



# Slow The Hands of Time

by Anne C. Willis

Some aspects of aging are out of our control and we should learn to accept these changes with grace. The plain fact is we are all going to get old, at least I hope so. As we strive for health and longevity we should consider not how long we live, but the quality of our lives as we age. I equate aging with vitality and the ability to have mobility. I would much rather be old and walk two miles a day, bike to the park, practice yoga, and have vital energy that drives my passions, than the alternative, which is to be on multiple medications, breathless after walking up stairs and daily suffering from every ache and pain.

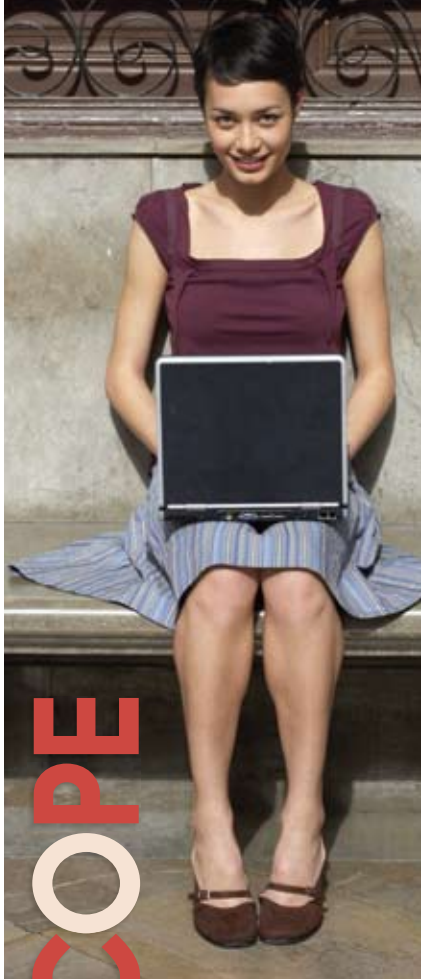
When considering skin longevity we need to recalibrate our attitude towards aging. Promises of a flawless complexion are a short-term fix and may increase long-term health problem. Striving for skin that is free of inflammation, lesions, age spots, moles, and skin cancers is not only realistic, but also vital for long-term health.

As medical intervention for reversing aging grows, integrative medical facilities remind us that skin is part of our overall health. Science and research demonstrates that we should explore a holistic approach when striving for an ageless complexion.

## Wear and Tear

The outside world comes in direct contact with our skin and over time adds to its wear and tear. The wear and tear theory was first formulated in 1882 by biologist Dr. August Weissman and suggests that accumulation of damage to cells tissue, and organs overtime eventually wear them out and kill them. This damage begins at the molecular level within the cells. The DNA in our genes sustains repeated damage from toxins, radiation, and ultraviolet light. While our body has the capacity to repair DNA damage, not all of the repairs are accurate and complete therefore the damage progressively accumulates. With age the body loses its ability to repair damage leading to visible wrinkles, age spots, and cell starvation.

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## Other Aging Philosophies

### Free Radicals and Hormones

Free radicals attack the skin in several ways. Wounding to the structure of the cell membrane occurs as free radicals try and rob electrons. Once the integrity of this semi-permeable structure is compromised the permeability of toxins is increased, leaching of valuable nutrients within the cell occurs and oxidation to the mitochondria leads to cell death. Damage caused by free radicals creates metabolic waste products, including substances known as Lipofuscins. Lipofuscins are connected to age spots. In addition, free radicals generate enzymes called collagenase that attack collagen and elastin causing these structures to break down. Repeated exposure to free radicals slows down cell renewal, inhibiting the skin's ability to repair itself.

### Hormones

As we age, the secretion of many hormones declines and their effectiveness is also reduced. There is one exception, cortisol. The stressors of the 21st century are not an occasional event, but an intrinsic part of our lives. We are constantly exposed to both emotional and biological stressors. Cortisol, the hormone responsible for stress regulation, has not only increased in an effort to cope with real life stressors but also increases with age. Increased cortisol levels lead to breakdown of muscle tissue and collagen.

### What are skin's greatest enemies?

When we think in terms of aging skin we should be more focused on pathologies that occur as we age; telangiectasia, reduced immune response, actinic keratosis, capillary fragility, cell starvation, age spots.



Internally sugar, wheat, and dairy are the greatest enemies. Sugar increases insulin, which directly influences the production of oil. More oil means excessive bacteria. Increased insulin also means abnormalities to the growth of the follicular canal and the growth of skin cells itself, like skin tags. Sugar causes inflammation, which creates capillaries fragility and causes cells to starve and cancer loves sugar!

