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*Natural beauty ingredients
photoby Chris Frutchie*

How to Slash Your Beauty Budget

By Monica Issitt

MY TWO YEAR OLD loves to play beauty shop with mom. I comb his blonde locks, make some hairspray noises and dab a little lotion on his cheeks and hands. From flat to fabulous it takes maybe three minutes (okay, five, after he checks himself out in the mirror) and he walks away, I swear, with his shoulders back and head held a little higher. Although we emphasize a strong character more than looks in our house, there is something about taking care of yourself – the good smells of lotions and potions, feeling a bit more polished, that do all of us some good.

Most of us are acutely aware, however, that we've been had. Does feeling good about yourself need to be attached to your external appearance? Does it need a dollar sign attached to it? We do not attempt to answer these broad questions however, it makes us wonder, does beauty really need to cost THAT much?

I asked friends in Frisco to divulge their secrets with unheard of questions

like, "Where do you go?" and "How much did it cost?" I dug a little deeper to find out what they do at home, for next to nothing, to look so good. It is important to share this information with womankind, because, after all, we're all on the same team, right?

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THEN AND NOW

"Before I became a mom, I went to a salon every eight weeks for two or three hours and spent between \$160-\$200 a visit," says Mandy Burton, Frisco resident. She describes something most

moms and anyone whose priorities lie outside the salon would understand. "I've become so low-maintenance since becoming a mom its unreal. Even little things, like how long I take to dry my hair, have changed since I have zero extra time on my hands. I've found that all that drying and styling and all the expensive products I used were actually doing more harm than good. Now I do next to nothing and I have much healthier hair," Ms. Burton explains.

This information may surprise those of us who live in this product-driven culture in which we are bombarded with challenges to try each new magic pill. But it was second nature for our grandmothers who would never dream of (or pay for, for that matter) some of the crazy concoctions we put our hard earned dollars toward, all in the name of beauty. My 88-year-old grandmother has sworn by her "water and cold cream only" approach to skin care for as long as I can remember. She knows that a good haircut and a coat of clear

nail polish work wonders. She knows better than to wash her hair everyday with expensive products and would never dream of paying someone to do things she can do herself.

THE SIMPLE LIFE A.K.A. STUFF WE ALL KNOW

Most of us know, intuitively or otherwise, that beauty comes from the inside. Healthy-looking skin, for the most part, is a product of eating good food, drinking plenty of water and using that sunscreen. Some skin problems are hormonal and/or more complicated than that, but most of our faces would thank us for limiting alcohol, caffeine, fried and greasy foods and loads of preservatives. Fresh fruits and vegetables give our skin the nutrients it needs to create itself anew every month or so, and all those little antioxidants reek havoc on wrinkles and free radicals.

YOU'VE GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO

There are plenty of women out there who really enjoy going to expensive salons. We like to treat ourselves to experiences that would be tough to reproduce in our own homes. There is also the “touch factor,” the fact that it just feels nicer to have some treatments done for us by someone other than ourselves. So if you are one of these women whose life has benefited by going somewhere for a facial or hair wrap then, by all means, keep the appointment. At the end of this article, however, there are some recipes you could use in a pinch.

Now, there are those of you who feel you must go to fancy places to have luxurious-sounding treatments done to you. And, there are those of you who would rather not spend the time or the money but would rather spend that spare time with your family (assuming that time is fun and stress free!) or in your garden, bike riding, doing yoga or knitting. For you, going to a salon every week or even every month would be just another thing to add to an already packed schedule. These recipes are especially for you.

I'd be hard pressed to find a woman who would turn down a Valentine's gift certificate for a free facial or doesn't like to go for some type of special

occasion beauty treatment every once in a while. I, myself, go to a massage school every chance I get. I stash away a couple of dollars here and there and say that I can't afford not to go. I think of it as more of a necessity than an extravagance. But no longer should you feel that you have to spend an arm and a leg on complicated treatments that you could emulate at home. So bring on the girly party and let's get started.

NATURE'S PHARMACY

Liz Bovard, *Frisco STYLE Magazine's* director of sales, worked in the cosmetic industry for eighteen years as a marketing trainer for several of the largest cosmetic companies in the country. She saw many fads come and go and says that most of the benefits of popular products sold by these big name companies can be gleaned at home, at a fraction of the cost.

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“It really comes down to asking yourself what being taken care of is worth to you,” Ms. Bovard says. “When you pay for a product you are paying for higher grade ingredients, as well as the expertise of the sales professional, and of course, the pampering you receive at the time of the sale. With that said, it is possible to save a lot of money by doing some simple things from ingredients in your own kitchen.”

Compare the average spa treatment prices to the at home recipe version.

(Note: There is a difference between treatments offered for therapeutic reasons and those that are purely cosmetic. It is advisable to understand the health benefits of some of these treatments and to take that into consideration when you decide to skip them for a DIY approach at home.)

