

BLUE OAK VALLEY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

2011

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I. Learn More

1. Why use natural and organic beauty products?

Human beings and plants have similar cell metabolism and life processes. Our metabolism involves the use of vitamins and minerals and we get energy the same way from carbohydrates, fats, sugar and proteins. The damage to the human body caused by free radicals affect plants the same way. On a biological level, this natural affinity, makes for ingredients from plant extracts from plants to be the best active substances for human health.

Three very simple reasons:

- a. [Organic beauty products are better for your skin](#)

What you put on your skin eventually ends up in your body. Certified organic products are made with ingredients that are grown free of synthetic pesticides, herbicides and genetically modified organisms. They also don't include harmful additives such as petroleum waxes, fillers and artificial chemicals. Simply put, certified organic products are completely healthy and natural, synthetic alternatives are not.

- b. [Organic beauty products work better](#)

Think of beauty products like food. In today's world, there are a lot of synthetic, or "fake" ingredients used in food processing. But if you go to a high-end restaurant, you generally won't find "fake" ingredients on the menu. **Top chefs know that creating a top-quality meal requires top-quality ingredients.** They don't use artificial flavors in their cooking, because real spices and fresh herbs create a finer, more exquisite taste. Producing a beauty product is not much different. **Certified organic** beauty products work better simply because they are made with superior ingredients.

- c. [Organic beauty products are better for the environment](#)

Organic farming eliminates the use of synthetic chemicals and fertilizers, all of which have a destructive effect on our water, soil and health. Organic plants are also grown without the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), as they may pose a significant threat to both human and environmental health. Therefore, through looking out for your own health, you're also helping to protect our fragile ecosystem. That is what they call a "win-win" situation.

Organic Body Care Standards

Generally, if a product has one of the **organic body care certifications** below it is considered an organic product. Products that claim to be organic without having one of these certifications are *technically* not an organic product unless every ingredient in the product is made from certified organic food/agricultural ingredients (making it organic by default).

Organic Body Care Standards

Standard	Published	Comments
 USDA Organic, USA	2005	The strictest of organic standards because it is really a food standard. Requires 95% organic content to use logo. Disallows synthetic preservatives, and most chemical processing of ingredients.

Standard	Published	Comments
 <p>NSF, USA</p>	2009	NSF is one of the first US organic standards to emerge after USDA for cosmetic manufacturers. NSF requires a minimum of 70% of all ingredients (excluding water) to be organic to use its “made with organic” claim. Allows a broader array of preservatives and chemical processes than USDA.
 <p>organic OASIS USA</p>	2008	Oasis was created by a number of US beauty manufacturers and competes with the NSF standard. Oasis requires 85% of all agricultural ingredients to be organic. Allows an even broader array of preservatives than NSF, and similar chemical processes to NSF.
 <p>NaTrue European Union</p>	2008	NaTrue is a new non-profit standard from Europe started by German organic beauty manufacturers. It created a 3 star system to segregate “natural cosmetics” from “natural cosmetics with organic content” from “organic cosmetics”. Natrue 3-star requires 95% of all agricultural ingredients to be certified organic. 2-star requires 70%. Maximum of 5-15% (depending on the product category) of content can be from Natrue’s acceptable synthetic list.
<p>COSMOS European Union</p>	2009	COSMOS is the first European Harmonized Standard for Organic beauty created by the first 6 EU organic beauty certifiers. COSMOS requires 95% of agricultural ingredients to be organic. 20% of total product by weight must be organic – including water. Allows a maximum of 5% synthetic content.
 <p>BDIH Germany</p>	1995	Though called a natural body care standard, BDIH requires manufacturers to use organic content wherever possible. It defines “where possible” as being available in sufficient quantity and quality, and defines which plants fall into this category by default. Therefore, it is possible for a product to have 0% organic content and still be BDIH certified. BDIH also maintains a member’s only list of acceptable ingredients that can be used in its products. BDIH was a forerunner by creating the world’s first organic body care certification.
 <p>Soil Association United Kingdom</p>	2002	Soil Association requires all of its certified products to show the organic percentage on the package. For a product to be called organic it must be 95% organic. For a product to state “made with organic X” it must be a minimum of 70% organic. Soil Association excludes water in this calculation, but if water is used to create an ingredient (such as a floral water) the weight of the water in contrast to the weight of the plant being used determines its organic percentage. This method precludes manufacturers from manipulating their organic content levels by using organic floral waters to boost their organic percentage.
 <p>Cosmebio France</p>	2002	Requires 95% of all agricultural ingredients to be organic. 10% of total product by weight (including the weight of water) must be organic. Allows up to 5% synthetic content. Cosmebio is only available to French manufacturers, and is certified by Eco-cert. Eco-

Standard	Published	Comments
		cert is available to manufacturers all over the world.
 Eco-Cert France	2002	Requires 95% of all agricultural ingredients to be organic. 10% of total product by weight (including the weight of water) must be organic. Allows up to 5% synthetic content.
 AIAB / ICEA , Italy	2003	Does not require a minimum organic content level. Water is not considered in the organic content. Maintains an extensive list of ingredients not permitted in organic cosmetics.
 Biogarantie Belgium	2004	Follows similar rules to Ecocert.
 NASAA Australia	2005	NASAA is a food certification body similar to the Soil Association that has also developed a standard for beauty. NASAA restricts numerous synthetic ingredients and processes used in cosmetics.
 Biocosc Switzerland	2006	Requires 95% of all agricultural ingredients to be organic. 10% of total product by weight (including water in the weight) must be organic. Allows up to 3% synthetic content.
	2007	Provides complete guidelines for organic farming. Includes a complete schedule of organic compounds accepted for Organic certification.

