

Skin Care Terms

Clear, effective communication is an important part of developing a relationship with your customers. As an Independent Beauty Consultant, this list of common skin care terms can help you talk about the basics of skin care with confidence.

Acne — A skin condition consisting of blemishes (blackheads, whiteheads, pimples or cysts) which is probably a result of a buildup of keratin proteins, bacteria and oils in some hair follicles.

Adipose Tissue — A type of connective tissue that contains stored cellular fat providing cushion support and energy storage for the body.

Antioxidants — Known to be defenders against free radicals.

Cellulite — A dimpled or orange-peel appearance of skin in the hips, thighs and buttocks. As the connective tissues beneath the dermis stiffen, either as an effect of aging or due to swollen cellulite-causing cells, they pull down where they connect to the dermis, resulting in “dimples” on the skin’s surface. These “dimples” are often referred to as orange peel, or commonly, cellulite.

Collagen — Fibrous protein in the dermis that gives skin its firmness and resiliency.

Comedogenic — Causes blackheads, whiteheads or other blemishes.

Dermis — Layer of cells beneath the epidermis.

Elastin — A protein similar to collagen found in skin which provides skin the ability to stretch and return to its original shape.

Emollient — An ingredient or product that “locks in” the moisture already in the skin, retarding its evaporation and making the skin feel softer.

Epidermis — The outermost layer of skin that constantly regenerates itself. The top level of cells is dead skin cells, and underneath are living cells that push their way up to the surface, then die and flake off.

Exfoliant — An ingredient or product (a grainy scrub cream, for example) used to remove dead skin cells from the surface of the epidermis.

Free Radicals — Unstable, reactive molecules that are produced by normal chemical reactions in the body and are thought to attack cell structures, potentially affecting skin elasticity and firmness.

Humectant — An ingredient that helps skin retain moisture.

Hydrate — To restore the normal level of moisture to the skin.

Hypoallergenic Cosmetics — Used to describe products that do not contain ingredients known as common allergens (allergy-causing substances) — like fragrance. Now that stringent allergy testing has become an industry standard, many products fit this description.

Keratin — A tough, fibrous protein that is part of the outer layer of the skin's epidermis and of the hair and nails.

Melanin — The dark brown or black pigment that helps give skin its color.

Non-comedogenic — Indicates a product has been shown through clinical testing not to clog pores.

Over-the-Counter (OTC) Drugs — Drugs that can be purchased without a doctor's prescription like sunscreen and acne products. Customers should carefully read and observe all warnings, indications and directions for use on the labels of these products.

pH — A measurement of acidity or alkalinity. Since high (alkaline) or low (acidic) pH products can be harsh, Mary Kay® skin care products are pH-balanced so they're compatible with the skin's own pH level.

Photoaging — Fine lines, wrinkles and pigmented areas caused by overexposure to the sun, which are not related to chronological aging.

Rosacea — A chronic and often progressive skin disease characterized by redness and acne-like lesions over the cheekbones and nose. Over-the-counter acne medications are not suitable for treating rosacea. This medical condition should be treated by a physician.

Sebum — The natural oil substance produced by the sebaceous glands which is the skin's natural moisturizer.

Shelf life — The length of time during which a product should be used before it expires.