

The Massage Monthly

August 2024

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Natural vs. Organic Products

What's the difference--and how can you tell?

Kathleen Neves

Now, more than ever, people are questioning what is being put into the skin care products they use. With terms such as "natural" and "organic" being used on all kinds of packaging, it's important to know not only what these terms really mean, but how they affect the way a product is labeled, the way ingredients are listed on the packaging, and the overall effectiveness of the product.

Terms Defined

What exactly does it mean when a product is labeled "natural" or "organic"? In the broadest sense, a natural product is something that originated from a plant or animal

difference between products labeled "natural" and "organic" is the amount of regulation imposed by the government. The US government does not regulate natural skin care products, which means anything can be labeled or described as natural, regardless of what it contains or how it was produced. Organic products, however, are heavily regulated by the government.

Organic Isn't Easy

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) sets strict regulations for organic products: how ingredients must be grown and processed; where the word organic can appear on the product label; and how the label may be presented on

*Our bodies are
our gardens –
our wills are
our gardeners.*

–W.Shakespeare



Check the labels and know what they mean to buy organic.

source, and an organic product is a natural product that was grown without the use of artificial fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides. Many ingredients used in beauty, makeup, and skin care products are already derived from plant sources, but exact definitions vary.

In the world of skin care, the biggest

the actual product. Growers must adhere to a special system of farming that maintains and replenishes the soil fertility without the use of toxic materials such as pesticides or fertilizers. Third-party certifiers appointed by the USDA enforce these regulations with annual inspections of organic farms and

Continued on page 2

Office Hours and Contact

218-263-1501

www.ohanatherapeutic.com

E/O Mon: 11am-6pm

Tues: 9am-1:30pm

Wed. & Thurs: 11am - 6pm

E/O Fri: 9am-1:30pm

In this Issue

**Natural vs. Organic Products
Massage for Your Teenager?
Treat Your Face Naturally**

Continued from page 1

processing facilities.

The National Organic Program (NOP) is a government agency that works with the USDA to help regulate the use of organic ingredients in skin care products, and to make sure these types of products are correctly labeled. There are four labeling categories for certified organic products:

- 100 PERCENT ORGANIC

Products that have been certified by the government as containing 100 percent organic ingredients. The product is permitted to display the USDA Organic label on the front of the packaging.

- ORGANIC

Products that contain at least 95 percent organic ingredients. They are also permitted to bear the USDA Organic label on the front of their packaging.

- MADE WITH ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

Only 70 percent of ingredients need to be organic for a product to be certified in this category. These products cannot use the USDA Organic label, but are allowed to have descriptive text on the product label to say it is made with organic ingredients.

- LESS THAN 70 PERCENT ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

These products cannot use the USDA Organic label, and the only place where the word "organic" can be used on the product's packaging is in the ingredient list on the back of the product.

What's Natural?

The main reason why the federal government doesn't regulate natural skin care products is because there is no formal definition of what natural means within the beauty industry. Different brands may use the word in completely different ways. This creates confusion and frustration for the consumer.

In May 2008, the Natural Products Association (NPA), along with brands such as Burt's Bees, JR Watkins, and Yes To Carrots, created the Natural Standard for Personal Care Products. This voluntary standard is the closest thing the beauty industry has to a formal definition of natural. It consists of the following four components:

- Natural. At least 95 percent of the

ingredients in the product must be formulated without any artificial ingredients, and minimally processed.

- Safety. The product must be completely void of any ingredients deemed harmful to human health by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- Responsibility. The product cannot have been used in any sort of animal testing.

- Sustainability. The product, its ingredients, and its packaging must be environmentally friendly. Ingredients should be biodegradable, if possible. The product's packaging should be made up of recycled materials, or at least be easy for the consumer to recycle.

To use the NPA Natural Seal on its label, a product must meet all four components, and its manufacturer must disclose all ingredient information, fully and accurately. The NPA Natural Seal is

the closest equivalent for natural products to the USDA Organic label for organic products, but it is a voluntary standard that is neither required, nor endorsed, by the federal government.

While it's important to know the difference between natural and organic, it's no less important to make sure you're using the most suitable product. Just because a product is labeled "natural" or "organic" doesn't necessarily mean that it will be the best choice for your skin type, concerns, and conditions.

Kathleen Neves is a licensed esthetician, makeup artist, and beauty blogger based in San Francisco.