How does organic body care certification work?

Each organic certification body creates a set of rules that a product and manufacturer must meet in order to be certified. These rules typically define things like:

- What the minimum % of organic content is required
- What % of synthetic (preservatives, petrochemicals, fragrances, etc.) content is acceptable, if any
- What ingredients a product can and/or cannot be made with
- What processes can be used in the creation and/or processing of ingredients
- How water is factored in organic % calculations

As part of the certification process, the manufacturer must have their ingredients and processes regularly audited by a third-party organic certifier to ensure it is complying with all the rules of the standard.

Organic body care standards are, in essence, similar to organic food standards. Organic food standards today are government-controlled and harmonized (standards from differing countries are compatible with each other and have very similar requirements). Today in most countries you cannot represent a food product as “organic” if it isn’t third party certified to be so. Organic body care standards are not government controlled at this point. This is why you may see confusing labelling in the realm of organic beauty. Similar to foods, organic body care certification today is a product-level certification as opposed to an ingredient-level certification (think “organic spaghetti sauce” vs. “organic tomatoes”).

Organic vs. Biodynamic

Organic and biodynamic are very similar; both are grown without chemicals and GMOs. However, biodynamic goes one step further. It is a holistic practice where all things are considered living inter-related systems - animals, plants, and the solar system. Biodynamic practices create healthier plants and heal the earth by replenishing the soil and adding vitality to the plant, soil and/or livestock.

Biodynamic farming methods enliven the soil through human attentiveness and careful observation of nature's rhythms. The main difference between organic and biodynamic is that biodynamic farming uses different principles that add vitality to the plant, soil and/or livestock, whereas traditional farming typically deteriorates the soil.

Biodynamic agriculture uses specific preparations made from minerals and herbs - very similar to homeopathy. These preparations are used to enhance the compost applied to the fields, and intensify the sunlight permeated into the plant.

Biodynamic agriculture also incorporates astrological influences. Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Biodynamics, believed that much like the moon affects the tides, so does it affect the growing phases of planting and harvesting. Complex stellar calendars chart the influences of the moon and other planets for gardeners and farmers to follow. For example, our farms harvest their Calendula flowers by hand early in the morning when the energy of the plant is most intense and vital.

With the over-processing of soil, plants are losing their nutrients, minerals and vitamins. Biodynamic farming creates plants that are more vital and nutrient rich. When we eat these plants we are consuming this vitality and feeding our cells with it, or in the case of skin care - applying this vital energy to our skin. Healthy skin care begins in the garden with plant ingredients.

What is Bio-active energy(BAE)?

Our Products are infused and energized with Bio-active Energy (BAE). BAE is a form of natural and pure energy derived directly from the Sun. Using a proprietary technology it is harnessed, balanced and stored by integration into natural minerals extracted from the earth. BAE is a scientific breakthrough that is revolutionizing life the world over. This energy is pure, natural, non-magnetic and biologically enhancing. More importantly, using a proprietary technology, the energy can be reproduced and 'stored' by infusion and integration into minerals, metals and liquids. Objects infused with BAE become energized. Some known beneficial effects of infusing BAE :

- destroy and inhibit the growth of cancer cells;
- reduce and alleviate pain in the human body;
- revitalise plants and soil to achieve accelerated growth;
- increase the efficiency and power of your motor vehicles;

- keep living cells alive longer;
- neutralise air contamination and reduce water pollution;
- improve your general health;
- counter the effects of the various harmful radiations integral to our daily life;
- increases sexual prowess and virility.....

I. FAQ- OILS

1. Base Oils FAQ

What is the difference between a base oil and an infused oil?

Base oils are precious oils extracted from fruits, nuts and seeds. They are rich in essential fatty acids, lecithin, vitamins and vital substances. They are used because they have a composition similar to the natural properties of the sebaceous matter of the skin. Infused oils are base oils in which additional flowers and/or herbs have been steeped for several weeks. The infused oils contain not only the active ingredients of the base oil, but also those of additional plants. Infused oils, such as Lavender oil, are particularly excellent for hair and scalp care as is Calendula oil for face and body care.

I am allergic to peanuts. Should I be concerned about the peanut oil used in certain products?

Most base oils from Blue Oak Valley do not contain peanut oil. As it is our commitment that only the finest and purest of oils and ingredients are used in our products any trace of proteins that may cause allergies are removed using sophisticated filtration techniques. While the likelihood of an allergic reaction to the peanut oil used is extremely low, we suggest you discuss this issue with your doctor before using.

