer long, or even all year round. And unfortunately there are a number of endocrine disrupting chemicals that can be found in sunscreen. So things like oxybenzone is one that you want to avoid. And there are natural mineral based sunscreens, like zinc oxide based sunscreens, I think are a much better alternative. So those would be the ones



that I would recommend. And then also I wanna remind people to be careful of what you're spraying in addition to what you're applying, and also powders. So for women, a lot of us are using powders, or spraying deodorants, or products in your hair and things. Remember that this is another way that things can get into your body. So there are certain products that are sometimes even called natural, but they have nano-sized particles in them. And these tiny little particles, when you breathe them in, they can get into your lung tissue and create a lot of issues. So just be mindful about it. It's not just what you put on your skin, but also what you're breathing in. And remember your lips are one of the most sensitive areas, because you lick your lips, you're eating, whatever you put on your lips is going to enter, not just with your absorption topically, but orally and through your digestive system.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

So what's your stance on fillers and injections, speaking of lips, and what you're putting on and in?

Trevor Cates

Well, I think it's a very personal choice for people. I personally do not choose to do any of those, but I think there's a lot of concern with them. One of them is just the obvious of, you've got to be careful with whoever is doing these procedures, because there's a lot that can go wrong. Scar tissue can build up. Even when you're using more natural substances for fillers, there can be scar tissue if you're doing a lot of it, you're working with a practitioner that's not super skilled. You could get scar tissue that builds up, and that can create a lot of issues down the road. And then, you know, I just have to say, Botox, however you wanna describe it, it comes from Botulinum, which is a neurotoxin. So I know it's said that people say that it's safe, but I'm still not convinced.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

I feel the same. And it can also be a trigger for autoimmunity, everyone. So it is definitely a personal, you know, it's a personal choice, and your relationship with your own aging process is an important one for you to be able to walk that path with. And it can also, fillers and injections can have been shown in article, after article, after article, to be potential triggers for autoimmunity.



Trevor Cates

Yeah, I mean, again, look at everything that we do. Our body is constantly like, okay, what is this? Is it foreign? And it's like, is this foreign? Do I need to protect the body against this? And so anything like a filler or an injection, it's not gonna recognize it as its own. So especially with people with autoimmune, where your body is hyper reactive, then your body is just, it's trying to do its job! So the less you can put these things in your body, and give, as you're going through the healing process, and I know Dr. Keesha and all the people in the summit are giving lots of ideas on how to actually heal this. So as you're healing, as you're healing your gut, as you're getting your nutrient status back up, and you're decreasing the internal inflammation in your body, just give it a break from all of these potential toxins. And then down the road, when you've cured yourself of those autoimmune, you know, whenever the autoimmune diseases are, or at least gotten into a place where it's, you know, you're symptom free or very managed. Sometimes then you can decide if it's worth it. But I think you're probably gonna determine it's not even worth it.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Right. Yeah. I found it interesting that sometimes people that were really upset about having to make a decision about the COVID vaccination were getting fillers. I was like, hmm? These are both like, yeah. You know? It's something to think deeply about, for sure.

Trevor Cates

I think it's become so normalized. The beauty industry has done a really, really good job of normalizing this, and making it seem like these are not, I mean, that this is just regular things! These are just a normal part of being a woman, and that even starting with young women in their twenties, like this is prevention. And I just really hope that people will start to realize we don't need this. This is not what we need. And eventually it can really backfire. And some people might get away with it for a period of time, but is it really worth it?

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Right, right. So in your new book, you talk about four key pieces of this. And I would love to have you highlight those, and talk us through them.



Trevor Cates

Yeah, so my new book, "Natural Beauty Reset", it's a seven day program to harmonize hormones and restore radiance. And it's really about building the healthy foundation to help us help our bodies restore it to the balance that our bodies wisely are able to do naturally. And so they're food, movement, mindset, and skincare. Those are the four areas that these are the things that we do on a, hopefully, day to day basis. That's what the goal is, to get to that, to create a healthy foundation in these four different areas. And part of what I talk about in the book is a seasonal approach to that. So they're the four different areas, and I tell people how to do a seven day reset at the beginning of each season. So to help get back on track, because our needs for each of these different areas change with the seasons. So right now we're in fall, and we're shifting away from summer and going into shorter days, less sun exposure, sun is further away, so we're going to start noticing differences with our skin, with our mood, with our motivation for eating and exercising, and also with the food that's available to us also changes.

And I think so often we go to the grocery store, we're always buying the same thing. We may even shop at Wholefoods, or a health food store, and just think, oh okay, well, I'm getting my super foods, and not realizing that there are certain foods that are going to be more nutrient rich, and also more flavorful at certain times. So I'd definitely encourage people to look to your farmer's markets, and even in grocery stores, you typically will see certain produce looks like it's fresher, looks like it's just gonna be more nutrient rich, because it's in season. So I encourage you to start to start looking at this. What can you do to start shifting, to get your body back in balance?

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

We're moving into root vegetable time, everybody. Yeah.

Trevor Cates

Yeah, root vegetables. And what's amazing about things like yams, and sweet potatoes, and pumpkins, they're rich in vitamin A, beta carotene, and then also broccoli is in season, rich in vitamin C. And these are nutrients that we need to help support our immune system in times when we might be more exposed to cold, flu, viruses, different things. And so to support our immune system during that time, nature is actually abundant with the nutrients that we need for that support.



Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

I have a little bit of a question that just popped into my mind. I love that you're following what Ayurveda said too, you know, seasonal changes. You don't just wear the same clothes all throughout the year. You change them. So of course you're gonna change your other routines. There's another change that's a shift that's happened in the last three years, and that's the wearing a mask. Do you have anything that you advise for keeping that part of your skin for people that have to wear masks for long periods? I mean, I'm lucky, I work from home so I rarely have to wear one, but I do. If I get on a flight, I wear it for the whole flight. And so of course your skin's not breathing very well at that point. So what are your recommendations for that?

Trevor Cates

Yeah, there was a big thing about it when everybody was wearing masks at the height of it, it was maskne. You know, like people would be breaking out under their mask. And so a couple of things to think about is be mindful of what you're putting on your skin. So like, if you know you're gonna be wearing a mask, maybe skip the makeup. You know, if you're a woman, just skip the makeup there. You could still certainly use your cleanser, and moisturizer, and things. But having that extra makeup around in that area, that could just clog your pores and create more irritation. And then also if you get a chance to actually cleanse your face again after you take the mask off, and using a really good cleanser. One of the biggest mistakes people make in skincare is the cleanser that they use, and there's this feeling that we need to over cleanse, and over exfoliate, kind of like too much of a good thing. But using it like a gentle cleanser that has the right pH for your skin, more of an oil-based cleanser that keeps the barrier function of your skin intact while still cleansing your skin. And you don't need to just overdo it with these foamy kinds of cleansers and things. And so that would, you know, those would be some tips, and changing your mask, of course, and not repeatedly wearing the same mask over and over again. So those would be some tips.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Okay, those are good ideas. In my car, I keep my cloth masks. And then I know if my 25 year old daughter's been using them, because I don't wear foundation at all. And so she'll, I'll look down and there's a mask that's got all this foundation and lipstick in it, and I'm like, Reagan! Yeah, it's a really good idea. Skip the makeup if you're gonna be wearing a mask. My husband also uses, we've used the Dr. Bronner's hand sanitizer for the last three years, with lavender essential oil in



it. And it's like our favorite, you know, after you pump your gas, or you come in from the grocery store, and he's sprays that in his mask all the time now, and then puts that on. So that may be another, I don't know if that's good for you or not, but I--

Trevor Cates

I can't remember what's in there, but essential oils can be a great thing to put a drop of. A little bit goes a long way though, so just remember. You're just like probably a drop, maybe a half a drop in some circumstances. Or wash your mask, if it is a reusable, wash it with some essential oils. Yeah, that could be a great thing. I think hand sanitizers, we do wanna be careful with that. Just remember that when you wash your hands, you can just use soap and water when you wash your hands. That's actually the best thing. That's actually better than using hand sanitizer. Only use hand sanitizer when you don't have access to soap and water.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

In the car, yeah.

Trevor Cates

Yeah, right. But, you know, some people are just using it everywhere they go. They just washed their hands, and then they're putting on hand sanitizer. You don't need to do that. That is actually a better way to get any kind of bacteria viruses off of your hands.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

Well, thank you so much. I really appreciate you taking this time to share your wisdom with us, and is there anything that we haven't talked about that you just really feel like we need to say before we sign off?

Trevor Cates

I mean, I think that one thing I hope you're talking about in the docu, I mean, in the summit, is that, you know, I think one of the things that's really important for our immune system is our mindset. And we kind of touched on it a little bit--

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

We talk a lot about that.



Trevor Cates

But when you think about the immune system, it is your body's opportunity to protect you from the outside world. And it's trying to do you a favor! But if we have, I'm sure you're talking about this, especially emotional traumas and things, our body just doesn't really understand how our immune system should function. And so, especially if you have these emotional traumas, your body, your immune system could be overreacting. And that's something that I noticed with myself, you know, as a kid, having a lot of allergies, and having a genetic predisposition to allergies, and eczema, and things like that, is that it's, you know, the emotional aspect of it, and also genetically how it can get passed along, because, you know, something that is hereditary from a medical perspective can also, the trauma and emotional trauma can be passed along through generations. So I know that you talk a lot about this, so I'm glad that you're doing the summit, but I just wanna mention it from me personally too, that that's something that I've noticed and that I have talked to my patients about, especially when they have that really reactive kinds of skin and that immune reaction with it. Like, why is your skin so reactive? And there's part of it is that gut health and the skin microbiome support. But I'm not gonna deny that the emotional aspect is an important part of it too.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

That's a really good reminder, thank you so much.

Trevor Cates

Yeah, thank you.

Keesha Ewers, PhD, ARNP-FNP-C, AAP, IFM-C

All right, everybody. Until next time, be well.