



Fact or Fiction?

It's the day of reckoning for 20 grooming "truths".

My grandmother sabotaged my first date with a girl. Actually, I think my mother still blames her for my sexuality. It was the eve of my first Grade Seven disco. Of course, this coincided with the eruption of my debut pubescent pimple, smack bang in the middle of my chin – a reverse dimple. Nana Rose, a woman of a million handy hints, suggested that I put methylated spirits on it – “It’ll dry it right out, poppet,” she reasoned. It was growing by the hour – nerves maybe – and, with the disco starting in less than 24 hours, I figured I had nothing to lose.

I was wrong – this was one of the situations where the cure is worse than the disease. Not only did the metho not get rid of the monster zit, it left the skin around it looking like I had been attacked with a flame thrower.

Needless to say, this reduced my chances of hooking up with my date, Candy, to zero. To this day I am sure my mother thinks that if it had not been for Gran and her home remedies, Candy would have kissed me at that disco and I would now be happily married – to a woman – living in Burwood with three kids....

Little did she know that I always had my eye on Candy’s older brother David, anyhow – but that’s another story.

The metho cure was one of my Gran’s beauty myths. She told me several and I believed all of them. She also told me playing with myself would make me go blind, but thankfully I chose not to believe that one. You certainly shouldn’t believe everything you hear or read, as these busted myths prove...

1. Skin care needs to be expensive

FICTION Very often with expensive skin care products you are paying for the packaging and the brand name. Occasionally, however, you will be paying more dollars for patented ingredient technology such as “Idebenone”, a bioengineered version of the ingredient Co Enzyme Q10 in the PRIORI skin-care range.

2. Shaving makes hair grow back more

FICTION Shaving cuts off the hair with a blunt edge at the skin level, giving the look and feel that, as the hair grows back, there is more hair coming through than before. If this myth was true, Bruce Willis would have hair like Cindy Crawford – he has been shaving his head for years.

3. Sunscreen gives you spots

FACT The zinc oxide and titanium dioxide found in sunscreen certainly can clog the pores of some people. To avoid getting pimples from your sun protection always double-clean your skin in the evening. Try massaging olive oil into

your skin first to remove the sunscreen – as oil effectively dissolves oil – and then use a foaming cleanser to remove all traces of the oil and sunscreen.

4. If you use one skin care product from a specific range you need to use all the products from the same range

FICTION Skin does not recognise particular skin care ranges, it only responds to the ingredients in the bottle. It is greedy skin care companies that encourage brand loyalty to make more money.

5. Alcohol in skin care “closes” your pores

FICTION You cannot “close” your pores, as the skin’s pores do not open and close. Instead alcohol will just dehydrate and irritate your skin. SD Alcohol, a very common and extremely cheap skin care ingredient, is the worst culprit and should be avoided, especially in after-shave products in which it often appears.

6. The sun causes ageing

FACT UV sun exposure causes the breakdown of the collagen and elastic network in your skin, causing ageing. When you damage these delicate fibres it is like draining water from a waterbed, resulting in a loss of firmness and an increase in surface wrinkles.

7. My oily skin doesn’t need a moisturiser

FICTION Oily skin might not need a thick moisturiser to replace the oils like someone with dry skin, but it can still benefit from essential anti-ageing and hydrating ingredients such as hyaluronic acid or Vitamin C in a light, oil-free “fluid moisturiser”. If you really are moisturiser-phobic, try “Basic Moist Light Moisturising Fluid” by BIODROGA (call 1800 99 99 00 for stockists). This product will leave your skin perfectly hydrated with no greasy after-feel.

8. Toothpaste works to dry out pimples

FICTION My sister told me this one and caused me to burn my skin: sibling rivalry at its worst. Feeding her pet goldfish to my Mexican walking fish provided me with some temporary solace.

9. Stress and bad diet cause pimples

FACT Stress and bad diet do not directly cause pimples, but both will have an effect on the skin. Stress causes a stimulation of the adrenals that can stimulate oil flow in skin and a bad diet is going to mean the skin will be more susceptible to the infection from P acnes bacteria. In contrast, a healthy diet will provide your skin with the nutrients

it needs to heal from acute acne and long term dermal scarring. If you do suffer from acne an important supplement to take daily is zinc.

10. My mother’s father went bald, so I will too

FICTION We inherit our genetic balding from both sides of the family, even from our grandparents when our parents do not express the balding gene and have a full head of hair. Usually if you haven’t seen signs of going bald by the age of 26 there is less chance of it happening. If you are going bald, don’t live in denial – shave your head.

11. Skin care needs to tingle or make my skin red to work

FICTION The only time skin care should sting or “tingle” and possibly go flush is if it is an acid-based product, which needs to go onto the skin at a low pH or if the product contains Vitamin A or C. If any other skin care product stings or makes your skin go red and itchy then this is actually irritation or an allergic-type response. The culprits are usually essential oils, colours, preservatives and artificial fragrances.