2. Pure Essential Oils FAQ

What are the 'essential' in essential oil mean?

Essential refers to the characteristic essence of the fragrance that makes it distinct and unusual. The most popular way to collect the essential oil is through steam distillation. Steam is used to help release droplets of oil. Together the droplets of condensed water and oil collect in a container where the oil floats to the surface (the water part is called hydrosol or floral water). Cold pressing is another method, commonly used for extracting citrus oils. The rinds are ground or chopped and then pressed to release a watery mixture of essential oil and liquid. Eventually, the oil separates and is ready to be bottled. We presently also work with our partners Feyecon Holland to employ SFE with CO2 technology for the extraction of plant oils.

What does top note, heart note and base note mean in aromatherapy?

Cool, fresh and invigorating, top notes, such as citrus oils, only last a short time and can enhance concentration. Lavender, Ylang-Ylang, Rose, Jasmine and other flower oils along with woody or spicy scents are heart notes. Known to harmonize and balance, they're also sensually stimulating and last longer than the top notes. The longest lasting base notes are relaxing and grounding and they are often come from roots or resinous oils.

What does 'absolute' mean when talking about an essential oil?

Referring to the method of extraction, absolutes are very intense scents created when a plant's essential oil cannot be gathered through steam distillation. Often used for Jasmine, Tuberose, Mimosa and other precious flowers, the essential oil is extracted through a process that involves chemical solvents. They are very potent and only 1 - 2 drops are needed to blend with 50 ml base oil.

How are essential oils absorbed into the body?

Through the nose the scent is transported into your olfactory mucous membrane sending electrical impulses to the brain, which affect both body functions and emotions. During a massage or aroma bath the essential oils are absorbed into the skin and enter the blood circulation. Finally, some essential oils can be taken internally. However we do not advise this and recommend consulting a physician who is also knowledgeable in aromatherapy if you are considering using essential oils internally.

Should I avoid using any essential oils in the sun?

Some essential oils increase photosensitivity and should not be used before sun exposure. These include – but aren't limited to – Angelica Root, Bergamot, Bitter Orange, Clementine, Grapefruit, Lime, Mandarin, Orange and Lemon.

Why do the same essential oils sometimes smell different?

Similar to how a type of wine differs depending on the vineyard and year bottled, essential oils are different in quality and strength. As plants are grown with changing and different conditions such as weather and soil, the quality of a fragrance can vary. Only standardized industry oils that are very often treated to be so, continually smell the same.

What essential oils should I avoid during pregnancy?

During pregnancy any essential oils that mimic a hormonal response should be avoided as a precautionary measure. These oils include – but aren't limited to – Basil, Camphor, Hyssop, Pennyroyal, Sage, Savory, Thuja, Wintergreen, Clary Sage, Rosemary, Juniper, Thyme, Bay Leaf, Tarragon and Aniseed. Always consult your aroma therapist and/or physician before using essential oils when pregnant or breastfeeding.

Can essential oils be dangerous?

Essential oils can be powerful tools so always be cautious when using them. Never use essential oils directly on the skin without diluting in a base oil. Also don't use them in high concentrations or take internally without the explicit advice of a health practitioner. We do not offer any essential oils that are potentially hazardous.

Are allergies a concern with essential oils?

People have allergic reactions to many different substances, including essential oils. It is worth testing the essential oil before using it for body care. Blend 1 drop of essential oil with about 10 drops of a base oil such as Almond oil, and apply to the inside of your forearm. If your skin turns red, please do not use this essential oil.

What essential oils can be used directly on the skin?

Undiluted essential oils should *never* be used on the skin. Always dilute them with a base oil or emulsifier. Please seek the advice of a natural health practitioner before using an essential oil you are unsure about. And never touch the eyes or mucous membranes such as the nose. Essential oils such as Lavender and Tea tree are generally accepted to be safe to use topically, however caution should always be exercised when using any essential oil, common or otherwise.

What is the “fragrance” or “parfum” listed in the ingredients?

European regulations require that pure essential oil scents are listed as "Fragrance/Parfum". However all of the fragrances found in products sold by Blue Oak Valley are blended with only the purest ingredients and essential oils. No synthetic fragrance or perfume ingredients are ever included.

II. Body FAQ

What can I do to prevent or remove stretch marks?

Although there is no way to completely prevent stretch marks or get rid of them once you have them, using a cream or oil full of cell-strengthening ingredients such as Birch, Shea butter and Wheat Germ oil can help fade or prevent marks.

What do you recommend for eczema?

As eczema is often painful and itchy, look for products that will calm and soothe skin with anti-inflammatory ingredients. A few of these include Viola Tricolor, Chamomile, Grape Seed extract and Calendula. In terms of preventing eczema flare-ups, they can be triggered by anything from specific foods to the detergent used to wash your clothes, so it's important to try to identify the cause in addition to treating the symptoms.

What do you recommend for psoriasis?

