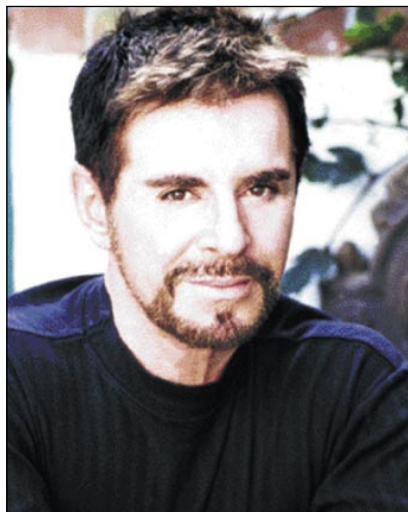


The Truth about Cats and Dogs.

By Danné Montague-King



What do animals have to do with beauty therapy you are asking yourself? Has Danné Montague-King finally gone round the bend and to the dogs?! Actually, I was watching the movie entitled, "The Truth about Cats and Dogs," and a scene in the film where Uma Thurman, the star, takes a plain Jane radio talk show presenter into a department store for a 'beauty make-over,' inspired this month's feature.

The sales girl, who looked like a mini RuPaul, informed the plain Jane that she had pores the size of Grand Canyon, dry skin and premature lines etching her eyes. After incorrectly inquiring what 'skin regime' the plain Jane was using, little Miss Betty Beauty Consultant tells her she must purchase their newest miracle cream which contained rare ingredients that neutralize 'free radicals' in the skin. The scene was actually very funny.

But what bothered me was the glib way a sales girl behind a cosmetic counter rattled off 'free radicals' giving the impression that any old cream can be free radical neutralizing.

Even more ironic, was the fact I have been receiving dozens of faxes from therapists all over the world who are serious practitioners wanting to know more about free radicals and how to deal with their invasive attacks on the skin. It irritated me that a phenomenon that is becoming an increasing worry to scientists, ecologists and doctors all over the world should be bandied about as an advertising gimmick for over the counter creams. So I decided to assist my professional practitioner readers to take an even closer look at free radicals and how to deal with them intelligently.

NEUTRALIZING FREE RADICALS?

It is highly unlikely that free radicals could be 'neutralized' in the skin by a topical cream. Free radicals are very tough, resistant rogue molecules and are also as crazy as the Mad Hatter in Alice In Wonderland. They careen in an unstable manner through millions of unsuspecting, healthy molecules, trying to replace their broken electrons by robbing electrons from their unsuspecting normal counterparts. Actually, free radicals started out originally as normal stable molecules, but chemical pollution from outside sources, positive electromagnetic waves and cosmic rays from excess sun break off one of the molecules' electrons, changing them into free radicals. Like vampires, the free radical molecules rush about sucking desired electrons out of good cells, transforming them into 'the living dead' as well. In a matter of hours millions of naturally stable cells, going about their business of maintaining our bodies at optimum levels, become stark raving free radicals also.

Much like viruses, free radicals are not easily neutralized full stop, but they can be 'encapsulated' or slowed down, and more recently we have found ways to stop them from forming in the first place, and later, to 'exit' from the body entirely.

THE SHIELDS

It's been common knowledge for a long time that vitamins C, E, A and D help to ward off free radical attacks. Most of the focus has been nutritionally based, with recommendation from nutritionists to take plenty of these vitamins internally. Lately there has been a flush of cosmetics that promise the same protection in topically applied serums, creams and lotions although my team of colleagues have been working with this for thirty years and often wonder what took every body so long to get onto it. However, with the exception of vitamin E and A, most often other free radical hating vitamins, known as anti oxidants (another word for anti-rust or preservative), denature very quickly whether taken orally or applied topically. Foremost among these is vitamin C.

VITAMIN C – PLAIN OR FANCY?

Straight ascorbic acid (vitamin C) is probably the most therapeutic and powerful in stimulating collagen synthesis in the fibroblast cells of the skin – but the body uses this 'C' up very quickly. Hence the time release capsules for internal use that one can purchase at any chemist shop. However, it would be difficult to structure straight ascorbic acid in a cream that would deliver vitamin C to living cells over a period of hours. In addition, common citric acid and ascorbic acid does not last very long in a topical

The Truth about Cats and Dogs

cream, the maximum time being 6 or 7 days. In an effort to increase the stability of vitamin C in creams, many American and Canadian manufacturers added bioflavonoids to their formulas blended with chemically compounded ingredients such as magnesium ascorbyl phosphate, ascorbyl palmitate or calcium ascorbate, which extended the shelf life to nearly a year if the cream was kept under optimum conditions. I have found using various combinations of all vitamin C's gives the most potent anti-oxidant power to a product and adds the extra 'kick' to the amino acid chain that produces living collagen.

PYCNOGENOLS

I have covered this group of free radicals fighters in past articles, but I did not mention red wine, which many doctors are advising older clients to drink more of – at least one glass every day. This is largely due to the flavonoids from the skin of red grapes, which contains leucocyanidines (anti-oxidant properties that support the circulatory systems). Now we have a way of producing proanthocyanidines, also obtainable from the seeds of grapes, peanuts, cranberries and lemon tree bark, which are designed by nature to boost the power of pycnogenols to a 100 percent more effective category.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR NOW

Try to avoid creams or lotions that promise to deliver too many types of action at once. Medical opinion is: Active ingredients in products or drugs are best delivered into the system when they are not mixed with a myriad of other active ingredients. As a rule of thumb, I have always advised letting the body tell us how it needs to be treated. The skin is multi-sectioned rather than in actual layers like a cake.

There are basic layers but they are inter-connected with numerous receptors, ganglia, dendrites and desmosomes. Also, cell divisions are not clean cut, cells struggle upward towards the epidermis and elongate before the final hexagonal and flat structures. Likewise creams, lotions and serums should be 'layered' or sectioned onto the skin, with direct action ingredients in each formula that addresses a special function of the epidermis. For instance, an acid mantle can be replicated with a spray mist

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that contains ingredients similar to what the sebaceous and sweat glands produce. Then this 'acid mantle' is scaled into place with a vegetable protein cream containing a full compliment of vitamin C and pycnogenols. Finally, a protective shield of sunblock can be applied, and if all three products are formulated to be transepidermal with water solubility, the skin will not be loaded up with comedogenic products that clog the pores.

ELECTROMAGNETIC WAVES

Negative electromagnetic waves can re-polarize a free radical molecule, adding the correct amount of energy to the missing electron that this maverick needs so desperately, thus removing its strong desire to attract and rob another

healthy molecule. In a half hour an electromagnetic wave emitted via a skin contact antenna with pulsing waves of one to 800 pulses per minute, can stop free radical activity from overtaking millions of molecules in the skin and body. There are American scientists currently working with British engineers at this very moment on perfecting high-tech, computerized electromagnetic machines that will soon be available to beauty therapists at reasonable cost. The use of electromagnetic wave equipment is easy, now that everything is computerized. The therapist will simply program clients' treatment time, wave pulse speed and intensity, and just press a button after the individual antennas are attached to the client. Years ago some of our best research in rebuilding the skin, even to the raising up of holes in the face from scars and acne pits, came from using electromagnetic waves as part of the therapy. Unlike galvanic and regular electrical modalities, the effects of electromagnetic waves can be explained in minute detail, even to the most uneducated of clients. The fight against free radicals will become fiercer as our lifestyles become more synthetic due to the depletion of natural resources on the planet, but we are an adaptable species – and whereas we may be a little thick about what is naturally available to mankind from the healing largess of Mother Nature, eventually we will find a way to make use of all her gifts. ■■

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