





HOLISTIC APPROACH TO GLYCATION

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The explanation of glycation, according to Western medicine, is the result of a glucose excess in the skin fibers, which results in wrinkles. *The American Heritage Medical Dictionary* defines glycation as “The nonenzymatic covalent bonding of a sugar molecule to another molecule, especially a protein.” This has resulted in the conclusion that sugar causes wrinkles.

When a client is experiencing signs of glycation, the skin may present any or all of the following characteristics: discoloration, hyperpigmentation, hard and shiny appearance, deep crevices around the eyes/nasal labial fold or deep criss-cross lines along the upper lip or chin.

TOPICAL APPROACH

According to Western medicine, dermatology and mainstream esthetics, the treatment of choice for this condition is primarily topical, citing professional services such as chemical peels, enzymes and microdermabrasion.

Products containing tocopherol, resveratrol, green tea, vitamin C and vitamin A continue to remain at the top of the recommendation list, exhibiting the belief that utilizing ingredients claiming to benefit the skin may be the correct approach. Since the result of the glycation process manifests on the skin, this allopathic methodology makes sense to most. From a Chinese medicine and a holistic approach, we see it differently.

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YIN, YANG AND GLYCATION

Chinese medicine is based on many philosophies and theories, including but not limited to the Yin and Yang theory, which focuses on maintaining balance and harmony in the body. Any symptom, illness, skin condition, or even an excess of an emotion is the result of one or more body systems having an imbalance.

The body communicates all imbalances initially through emotions. When those emotions are left unresolved or ignored, the imbalances always manifest on the skin in the form of discoloration, an increase or decrease in oil production, acne, rash or wrinkles. This is the beginning of understanding the body's method of communication.

The Yin and Yang theory in simple terms relates to the energetic nature of any food, ingredient, symptom, or manifestation of skin conditions, illnesses or diseases. For example, there are 12 types of acne, each will have an energetic of Yin or Yang.

Although Yin and Yang represent much more, for the sake of this conversation, Yin represents slow, thick, stuckness or stagnation, while Yang represents fast, thin and movement.

Knowing glycation is a "bonding" action means it is causing a thickening and clumping to occur internally.

To holistically address this condition, we must understand the reason the body chose to bond the molecules together, rather than allow them to be free flowing as the body intends.

This action represents an internal imbalance in the body, a Yin condition. To balance the body, we must approach this condition by encouraging the increase in circulation, to create movement or an energetic Yang protocol.

WHY A HOLISTIC APPROACH?

Chinese medicine recognizes 120 skin types versus Western medicine's five. Chinese medicine has 120 body types or elemental energetic compositions versus Western medicine's four body types.

This fact alone should prove there is no one size fits all approach with any health or skin condition.

Estheticians are often left questioning themselves when the desired results are not achieved. Thoughts of changing products lines or equipment are typically

their first thought when trying to determine where they went wrong.

A targeted treatment focusing on a specific area of the face such as a wrinkle or pigment spot, is an allopathic approach. A holistic approach means we must consider everything that makes this person who they are, including dietary habits, stress level, stress management, emotions, water intake, digestive health, sleep patterns, exercise habits, lifestyle, medications, supplements, and even where they live to properly customize their corrective game plan.

The location of the skin condition reveals another piece of the puzzle. Every body system has an area of the face that reflects its state of function. As with most things in our industry, not everyone agrees on the location of those areas, which explains the many varieties of face maps floating around cyberspace. Let's holistically bring things together.

BREATHING

Recommending breathing exercises is a great first step, as it can introduce a mild meditative state. Breathing, when done correctly can expand the lungs. Be sure to keep the breath slow, steady and controlled.

Inhale for a count of three seconds, hold for three seconds and exhale for three seconds. Repeat this in multiples of nine repetitions. Minimally first thing in the morning and prior to sleep is recommended or when experiencing an influx of stress.

In Chinese medicine, each organ system has a Yin and Yang organ system, or a husband and wife. The lung and the large intestine are husband and wife. The skin is the third lung of the body, which makes it impossible for breath not to impact the skin. Breathing slowly and controlled calms the spirit, the emotions and helps us handle stress more effectively.



MUSIC

In ancient times, music was an incredibly effective healing modality. "Sound healing is 100 times more efficient at sending an informational signal than through chemicals," according to Dr. McClaren.

Every type of music can be linked to an organ system.

Knowing that glucose is linked to the spleen, the type of healing sounds for this organ would be in the form of gongs and drums. Drumming and bell sounds establish a rhythm in the body to balance the spleen.

When looking at the manifestation of a criss-cross pattern in the chin area, support is needed for the kidneys. Wind wood-based instruments are recommended support for balancing the kidney system, per Daoist Chinese medicine philosophy and theory. The speed and volume of the music is irrelevant. It will still aid in the balancing of the organs and body systems.

DIET

Food energetics, different than nutrition, is a vital part of balancing the internal workings of glycation. Like the proper instrument, food energetics must be specific to the organ system that is impacted to ensure the greatest change.

Continuing with our example of focusing on the spleen and the kidney systems, the goal is to

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recommend foods that support those organs, the blood and the blood vessels to increase circulation in the body. A few examples of food with the correct energetic nature include white rice, brown rice, black rice, sweet potatoes, barley and millet.

Eating these foods first thing in the morning and in the afternoon is best. More options are cinnamon, chestnuts, pine kernels, carrots, leeks, beets, pumpkin and berries.

Here are a few simple ideas for meal planning. For breakfast, try sweet potato cakes with a dust of cinnamon and nutmeg. For lunch, a warm bowl of rice with cooked leeks, carrots, sesame seeds and pine nuts will be good. As a snack, have a small cup of cooked millet, berries and roasted chestnuts.

It is advisable to minimize the amount of raw, uncooked foods, dairy, pastries, white breads, white flour pastas and ice-cold drinks due to the possibility of creating a weakening in proper function of the spleen.

PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT

To determine the most appropriate professional facial service, the energetic, different than benefit, of any product or equipment is important. We've established that glycation is a bonding condition and must be treated with an energizing protocol to restore balance, meaning you'll want to increase vascular strength and muscle growth since these symptoms show us that the muscles can be weak, and the circulation is poor. Use ingredients and devices that will support increasing circulation to break up stagnation and encourage cellular regeneration.

Warmth. The first step is to warm it up, as using heat stimulates circulation. Blood carries hydration and nutrition throughout the entire body. Get things going by increasing the circulation with heat and a faster, more invigorating massage speed. It's best to avoid ingredients, devices or stones that are considered cooling in nature, since they will further slow the circulation. Aloe vera, cooling gels, cold devices and refrigerated stones should be avoided with this skin condition.

Microcurrent. According to Chinese medicine, not only does the spleen transform food energy, but it also

governs the movement of blood by keeping it flowing in its proper pathways in the blood vessels. Movements of the muscles and limbs also depend on the power of the spleen. So, if we're seeing signs or symptoms of a weak spleen, then we might see a lack of muscle tone and weak muscles. Microcurrent is incredibly supportive for symptoms of glycation, since it works on muscle strength and growth. Additionally, microcurrent assists in breaking up stagnation, increasing circulation, building collagen and cellular regeneration. Output of current and frequency waves used with microcurrent equipment varies by manufacturer; both of which will impact client results.

Conducting agents also play a role in the success of diminishing visual symptoms of glycation. Determining whether your conducting agent has more calming benefits or invigorating will be an important, and often overlooked, step. If your product is aloe vera based and on the calming side, for example, try adding a small amount of niacin powder or lime juice to energetically warm it up.

Ingredients. Include masks or moisturizers with warming and stimulating ingredients such as dark cherries, cocoa, chestnut or hawthorn berries. Energizing ingredients also include cinnamon, clove, spices and niacin.

BE PATIENT

Due to the complexity of this condition, results are rarely seen quickly. A commitment to improving one's health involves making lifestyle changes and patience for the client, as well as the esthetician. ✨



Michelle Valeri is the owner of MV Skin Consulting and the co-founder of Holistic Dermal Professionals. She is a licensed esthetician, a skin expert in Eastern philosophy and a Chinese Medicine Wellness Consultant. In addition to having 25+ years of natural healing and product development experience, she has trained privately with multiple Chinese medicine masters through apprenticeship style teaching methods.