You can help ease discomfort and calm skin by soaking in a tub full of warm water and oil, Epsom salts or Dead Sea salts. Follow immediately by moisturizing skin while it's still moist. Look for gentle products that soothe flare ups with Calendula, Neem and Burdock Root as these plants are known for reducing inflammation, irritation and itching. Refer to our [Psoriasis Solutions](#) section for more information and specific product recommendations.

Is body oil better than lotion for treating extremely dry skin?

Yes. Although using a lotion is better than doing nothing, a body oil (unlike a lotion) is water-free so all of the nurturing and moisturizing ingredients get absorbed into your skin to help transform dry skin into soft and healthy skin. Also try mixing a few drops of body oil into your lotion to give it additional hydrating properties. In Europe body oils are more commonly used, but in North America lotions tend to be more popular.

What's the difference between all of the different body moisture formulas?

When it comes to body hydrators, there are many different types to choose from. The main difference is the thickness of a product, which is determined by the concentration of plant oils versus the amount of water or other base ingredient such as Aloe Vera. Secondly, key ingredients are different and thus the therapeutic benefit changes from product to product. And finally, scent plays a key role in the decision.

Body milks and lotions are usually the lightest option as they have a higher water content and less oil. So these products tend to evaporate faster from the body.

Body creams (or crèmes) contain a much higher concentration of oils than milks or lotions to moisture more deeply.

Body butters typically contain high amounts of plant oils that solidify at room temperature but melt when they are heated on your body. Shea, Mango and Cocoa butters for example moisturize as intensely as a liquid oil but with the convenience of a solid product.

Body Oils are made up of a variety of base oils. These precious oils, extracted from fruit, nuts and seeds, have a composition similar to the natural properties of the sebaceous matter of your skin. So they effectively strengthen skin's natural defences. They are rich in essential fatty acids, lecithin, vitamins and vital substances. Containing no water, they absorb into the skin (instead of evaporating) and deeply moisturize for an extended length of time.

When is the best time to use a body oil or lotion?

Ideally you should use a body lotion or oil after a shower or bath when the skin is still damp. This allows your skin to better draw in the moisturizing properties of the product. However these products are great for hydrating whenever you need it. And body oils in particular are perfect for soothing massages.

Body Moisturizers FAQ

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Body Exfoliators & Scrubs FAQ

How do I get rid of cellulite?

In addition to a healthy diet, regular exercise and drinking plenty of water you can help reduce the appearance of cellulite by dry brushing skin in a circular motion to stimulate circulation. Combine this with products containing specific plant ingredients that help remove water at the cellular level, increase skin's elasticity and reduce swelling. Look for scrubs, gels, body oils and lotions blended with Birch, Green Tea, Rosemary, Seaweed and Juniper.

Is there such a thing as too much scrubbing?

Yes. Although exfoliating your body buffs away dead cells to soften your body and allow your moisturizer to penetrate better, scrubbing too often or too harshly can aggravate and irritate skin. This is especially important for softer areas of the body including the chest, stomach, etc. or if you have delicate or sensitive skin. Our products are all extremely gentle and some can even be used daily. However don't press the formulas too hard into your skin and instead let the natural scrubbing properties do the work. This applies when exfoliating your face as well.

Body Washes & Shower Gels FAQ

My organic body wash doesn't lather as much as my old conventional product. Does this mean it isn't cleaning as well?

No, it means that it doesn't contain too harsh chemicals that create bubbles. Organic cleansers use plant-based surfactants to create tight cleansing foam. The efficacy of our Lilly brand cleansers is twice that of conventional brands.

III. Face FAQ

Why is "organic" important in skin care?

First, organic is the 'real' natural. Since there is no definitive rule on marketing natural products in the industry, many manufacturers try to increase sales by promoting products as natural when they're anything but. If you want a truly natural product – instead of one made with lab-created synthetics – buy one that has a third-party body care organic certification on it. Plus generally speaking certified organic products aren't made with petroleum-based ingredients or synthetic chemicals. Nor are they genetically modified or grown with synthetic pesticides, herbicides and

fertilizers and sewage sludge. Synthetic pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers are damaging to the environment, your health and your skin.

Do organic products actually contribute to healthier skin?

Organic products are most definitely healthier for the skin. Humans have similar cell metabolism and life processes as plants. Taking this into consideration products from Blue Oak Valley are made with plant based ingredients to provide the ideal nutrition required to maintain a youthful complexion and assist in skin regeneration: Includes antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, carotenoids, herbal extracts, flavonoids, essential fatty acids and polyphenols. Petroleum derivatives, synthetic preservatives, fragrances and colours do not contribute to healthier skin. Synthetic ingredients may be able to perform the same basic functions, but they don't offer additional therapeutic benefits from the nurturing vitamins, antioxidants, minerals and essential fatty acids

Do organic skin care products really cost more than mainstream skin care products?

There actually isn't much difference between an average product on Blue Oak Valley and department store options. There are plenty of cheaper options available in drugstores, but they're often mostly made with cheap chemical ingredients and additives. We only carry top-quality products with pure and organic ingredients that are better for your body and health.

When should I start using 'anti-aging' products?