Natural Ingredients for Home Spa Treatments

AVOCADOS are full of nutrient-rich oil and make a great moisturizer.

CHAMOMILE TEA cleans pores and clears blackheads. Steep three tea bags in a bowl of boiling water and put face over bowl with towel over head to catch the steam.

CHERRIES have malic acid which regenerates cell growth. Mix 2 Tbsp. cherry juice with 1 Tbsp. dry oatmeal and put on face for five minutes, rinse.

CRANBERRY JUICE, a gentle exfoliant, is good for acne. Put a handful of cranberries in blender and remove pulp. Soak gauze pads in the juice, wipe over face, avoiding eye area, for about ten minutes. Rinse.

CORNMEAL is a cleanser and skin aid. Add to water or milk and then put on skin to absorb oil and dirt.

CUCUMBERS are a natural anti-inflammatory you can use for puffy eyes or sunburn.

GRAPEFRUIT has acids mimicked by expensive body scrubs. Sprinkle sugar over ½ grapefruit and rub over body except freshly shaved skin.

HONEY is cleanser and toner. Mix 1 Tbsp. honey w/ 1 tsp. apple juice and smooth over face as toner. Leave on 15 minutes and rinse off. As a firming mask: Mix 1 Tbsp. honey with egg white and smooth over face and neck. Leave for 10 minutes and rinse.

LEMON JUICE contains citric acid and can highlight hair or help cure a blemish.

STRAWBERRIES are a dental cleaner and whitener. Mash a strawberry and spread on teeth to whiten them.

SOYMILK will slow hair growth. Apply before shaving.

TOMATOES contain lycopene, an antioxidant. Cut up and mash a ripe tomato and spread it on your face. Leave on 20 minutes and rinse off.

*from Bargain Beauty Secrets
by Diane Irons*

SALON HYDRATING FACIAL:

\$60-\$160

Home Facial: \$5 or less

Mix 2 Tbsp. canned pumpkin, ½ tsp. honey, 1 tsp. yogurt. Apply to face. Leave on 10 minutes and gently wipe clean with warm washcloth. The natural enzymes in the pumpkin give skin a healthy sheen. Honey's medicinal properties are almost endless.

MICRODERM ABRASION, I VISIT:

\$100+ Series of 10-12 (recommended for maximum benefit): \$1,000 and up
Exfoliating/peel at home: \$5 or less

Mix 1 Tbsp. sugar plus olive oil to make a paste. (Those with oily skin should use salt instead of sugar.) Leave on face for 5-10 minutes, gently exfoliate (gently rub in circular motion), rinse off.

SPA PEDICURE

(HYDRATING TREATMENT): \$65-\$80

Home Hydrating Pedicure: \$0

For a Foot Scrub/Home Pedicure mix together ½ cup cornmeal, 2 Tbsp. olive oil. Gently rub on feet, leave on for 5 minutes and gently wipe off.

And to make a Hydrating Foot Treatment...Drop 5 bags of green tea into a basin of hot water. Soak

feet until water cools completely. Apply olive oil to feet to lock-in moisture.

HAIR WRAP AT SPA: \$20-\$35

Home Hair Wrap: \$1

Mix one mashed mango with 1 Tbsp. yogurt and 2 egg yolks. Spread over hair and cover with a shower cap or plastic wrap. Leave on for 20 minutes and shampoo out.

BODY WRAP (LEGS ONLY): \$85-\$130

"Coffee Wrap" at home: free, if you have a cup of morning Joe anyway

Rub warm coffee grounds on hips and thighs and cover with plastic wrap. Roll over with a rolling pin. You'll laugh at yourself – but it works!

Monica Issitt is a freelance writer living in McKinney.



Staff Beauty Picks

PHILOSOPHY "HOPE IN A JAR" moisturizer: It is a lightweight moisturizer that hydrates my skin without leaving a greasy residue. It also improves the overall tone and texture of my skin. \$28 - \$55 at Sephora or Nordstrom's ~ Brooke Yoas

L'OREAL SUBLIME BRONZE SELF-TANNING GELEE: It is streak-free, quick-dry and leaves no tanning smell. Contains Vitamin E and leaves my skin smooth. Great to get your tan started for the summer. Any drug store such as CVS or Walgreens for \$ 8.95 ~ Cari Bennett

CENTRAL MARKET SPA BAR & NEUTROGENA'S RAZOR DEFENSE POST-SHAVE LOTION: Central Market offers several scrubs and masks for all skin types. The Sea Greens Revitalizing Mask helped with my pregnancy acne. You can't beat the price...\$2.79 for one ounce, which lasts a good while.

My husband likes Razor Defense because it's not too oily feeling. It helps with his dry skin especially in the winter. And, it smells nice. \$5 at Target. ~ Leah Ratliff

SEBASTIAN SHAPER HAIRSPRAY. I have been using it for more than 20 years and it is the best. It helps keep my hair in place without being heavy or sticky. Target for \$13.99 ~ Theresa Kossack