12. Once I start using Botox I can’t stop

FICTION Of course you can stop using Botox, it’s just that you probably won’t want to. Botox is not physically addictive in any way, but more socially addictive. When you stop using Botox your expression lines and wrinkles will return, leading you to call the doctor for your next jab.

13. Coffee is bad for me

FICTION Coffee is a powerful antioxidant and having one or two cups of coffee a day is certainly not bad for you. Excessive consumption, however, will dehydrate you. Look for coffee in skin care, as it is both a potent antioxidant and cellular stimulator, making it perfect in eye treatments.

14. Mineral oil is bad for my skin

FICTION This is a fable created by specific skin care companies trying to create a “difference” between themselves and other skin care companies. Mineral oil is actually a very skin-friendly ingredient, which is perfect for anyone that is sensitive and has allergic-type skin. Personally, I feel that the vegetable oils such as almond oil or squalene are superior to mineral oil in skin care formulations as they are full of added nutrients, but mineral oil is certainly not “bad” for your skin. >>

GROOMING

With Will Fennell

15. Sun beds are better than the sun

FICTION Both sun beds and the sun emit dangerous and deadly UV rays that cause cancer and skin ageing – both need to be avoided.

16. Squeezing pimples makes acne worse

FACT The bacteria that causes pimples, called *Pacnes*, can be spread all over the face when you pick at your pimples. If you need to remove a white head then sterilise the area with some alcohol, cover your fingers with a tissue and gently apply pressure in vibrating movements around the pimple. If it doesn't come out easily, don't just keep squeezing harder and harder. Put some zit medication containing benzol peroxide – go with a five percent formulation – on it and come back to it later. Squeezing not only causes acne to spread but can cause long term dermal scarring that is hard to remove.

17. Exercise is good for my skin

FACT Exercise is great for your whole body, but exercise directly affects your skin by stimulating the lymphatic system. The lymphatic system carries waste

around the body, but unlike the circulatory system, which has the heart as a pump, the lymphatic system needs the contraction of muscles to carry the lymph around. Exercise stimulates this process, which enables the body, especially the skin, to detoxify and cleanse itself.

18. My nasal hairs are important, which is why I shouldn't trim or remove them

FACT Your nasal hairs are there to protect you from foreign matter entering your lungs. Removing this hair completely by waxing can sometimes cause an aggravated nasal cavity. Trimming the hair at the nose opening with specialised nasal hair trimmers so that you can't see it any more will keep you well-groomed without aggravation.

19. I don't need lip balm

FICTION Lips don't have any oil glands on them, which is why they get dry and chapped. You might think you don't need a lip balm, but it will definitely help keep them protected and looking luscious. Look for ingredients like lanolin in

lip care, as this wonder ingredient mimics the skins own natural oils.

20. There is one miracle skin care ingredient

FICTION I don't believe in the supremacy of any one singular ingredient to treat your skin. Skin care needs to be established on my fruit salad philosophy. Why just eat one apple when a fruit salad of apple, banana, peach, watermelon and grapes topped with passionfruit tastes better and has so many more positive health and antioxidant effects than a single piece of fruit ever could. Skin care ingredients, especially the antioxidants, acids and peptides, work in the same way a fruit salad would – lots of different active, powerfully positive ingredients working synergistically together to change your skin.

To make a booking with Will call (02) 9388 0221 or go to willandpeta.com or willfennell.com.au

If you have any queries about massage from last month go to Donald Campbell's website: zenithwellbeing.com.au.

Product picks

HALSTON MAN

The warmer months call for a fragrance that is light and fresh and Halston Man delivers just that. Opening with a burst of passionfruit and mint, it does eventually settle a little on the sweeter side, but this is so subtle that it certainly won't be sickly in the humidity like many "musk-like" fragrances can be. With perfumes you either like them or you don't – and Halston Man I like very much!

Available exclusively at David Jones.



SANGUINE by KEIKO MECHERI

To be honest, I didn't particularly like this fragrance at first. But proving that perfumes do change as they sit on the skin and unite with your natural oils, within minutes the blood orange tones had come through and I loved it (I actually could not stop sniffing myself, which had people staring at me like I had Tourette Syndrome). If fruity isn't for you, this one might not tickle your fancy, but check out the other members of this family of fragrances from Keiok Mecheri. They are all perfection.

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MEN ESSENTIALS by DECLEOR

The fragrance of men's skincare products often veers toward pine or menthol – like someone decided this scent was "masculine" (though, for me, a preferable masculine scent is sweaty jocks). This range of men's specific products from Decleor smells, not so much like my boyfriend's gym shorts, but rather like his morning porridge – a yummy mix of cinnamon and cloves. Unlike many product lines specific for the boys, Decleor has a complete range for all your skincare and shaving needs. The standout is the shaving oil, which lubricates and protects while you're shaving. If you love aromatherapy, then you will love Decleor!

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