

By Julie Tremaine | Photo by Victoria Howard



Ask the Expert

Taking care of your skin is one thing, but pampering yourself with a facial is another thing altogether. No one knows that better than **Abby Backlund**, skin care expert and owner of Facing Thayer, the street's unique spa and beauty boutique. I went to her beauty lounge to learn a thing or two about getting and keeping gorgeous skin.

What does a facial at your spa entail?

A thorough skin analysis, a double cleanse, exfoliation (with products that contain higher levels of acids and enzymes than over-the-counter products), extractions, a massage, a mask appropriate for your skin's needs, and an application of moisturizer and sunscreen. Depending on your needs, there are extras such as a high frequency machine and additional massage.

What's your daily skin care regimen?

In the morning I cleanse, tone and use a moisturizer with SPF. Then at night, I cleanse, exfoliate with a gentle chemical exfoliant and apply eye cream and moisturizer. I do a glycolic peel monthly.

What product can't you live without?

Moisturizer. Everyone needs moisturizer, whether you're oily or dry. It helps you age better. And sunscreen. Everyone needs to wear sunscreen daily.

What's the deal with toner? Does it really do anything?

It balances the skin. When we cleanse, our cleansers and even the water we use have a different ph than our skin. When you disrupt that ph, that's when you dry out or break out. Toner evens that out. It also helps your moisturizer to seal in moisture.

What's your best-kept beauty secret?

Water! Water is so important to your skin because our cells are hydrated from the inside. If you're dehydrated, you'll see more fine lines and wrinkles, and your skin is going to look dull. That's the cheapest skin care product you can buy.

How should skin care change for a younger or older person?

At any age, you should be wearing sunscreen every day. The most important thing is to protect your skin. The biggest problem I see for people in their 20s is adult acne. Treatments like Dermalogica's Medivac System, which uses salicylic acid, help, along with extracting black and white heads, and just having a good at home regimen. An older person should be using a moisturizer with alpha hydroxy (Vitamins A, C and E) and products with regenerative protein that stimulate collagen production.

Facing Thayer, 297 Thayer St, Providence. facingthayer.com 331-4777.

The Beauty Basics

It has recently come to my attention that there are some women out there who don't wash off their makeup at night – or worse, people who wash their faces with bar soap. This is an emergency, and it's time for some basic skin care instruction. You might not believe me, but you can have gorgeous, healthy, glowing skin in just a few minutes every day. Your face (and your significant other, and everyone you see during the day) will thank you.



Wash Your Face. This isn't negotiable. If you want great skin, use a gentle cleanser specifically designed to remove the dirt and impurities from your pores. Do this once in the morning and once at night before bed. **Korres White Tea Cleanser** leaves your face shiny and clean, and is ideal for normal or combination (meaning normal but sometimes oily, or normal but sometimes dry) skin. **Korres Milk Protein Cleanser** is extremely gentle and moisturizing – it won't leave sensitive skin feeling dry or irritated. \$19.50/\$21, Facing Thayer, 297 Thayer St.



Exfoliate. You don't have to do this every day, but it is a good idea to get the dead cells that dull your skin off your face a few times a week. Make sure that you get a scrub specifically for your face – coarse particles like sea salt, found in body scrubs, will leave you raw. **Ole Henriksen Walnut Complexion Scrub** is a foaming, deep cleansing exfoliator that's gentle on the skin. **Ole Henriksen New Beginning Scrub** has finer particles and is better for sensitive or delicate skin. Both \$24, Sephora



Moisturize. Now that your face is clean and scrubbed, it's time to seal in the moisture. If you've never used an eye cream, now is the time to start. The skin around your eyes is more delicate and prone to dehydration than the rest of your face, so it needs a rich eye cream – keeping your eye area happy will keep away dark circles, fine lines and puffiness. Don't

believe me? Try **Neutrogena Radiance Boost Eye Cream** for a week and take a look at the difference. For the rest of your face, it's important to pick a moisturizer that meets your skin's needs. If your skin can get oily, an oil-free moisturizer such as **Neutrogena Illuminating Whip Moisturizer** will nourish your face without the grease factor, and it's SPF 20. For normal to dry skin, **Neutrogena Intensified Day Moisture** locks the moisture into your skin and also has SPF 15. \$12.49/\$14.99/\$27.99, Walgreens



Pamper your skin. If you've made it this far, you deserve something special. Once a week, give your skin the royal treatment with a facial mask. If your skin gets oily, a clay or charcoal based mask, like **Aveda Deep Cleansing Herbal Clay Masque** works wonders for cleaning out your pores and normalizing your skin. A moisturizing, skin brightening mask like **Aveda Tourmaline Charged Radiance Masque** works well for dry and sensitive types. It's like a mini-spa day at home, and only takes about 20 minutes. \$19/\$26, Aveda, Providence Place