The over consumption of wheat is the largest contributor to bacterial and fungal growth, leaky gut syndrome, and universal food allergies.

Products made from cow's milk have 59 active hormones, scores of allergens, fat, and cholesterol. Most cow's milk has measurable quantities of herbicides, pesticides, dioxins, and over 52 powerful antibiotics. Dairy forms mucus, which is a breeding ground for yeast and Candida. Bacteria love moist

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mucous environments. Dairy should be avoided if one suffers from any skin crisis.

Externally synthetic agents and peels reduce skin's natural defense, increasing permeability of toxins and UV rays. When skin perceives itself as defenseless it will fight to rebuild its defense mechanisms, sometimes to a fault. The increase of inflammation leads to breakdown of cell structure, capillary fragility and collagen degradation. The development of abnormal pigmentation occurs as skin finds ways to process ultraviolet rays. These abnormalities can lead to skin cancers.

Any free radical agent such as smoking, over exposure to sun, over use of alcohol, and medications are detrimental to overall health including skin.

### Good nutrients, great complexion. What nutrients are good for the skin?

What goes in, physical or emotional, will eventually make its way to the skin. Giving skin nutritional support is essential for overall skin health. Minerals play a key role in cell structure

and protection. Copper regenerates collagen, phosphorus is responsible for cell structure and repair and zinc supports skin's immune response. Vitamin A protects against an enzyme that destroys collagen and vitamin B prevents deterioration of collagen. Vitamin C increases collagen synthesis, supports immune response, provides UV protection, and reduces the formation of tumors and cancers.

### Essential Fatty Acids and Collagen

Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs) are lipids and proteins, an integral part of the cells' protective covering. EFAs reduce inflammation and repair injured cells. EFAs leave skin vital and glowing and can be found in most seed oils.

Collagen is the foundation of our skin; however it also supports blood and lymph vessels as well as skin follicles. When collagen becomes injured, the matrix scars, leaving the skin with lines, wrinkles, and large pores. Beyond the physical collapse, deteriorated collagen impairs capillaries inhibiting blood flow, leaving skin cells starved. The end result is skin that is devitalized and aged.

### How do we maintain our skin's longevity for optimal health regardless of age?

Here is the best philosophy for vital skin, as we get older.

- Use the sun constructively. Do not block it with synthetic chemicals.
- Cleanse your skin twice a day
- Use loads of antioxidants
- Avoid synthetic based skin care products
- Avoid peeling skin if it is unnecessary
- Condition skin with serums and oils that are rich in vitamins, minerals, and essential fatty acids
- Find joy in your life. Release negative emotions
- Do something silly at least once a day
- Incorporate healthy eating habits and get adequate sleep and rest

### The latest skin care product innovations

What is new is actually being rescued from the past. The 21st century is a return to tradition. The expansion of science and technology has done little for us emotionally. The healing therapies established thousands of years ago have been eclipsed by technology and machines and has done little to insure our well-being.

Due to science we have moved beyond skin type and skin condition. Skin conditions that reflect these technologies are

on the rise such as rosacea, adult acne, and wounded and deficient skin. It has become necessary to return to formulas that are organic and natural in order for our skin to cope with the onslaught of stress. We can definitely extract much from what we have gained from science, but the true answer lies in nature and tradition.

What can we do to improve the appearance of our skin short of plastic surgery or exotic therapies?

In your 20s skin cells regenerate every 28 days. However, with every additional decade of life you must add 10 days to that cycle. So in your 30s it becomes 38 days, 40s, 48 and so on. There are four factors to keep skin vital and regenerating at a more youthful rate:

1. Step up exfoliation, which is a process that eliminates dead skin cells at the surface of the skin.
2. Increase cell regeneration, which can be achieved by using things like roses, hawthorn, and rosehips. These plants contain vitamin C, which stimulates cell regeneration. Vitamin C also increases collagen synthesis and boosts the skin's immune response.
3. Use products that stimulate fibroblast. Fibroblast is a cell that produces collagen strands. Botanicals that increase fibroblast are calendula and gotu kola.
4. Use the health benefits of the sun instead of fearing it, eat a healthy diet, using natural remedies versus medications and finding joy in your self and your life is a winning combination for good health and skin longevity.

We are a generation who has many resources at our fingertips. As we strive for health and longevity it is important to use our resources wisely, so we can live healthy productive lives with skin that mirrors our inner vitality and passion. ➤



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