

Masks – the speedy refreshers

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Clients of beauty institutes prefer individual treatments showing quick and visible results. Possible solutions here are masks in combination with effective active agents.

Clients of beauty institutes expect a treatment that is individually adapted to their skin condition as well as to the seasonal requirements. Beyond it, they just feel the need for a change. On the part of the cosmetician, these expectations demand a high level of flexibility and a careful selection of the products necessary for the treatment. A possible solution here is offering masks in combination with effective active agents. They contribute to increase the skin moistness, soak and remove crusta and scales, firm, smooth, and if necessary, calm and refresh the skin surface. Depending on the skin condition there are different types of masks and active agents to apply.

Cream masks

Cream masks are applied like skin care creams, however, they are applied abundantly. A light massage is recommended shortly before the surplus mask is gently dabbed off with a dry towel after 30 minutes. Cream masks act less spectacular but in return they offer a variety of possible applications as they can easily be combined with active agent concentrates or ampoule products. The active agent concentrates can be spread extensively or only partially or even be applied together with the mask base cream. A very small selection of active agent concentrates already results in a broad spectrum of possible effects.

Healing earth masks

Healing earth masks are mostly based on minerals with a high capacity for water absorption e.g. clay and loam powders. Those minerals are inexpensive and have a long tradition in folk medicine. While on the one hand healing earth masks have a cleansing effect by absorbing substances from the skin surface they release on the other hand low dosages of minerals into the skin. Ionic exchanging properties are also reported. Healing earth masks also are frequently combined with physiotherapies e.g. the Felke therapy (Bad Sobernheim, Diez an der Lahn).

They are pleasantly refreshing for the skin. Healing earth masks are removed with clear water without any cleansing additives. Similar to fleece masks, healing earth masks can also be combined with active agent concentrates. The application of healing earth shows excellent results in the care for problem skins e.g. bad, oily skin, minor cases of acne, and for skin susceptible for psoriasis. In cases of neurodermitic barrier disorders, additives are mostly avoided but after the healing earth treatment a fat rebalancing base cream free of emulsifiers and irritants is applied. The base cream should be rich in essential fatty acids (linoleic acid, gamma-linolenic acid) and also contain an appropriate amount of urea which acts against possible itching.

Fleece masks

Fleece masks are offered on the base of a collagen or algae matrix. The fleece mask itself is either insoluble, or in combination with water turns into a gel releasing active agents into the skin. The fleece can be applied on top of a cream base. After moistening, the fleece produces a highly occlusive cover which supports the penetration of the active agents into the skin. When the treatment is finished, the fleece is simply removed.

Another possibility is to put the fleece on the skin and then soak it with active agent concentrates which then directly penetrate into the skin. This method has the advantage that active agent concentrates and also oils are fixated and running is avoided. Frequently, fleeces are already preconditioned with active substances which are activated after the fleece is applied and moistened. The substances then penetrate from the matrix into the skin.

Modeling masks

Modeling masks are a combination of different mineral powders which are mixed with water and then applied on the skin ("modeled") where they harden after a short time. As the skin is pretreated with creams containing active agents before the application, this

method has a very strong occlusive effect which accelerates the penetration of the active agents. Furthermore the heat caused by the hardening process ("thermo-mask") boosts the circulation and along with it the effectiveness of the active agents. Similar to fleece masks the modeling masks stay about 20-30 minutes on the skin and are simply removed after that time. To facilitate their removal, it is important that the active agent creams are applied thoroughly as well as abundantly; maybe even gauze can be added before the mask is modeled. The modeling mixture should not come in contact with the skin surface. The creams used can also be combined with active agent concentrates.

Cucumber, cream cheese & Co.

Applying cucumber slices, aloe, fruits containing AHA fruit acids, cream cheese and whey packs, cleansing bran masks etc. on the skin belongs to the most traditional and oldest mask procedures, however it is less frequently used today and mostly limited to the skin care at home. Regrettably so, as this method would guarantee that almost all the active agents e.g. fruit acids, vitamins up to the enzymes processed in finished mask products could freshly be applied on the skin, free of preservatives and other additives. The natural compositions, individual dosage and the variety of possible applications are a big advantage.

While on the one hand the multitude of possible treatments is indeed desirable, on the other hand the costs regarding the number of products have to be kept within limits. The best possible solution here are modular systems as they allow new and individual combinations of the different elements, i.e. base creams and active agent concentrates.

Modular systems

Modular systems can be used for cream masks, fleece masks, healing earth masks as well as modeling masks, which means, that changing over from one to another type of mask only requires a different matrix. In this way, a purchase of several fleece masks preconditioned with active agents can e.g. be avoided. A further advantage is that modular systems with a few base creams and a reasonable number of active agent concentrates can also be used for skin care and massages. As active agents concentrates are independent products, in problem cases they can also be applied purely or on specific areas of the skin.

A soothing cream mask for sensitive mixed skin may contain e.g.: D-panthenol concentrate, echinacea extract as well as a base cream for normal and sensitive skin.

Revitalizing cream masks are recommended for dry and horny elderly skin. The preparation may be as follows: green tea extract, liposome concentrate with moisturizers (NMF) and a base cream for low-fat skin.

A cleansing mask for skin susceptible for impurities or minor forms of acne should contain moistened clay powder, alga extract and liposome concentrate.

The few active agent concentrates mentioned here can also be used for skin care and massage. Liposome concentrate (supplies linoleic acid) is also recommended for bad skin and minor forms of acne, whereas D-panthenol is suggested for skin redness and cracked skin (possibly together with hamamelis extract) as well as a face tonic before applying the mask because it preconditions the skin for other active agents. Echinacea extract e.g. is an effective treatment for couperosis. Active agent concentrates should be bottled in containers with a measuring device e.g. pipette and caps to close again after use.

It is recommended to keep the mask thoroughly moistened in the beginning as it should only gently dry on towards the end of the application. The cooling effect of this kind of mask due to the evaporating water leaves the skin pleasantly refreshed and soothed. Afterwards the mask is rinsed off with warm water.

A well-balanced supply of masks and competent treatments with active agents and ampoules enables the institute to show professional competence and also establishes long-term ties to its clients due to the individuality. Modular systems help to effectively cut down on costs.

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