As a general rule it's good to start using anti-aging products at 30 to help prevent fine lines and wrinkles and even younger if you have dry skin. With plant-based skincare, you can use anti-aging skincare at a young age because of the nurturing antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and oils. These ingredients will protect against free radicals and environmental damage. However when reading the product description check to make sure it's appropriate for use under 30. And if your skin is oily or acne-prone make sure the product isn't too heavy or rich.

Can I use different products from different brands together?

There is no evidence that using products for multiple brands together in your routine will make them any less effective. At Blue Oak Valley, the products are all plant-based, so there is no conflict with ingredients. However it is important that you use products that are right for your skin type regardless of brand.

I just started using your products, why am I breaking out?

This may happen when transitioning to very pure products. They help activate the skin, encouraging it to function as intended, which may allow suppressed, underlying conditions to surface. Our products allow skin to breathe and detoxify. As the skin returns to a balanced state, the symptoms will subside. However keep in mind it is possible that you may be allergic to an ingredient in the product. People can be allergic to plant-based ingredients, as they can with synthetic ones. We fully accept returns for used and opened products for 60 days after you've purchased it. Call us and we'll help you return it and find something new. Usually an allergic reaction consists of raised bumps and is easy to identify.

How long until I see a noticeable effect on my skin?

It depends on your skin condition, the products used and your lifestyle and diet. A daily regimen of cleansing, toning and moisturizing can produce noticeable effects within several days. We

suggest using products for at least one or two weeks to allow skin to acclimate. A healthy diet, exercise and plenty of water will also benefit skin.

What should a proper skin care routine look like?

Your skin care routine should support and enhance your skin's natural functions by naturally encouraging it to balance and heal itself. Most organic products use beneficial plant ingredients that directly address the underlying conditions rather than just the symptoms.

Daytime: Minimally you should surface and optimally deep cleanse the skin, use a toner and finish with a moisturizer. To get more from your skin and a bigger 'glow' use a serum and eye cream before you moisturize. If you are going outside in warm climate, finish with a light-feeling sunscreen.

Evening: Begin by surface cleansing to remove the day's grime and makeup, then follow with a facial toner to give the skin extra hydration. Next you can add a serum or moisturizer (preferably a night-specific option) and an eye cream if desired. However some companies believe the skin needs to properly breathe at night to benefit from its natural regeneration process. Kirstin follows this philosophy and doesn't use a moisturizer at night. So if you follow that philosophy after toning you'd only finish with a very light serum and eye cream. The preference is yours.

Special Weekly Treatment: A facial mask can benefit your skin as needed, but as a general rule use only once a week. We recommend using a mask at night when you have more time to relax and can give your skin a break from make-up. After cleansing apply a mask, leave mask on approximately 10-15 minutes (or as directed on the packaging), rinse with warm water and apply a facial toner and/or night conditioning product.

Is it possible to put too many types of products on my face?

Yes. You don't want to clog your pores, preventing skin from breathing. Organic products are very concentrated and only a small amount is needed. Start with the basics –cleansing, toning and moisturizing –and then add more depending on your skin type, age, skin concerns and sensitivity. An eye treatment product and a mask or serums can be added on once you have a proper daily regime in place.

What do you recommend for wrinkles and fine lines?

You'll want to try a richer, creamier face wash followed by a hydrating toner. Pick a moisturizer with anti-aging plant ingredients full of antioxidant-rich seed oils and other nurturing ingredients. An eye cream should be used daily to diminish wrinkles and prevent new ones from forming. Also treat skin with a firming or exfoliating mask and be sure to wear sunscreen whenever going outdoors.

Cleansers and Exfoliators FAQ

What's the difference between foaming, gel, lotion/milk, cream and exfoliating cleansers?

Foaming cleansers won't remove makeup but are great for cleansing away surface dirt and often leave you with that 'squeaky-clean' feel. Most foaming cleansers on Blue Oak Valley have tight bubbles without too much foam because we don't allow the ingredients needed to create big foam. Can be used morning and night. Typically used for more combination, oily or acne-prone skin. Often foaming cleansers tend to be slightly drying.

Gel cleansers also don't remove makeup effectively and are typically used for more oil or acne-prone skin. Gel cleansers can sometimes be slightly drying if you have skin that's less oily. Can be used morning and night.

Lotion or milk cleansers usually remove makeup and are light to mid-weight formulas perfect for combination, normal and sometimes-dry skin types. Can be used morning and night.

Creamy cleansers are the thickest surface cleansers and are the most effective for removing makeup. Can be used morning and night.

Makeup Removers are either creamy cleansers or formulas designed specifically to remove makeup even in the eye area. Used as needed.

Exfoliants are quite different from any of the above mentioned and are generally scrubs or peels. They should never be used to remove makeup and used no more than a few times a week. Use them gently on your skin to prevent unwanted irritation. Never scrub hard or for long. Our Felicity exfoliators suggest you actually massage in a press-and-release rolling circular motion with your fingers rather than scrub at all. Best used in the morning after cleansing with a surface cleanser.

How do I find the right cleanser for my skin type?

For **dry** skin types, try a creamy or heavier lotion cleanser that will double as a makeup remover. The plant oils in the cream-based cleanser will moisturize your skin while cleansing it. Also try exfoliating 1-3 times a week.

Normal and combination skin types have more options, but most typically will need a lotion or milk cleanser. However feel free to try foaming or creamy cleansers. Also exfoliate 1-3 times a week.

For **oily or acne-prone** skin types, foaming cleansers and gel-based cleansers are your best bet. Look at the product descriptions for key words such as pre-tightening, antibacterial and antimicrobial. A few good plant ingredients for healing to look for include Tea tree and Manuka honey. For acne-prone skin, be gentle with exfoliation or avoid it all together to prevent irritating the skin. For oily skin, exfoliation is important, particularly using the press-and-release rolling motion to suction sebum from the pores for a deeper cleanse. Avoid over-washing and limit to twice daily. Exfoliate 2-4 times a week.

Those with **sensitive** skin need to read product descriptions to learn which cleansers are specific for your needs. Lotions or creamy cleansers are usually your best bet. Avoid exfoliants or use a delicate exfoliator applying it with the gentle press-and-release rolling method. If exfoliating irritates your skin, stop using it immediately.

Mature skin types should use a creamy cleanser to help add essential moisture and quench parched, or papery dry skin. Exfoliating 2-4 times a week is essential to help shed dulling dead skin cells for a more youthful, glowing complexion.

What is exfoliation and how often is it recommended?

Your skin renews each day as cells push upwards until they reach the outer layer of skin. These dead cells can sit on the skin clogging pores and causing a dull complexion. Exfoliating helps physically remove these dead skin cells to reveal more radiant, fresher skin.

Especially with **dry skin**, extra layers of dead skin cells won't allow your moisturizer to effectively penetrate the deeper skin layers to truly hydrate and treat your skin. That's why

regular exfoliation allows your moisturizer to do its job much better. Try exfoliating 1-3 times a week in the morning after a quick surface cleanse.

Normal and combination skin types will benefit from regular exfoliation by achieving softer, smoother and glowing skin. However avoid over-exfoliating and only use these products between 1-3 times a week in the morning after a quick surface cleanse.

Sensitive and acne-prone skin types should avoid exfoliation. If you must use one, make sure it's extremely gentle and exfoliate only once every other week to once a week in the morning depending on how your skin is reacting.

Oily skin types should exfoliate using the press-and-release rolling cleansing method to pull all of the sebum and other debris out of your pores. Try exfoliating 2-4 times a week in the morning after a quick surface cleanse.

The **massage in a circular motion** of exfoliating should be used when applying the Felicity Exfoliant paste. It encourages the lymph system's cleansing functions for radiant skin. Dampen your face with warm water and mix 1/2" Cleansing Cream with a few drops of water. Beginning at the forehead, press the product, rolling outward from the center and lifting as you roll. The mild suction created helps remove dead cells, dirt and oil. Work downward and outward with this press and roll motion for 1-3 minutes. Rinse with warm water and finish with a cool splash.

Is there anything wrong with using a bar of soap to cleanse my face?

There are different tools for different jobs. Although some bar soaps are designed specifically for your face and are pH-balanced as such, others aren't. It is not recommended that you use a body soap to cleanse your face.

Is it better to use one type of cleanser in the AM vs. PM?

Yes and no. It's best to use your **surface cleanser at night** to remove dirt followed by a makeup remover if necessary. In the morning, after your skin has gone through its renewal process you can use that same surface cleanser. If you're exfoliating, use it after your **surface cleanser in the morning**. After cleansing always apply a facial toner to hydrate your skin.

How often should I wash my face?

In general it's recommended that you wash your face 1-2 times a day, typically in the evening, and if needed in the morning. And exfoliate 1-4 times a week depending on your skin type.

Do I need a specific cleanser to remove eye makeup?

It depends on the type of cleanser you use. Creamy cleansers not only remove dirt, oil and face make-up, they also typically remove mascara and other eye makeup. Lotions and milk cleansers can also sometimes remove eye makeup. Whereas lighter formulas such as gels and foams will remove dirt and face makeup but don't have enough oil to effectively remove 'stubborn' makeup around the eye area. Check the product's description for warnings against using it around the eye area.

A good indicator of makeup-removing power is a high plant oil content and thick formula. Another trick for very effectively removing eye makeup is to use a pure and gentle base oil such as Almond oil or an unscented lip balm. The next step is hydrating your skin with a facial toner.

What's the difference between a surface cleanser and a deep cleanser?

Surface cleansers remove the dirt, and makeup from the top layers of your skin. And deep cleansers pull gunk from within the pores giving a deeper cleanse. Deep cleansers do not (and should not be used to) remove makeup, and aren't as effective as removing surface dirt. Follow by hydrating your skin with a facial toner.

How long will my cleanser last? And how much should I use?

For a surface cleanser use a quarter-sized amount (or 2mL) per application. You'll find you use more when removing makeup. Depending on the size of the bottle, how frequently you use it and how much you use, a cleanser should last you 2-4 months. After cleansing, follow with a hydrating facial toner.