Finding the best product for you is often a struggle.

Massage for Your Teenager?

Bodywork Can Ease Adolescent Angst

While teens may be less likely than their parents to go to a massage therapist, there are plenty of reasons why this age group should be encouraged to give it a try. The benefits of massage are well documented, among them relief of muscle tension, lowered stress hormones, increased sense of relaxation, improved immune function, and even a heightened ability to concentrate, according to studies conducted by the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami School of Medicine. But for teenagers, there's an additional payback.

The teenage body is in the midst of transformation -- exponential growth and development in a rapid period of time. On the physical side, teens may be at increased risk for aches, pains, and injury. Many teens strain their bodies with competitive sports, get erratic sleep, and consume a less-than-optimal diet. Massage can help muscles recover from overuse, and help balance the body and maintain that stability.

Perhaps even more crucial, teen massage can help improve body image and sleep patterns, and contribute to decreased depression, anxiety, and stress. This keeps a teen connected to her body, even as it morphs in confounding ways. "Many teens are self-conscious, and not happy with their bodies," says Eiris Kallil, massage therapist and shiatsu instructor at the Boulder College of Massage Therapy, in Colorado. "Massage can help teens stay grounded." Bodywork has also been reported to help mediate eating disorders, a growing concern among teens.

Another potential plus: A beneficial, therapeutic relationship can develop between bodyworkers and teenagers during the years when adolescents need adult confidantes, but keep parents at a distance. The practitioner can become a supportive, trusted adult in a teen's life. And the session itself, according to Kallil, can be a way to deal with all the physical and emotional turmoil of this tender age.



Massage eases teen depression and anxiety.

Treat Your Face Naturally

In between visits to your skin care therapist, it's always good to follow a healthy skin care routine at home. Here are some easy-to-use skin care recipes you can make yourself.

FLAXSEED OIL

Flaxseed oil contains some of the highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids, and calms skin that is raw and irritated due to conditions like eczema or psoriasis. It helps repair skin cells and hydrates even the driest skin.

FLAXSEED GEL MASK

Flaxseeds, when boiled and cooled, make gel. This gel can be used alone as a compress, or other ingredients can be added to it for a customized treatment.

Ingredients:

One-third cup whole flaxseeds

2 cups filtered water or cucumber juice
4 ounces of aloe vera gel (optional)
One-half teaspoon of honey (optional)
One-half teaspoon of sunflower seed oil (optional)

Bring water to a boil. Stir in flaxseeds and immediately reduce heat. Stir and simmer until the gel forms (about 10 minutes). Strain the mixture through a cheesecloth and then transfer to a sterilized container. Apply to face and décolleté with a fan brush for 5-10 minutes. Remove with a warm towel. Flaxseed gel can be stored in the refrigerator for up to one week.

HEALTHY PROBIOTICS

Probiotics--the live cultures in yogurt--exhibit antifungal, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial benefits when used on skin. Probiotics

increase ceramide production, which boosts skin protection against the bacteria that causes acne.

CREAMY YOGURT FACIAL TREATMENT

Use this recipe on skin with acne.

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons Greek yogurt
1 tablespoon sunflower seed oil or rice bran oil
1 tablespoon honey (optional)
Crushed mint leaves (optional; remove before applying)

Combine the ingredients together in a bowl. Apply mixture with a fan brush to face and décolleté for 5-10 minutes. Remove with a warm towel.

*Healing in a
matter of time,
but it is
sometimes also a
matter of
opportunity.*

-Hippocrates

PRODUCT RESTOCK!

We're excited to announce that we've received more Frankincense essential oil. This oil has been flying off the shelves lately due to people using it in recipes for pain relief. We're excited to say we have some in stock in 5 mL or 15mL bottles.

We will also be receiving more Magnesium Nighttime Cream and a *new* product from them in a couple weeks! Be sure to check your email for their arrival announcement.

UPCOMING HOURS

E/O Monday (8/12, 8/26, etc.): 11am - 6pm

Tuesdays: 9am - 1:30pm

Wednesdays: 11am - 6pm

Thursdays: 11am - 6pm

E/O Friday (8/9, 8/23, etc.): 9am - 1:30pm

Empowering you to heal yourself

208 E Howard St
Hibbing, MN 55746



Member, **Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals**