

# WHAT'S NEW IN NATURAL INGREDIENTS

By Kris Campbell

Natural ingredients are hard to define, since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not regulate natural skin care products or the ingredients in them. The FDA refers to natural skin care products as using ingredients “extracted directly from plant or animal products as opposed to being ‘produced synthetically.’”

Retail consumers are getting savvier about ingredients, which, in turn, is requiring the skin care professional do some research outside the treatment room. Consumer magazines are writing articles on glycation, rosacea and sensitive skin, and clients are mentioning ingredients that they hear about, asking: “Does this work?” By keeping up with the latest ingredients coming into the skin care marketplace, you are able to guide clients toward the newest products with the most natural results-driven ingredients they desire. Natural ingredients that have been around for years are being rediscovered to have properties that help with anti-aging, brightening, inflammation and acne.

## STEM CELLS

UVA and UVB rays, pollution and extreme environmental climate changes speed up the aging skin

process. Plant stem cells are playing an important part of more natural treatments for combating the forces that age skin prematurely. By combining stem cells alongside other natural ingredients, wrinkles and skin that has uneven tone can be combated, and sagging skin can help be prevented.

Stem cells of the plant *Globularia cordifolia*—which is native to the mountains of central and southern Europe—create phenylethanoid glycosides. This new guard for the skin offers protection from the unpleasant agents created when skin is exposed daily to various stresses, including unhealthy foods, smoke, pollution and sun damage. These agents build up in the keratinocytes of the skin, leading to premature aging, increased sensitivity—including inflammation—and losing the natural glow that every client strives for.<sup>1</sup>

Orange stem cells (*Citrus sinensis*) are another type of stem cells that are making their way to professional skin care with revitalizing results. Orange stem cells can help recover many of the qualities of a younger skin. The stratum corneum becomes more bonded when they are used, resulting in smoother skin with fewer scales. Manufacturers show that claims from testing with certain ingredients can help make the



skin look up to 12 years younger if put in the product formulation in recommended amounts.<sup>2</sup>

## ANTI-AGING

Although there are many types of grape seed oil on the market for skin care, a new type called zinfandel (red) grape seed oil is being drawn into skin care formulations. It is very rich in a diversity of phytosterols (plant sterols). Antioxidant activity from vitamin E helps to create healthier skin. Zinfandel grape seed oil also is very rich in both omega-3 and -6 fatty acids. These help form the cell membrane building blocks and offer amazing anti-aging benefits.<sup>3</sup>

Mangosteen extract has been used in Thai folk medicine for centuries to treat infections of the skin and also to help in wound-healing. It is now being incorporated into different skin care formulations for its antioxidant qualities in regard to sensitive skin, as well as different SPF and anti-aging products. Mangosteen can help reduce inflammation in sensitive and severely dry skin. Acne/oily skin clients will also benefit, because it has antibacterial properties.

Honey is popping up all over in the skin care industry

right now. Raw honey is good, but Manuka honey is better. Manuka honey is a monofloral honey produced in New Zealand and Australia from the nectar of the manuka tree. Manuka honey is considered “active,” meaning it bears such an extra-concentrated dose of antibacterial properties that it can actually be therapeutic to the skin. It is also anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, has antioxidant properties, and works well on a large range of skin types, from acne-oily to dry-dehydrated. Other interesting benefits include wound-healing; exfoliating; it reinforces the water-absorbing capacity of the stratum corneum; slows dehydration; and diminishes skin roughness while improving suppleness and elasticity.

## ANTI-GLYCATION

Many companies are coming out with products to combat the premature slackening and aging of



Mangosteen



*Albizia julibrissin*

glycated skin. *Albizia julibrissin* is a new ingredient that is extracted from the bark of the Persian silk tree of the same name; it also is a very detoxifying ingredient for the skin. Studies from Sederma, the manufacturer of this ingredient, have shown that two months of application of a cream with the recommended levels result in reductions between 27–51% in the following areas: dark circles,

drawn features, dull complexions and under-eye bags.

Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*) has been used in skin care for several years and is known for its help with strengthening capillaries and veins, increasing elasticity and firmness, and wound-healing. All types of skin can receive aid for skin issues with gotu kola. With glycation being a big topic in skin care these days, a derivative of *Centella asiatica*—asiatic acid—has been shown to help fight glycated skin. Sensitive skin, especially eczema and psoriasis, will also benefit with asiatic acid's large amounts of anti-inflammation qualities. Acne skin can also benefit from this ingredient, because it has antimicrobial and antibacterial benefits.<sup>4</sup>

## OILY/ACNE

Licorice has been in the skin care industry for a long time. It is mostly thought of in the sense of helping with pigmentation. According to the National Cancer Institute, it has: "potential anti-inflammatory, antioxidant ... activities." Licochalcone is a molecule contained in licorice root extract that helps control oil production, and is antibacterial, as well as anti-inflammatory.

Licochalcone has also been compared to benzoyl peroxide (BPO) when the ingredient is used in specific amounts within a skin care product. BPO is sometimes very harsh to the skin, especially sensitive skin. This particular type of licorice root can kill *Propionibacterium acnes* and also help with inflammation. BPO has neither of these functions.

## BRIGHTENING

Daisy is a beautiful flower that has shown momentum in skin care products to help fight premature pigmentation, as well as discoloration from existing sun damage. Many brighteners can be harsh on the skin by inducing peel-like side effects that can cause inflammation and also possible increased pigmentation to certain skin types. Daisy extract is a great natural choice to even out skin tone with no downtime and lighter, brighter results.<sup>5</sup>

## DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Sensitive and health-challenged skin types are really benefiting from more natural choices with calming, anti-aging results that often aren't harmful. Although natural sounds good to most these days, it is also important to consider reactions, such as allergies

to certain plants, flowers and fruits. Consider having a *Physician's Desk Reference* (PDR) on hand to look for potential reactions from certain ingredients if a client is on a medication. It is also important to advise clients to consult with their physicians before trying a treatment or product that they believe might cause a bad reaction.

With the increased focus on more natural ingredients, new results are being discovered from plant sources. Many ingredients that were used to treat one skin disorder have now been given new life in helping to fight another condition. Many natural alternatives offer one or more of the following properties: anti-aging, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antibacterial, UV protection, brightening, antiglycation and antioxidant.

As a skin care professional, you need to really look at labels, do your own additional research and ask questions of manufacturers regarding ingredients. Many of these natural ingredients are being talked about in consumer magazines, on talk shows and on blogs spa clients are reading. By doing the proper research and staying ahead of the curve, you become able to make educated decisions in the types of skin care you provide for your clients. ✎

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