How do I remove the cleanser from my face?

We recommend using water to remove your cleanser. Sometimes people recommend using a tissue or damp facial sponge to remove your cleanser, but this will only smear dirt and debris around your skin instead of properly removing it.

If I wear makeup, do I need a separate cleanser to remove makeup?

Depending on your skin type you may need a separate makeup remover. If you use a gel or foaming cleanser you'll need to wipe away eye makeup with different product formulated to specifically remove eye makeup or pure Almond oil.

If you use a heavier creamy cleanser you may not need another product. This is because the more oil in the cleanser, and the more effective at removing eye makeup. Follow by hydrating your skin with a facial toner.

Eyes FAQ

Why is it important to use an eye cream?

The skin around the eyes is very delicate, thin, and susceptible to damage. It's also among the first places we see changes in our appearance, because of its thinness. An eye cream can help to target certain concerns you may have now or prevent future concerns. For example dark circles and puffiness can be reduced with eye products designed to improve circulation. Or help fine lines with a product that incorporates plants with natural firming properties.

What's the difference between an eye gel, cream, treatment and balm?

An eye gel is a highly absorbent hydrating serum, best for oily, acne and sometimes combination skin types. A cream offers more protection from environmental influences and delivers more moisture into the skin. It's usually good for all skin types however people with oily skin may want to avoid a thicker formula and choose lighter creams. Best for normal to dry and mature skin types, a balm offers the most protections from external elements while moisturizing.

How exactly should I apply an eye gel?

After cleansing and toning, apply a small amount of eye cream to your fingertip. Using a gentle tapping motion, lightly trace circles around the eye starting from the inner point of the eyebrows moving under the eyes and upwards toward the outer brows.

When should I start using an eye gel?

It's fine to start at any age. After all, age has little to do with wrinkles around the eye area it's a combination of heredity, abuse from the sun and other external factors. Using an eye gel allows you to protect the skin around the eye, preventing future damage. If you spend a lot of time outdoors it may be a good idea to use an eye cream at an early age as the eye area is especially delicate and tends to dry more easily. At around 25, skin starts losing elasticity causing aging around the eyes. At this point you can opt for a more targeted line-preventing treatment. Also remember to wear sunglasses year round to prevent sun damage.

Should I use an eye gel day and night?

Yes. During the day you may want a lighter formula to not interfere with the performance of your eye makeup. At night you can use a richer cream to deeply protect, revive and nurture the eye area. Keep in mind that some brands advocate that the skin benefits from not using moisturizers at night in order to properly breathe and regenerate.

Can I use my moisturizer around my eye area instead of an eye gel?

We recommend using a separate eye cream because they are specifically designed for that purpose. The eye area is more delicate and sensitive than the other parts of your face. Your regular moisturizer may have ingredients that can potentially cause irritation.

Face Oils FAQ

Why use facial oil and how do they work?

Facial oil is water free and only contains pure plant oils, rich in antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids and other valuable nutrients for the skin. A typical face oil will include a nurturing base oil such as Jojoba or Almond as well as potent seed oils such as Pomegranate, Rose Hip, Camellia, Grape, Black Cumin and Pumpkin. However some face oils contain only pure seed oils. Facial oils work by deeply penetrating the skin and delivering these natural plant ingredients. Immediately skin becomes softer and more radiant, and feels velvety soft. After time lines may be softened and skin will have a youthful glow. Facial oils are wonderful anti-aging products as they support, protect and help regenerate skin cells. And since they're all natural, they don't clog pores.

When should I use facial oil?

Facial oil should be used in the morning in place of a moisturizer. Or to enrich your usual moisturizer when your skin is extra parched or needs a little more care, blend in a couple drops of face oil. At night you can also use facial oil if you choose. However some experts believe that skin should be left free of a moisturizer or oil at night – when your skin naturally regenerates – to allow it to properly breathe. It is also thought that, at night, your skin can become addicted to using a moisturizer, which slowly halts its own production of moisture.

Why are some facial oils in a capsule vs. a bottle?

The biggest difference is preserving the product. Once something is exposed to air the oxidation process begins, making the formula prone to breakdown and contamination. Since you twist open a new capsule every day, you're getting the freshest product possible. But that's not to say a bottle isn't good. Just remember to store facial oils properly by keeping them out of the sun and in a dark, cool location. Also make sure they have proper expiration dates use them beforehand. No expiration date most likely means the product is filled with heavy preservatives.

I keep seeing 'seed oil', what is it?

Seed oils are potent healing oils that are pressed from seeds. They include Pomegranate, Rose Hip, Camellia, Grape, Black Cumin, Pumpkin, Raspberry, Cranberry and Quince - among others. One of the most beneficial ingredients you'll find at Blue Oak Valley, seed oils are typically loaded with antioxidants, which fight off cancer-causing free radicals. They're also extremely high in essential fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and polyphenols to promote a healthy complexion and prevent the signs of aging. Since they support and protect skin cells, seed oils are a perfect option if you're looking for natural anti-aging ingredients. They are also typically more expensive than base oil.

Mask FAQ

What is the difference between a clay, cream and gel mask?

Clay based masks are typically more detoxifying and purifying to draw impurities out of the skin and absorb toxins. Clay has exfoliating properties and can also help reduce the appearance of large pores. These formulas are best for oily, combination or normal skin types. However some clay masks are blended with very moisturizing plant oils making them good for dry and mature skin types. Clay masks make a perfect spot treatment for acne. Simply dab a bit of the mask directly on the spot.

Cream based masks are usually thick cream formulas that quickly replenish lost moisture. They also deeply nourish skin to help reduce fine lines and soothe. Choose a cream mask if you have normal to dry skin, mature or sensitive skin.

Gel masks, such as an Aloe Vera-based formula normally soaks into skin immediately to hydrate, firm and energize. The nurturing ingredients dramatically add hydration and moisture for radiant, supple skin. They are typically good for all skin types.

How long do I typically leave a mask on?

On average between 10-20 minutes. However all masks vary so it's important to read the instructions.

How often should I be using a mask?

A mask should be used once a week. But all formulas vary slightly so be sure to read the instructions. Even using a mask once a month makes a difference!

Do I need to prepare my skin a certain way before putting a mask on?

You should always apply a facial mask to a cleansed face. For an even more beneficial experience do a facial steam bath after cleansing your skin *before* applying the mask. This opens pores to help

the mask detoxify skin and replenish it with plant nutrients. Then immediately follow with a mask of your choice.

What are the different types of clays used in masks and what are their benefits?

Clay is naturally rich in silica, iron, calcium, magnesium and other minerals. Clays are ideal to do everything from calm sensitive skin to preventing acne. There is a wide range of clays that each offers specific advantageous properties. The following are a few examples:

Bentonite Clay – Helps reverse the appearance of sun damage and diminishes signs of aging.

Halloysite Clay – Aids oily and acne-prone skin by removing oil, clearing blackheads and gently exfoliating.

Hectorite Clay – Absorbs dirt and oil, stimulates blood flow and protects skin. It's usually non-irritating and can be used by most skin types

Kaolin Clay – Rebalances oily skin and absorbs impurities. It also deep cleanses to clarify.

White Clay – Effectively moisturizes, detoxifies and soothes

Do I have to mix the mask myself?

Our mask is pre-mixed which means they can be applied directly onto your face. Try mixing with organic goat milk yogurt or raw honey instead of water. Both of these ingredients contain valuable enzymes; have antibacterial properties and work on all skin types. Mix 1 full teaspoon of mask with 1 tsp of water, organic yogurt or honey. Be sure to read the instructions for each specific mask.

How do I know which mask to use for my skin type and concerns?

Carefully read the product description and ingredient list to decipher if a particular mask is suited for your specific skin needs. If you have combination skin, you can use two masks simultaneously. For example, use a purifying mask on your t-zone and one that is more hydrating on your cheeks and neck.

Is there a special technique to remove a mask?

Simply wash the mask off with warm water using a facial sponge or washcloth. You can also dip your hands into water and massage the water on your skin using circular motions. Be sure to remove all traces and use a toner afterward.

Moisturizers FAQ

What's the difference between a lotion, cream, and balm facial moisturizer?

The difference is in the thickness. A lotion is the lightest with lower oil content and usually water based (though some can be made with Aloe Vera instead of water). Creams vary from medium to heavy weight and have higher oil content. Balms are water-free and often formulated with oil and beeswax. Face balms are usually quite protective and better for cold weather. Foot balms vary from this definition and are often more of a cream.

Why are some moisturizers more expensive than others?

The simple answer is quality and size. It's good to look at the unit price comparison. For example, with a moisturizer that costs MYR60 for 80mL (MYR0.75/mL) versus one at MYR40 for 30mL (MYR1.33/mL) you're actually getting a better deal with the higher priced one. Quality comes into play because our brands simply use better quality, more targeted ingredients. The more rare an ingredient, or therapeutically-rich, or harder to extract, the more expensive it is. But beyond that, some brands want to seem exclusive and luxurious and create their prices to suit, just as some brands cater more to a price conscious client.

Why should I use a moisturizer?

Moisturizers hydrate and feed moisture to your skin while protecting it from environmental damage. Facial toners are also important because they help draw your moisturizer into the skin. Hydrated skin cells mean better-looking skin. Think of it like this, a raisin is really a grape without hydration. The same idea applies to your skin cells.

Do I apply a moisturizer under or over my sunscreen, or do I even need a moisturizer if I'm wearing sunscreen?

Apply your mineral sunscreen after your moisturizer. However, some sunscreens have enough hydrating ingredients to eliminate a moisturizer altogether. And keep in mind that some products made with essential oils and minerals (such as mineral makeup) contain natural sun filters such as titanium dioxide.

Should I put a moisturizer on before applying my makeup?

Your skin should be 'prepped' for applying makeup by being cleansed, toned and moisturized. Healthy-looking skin gives off a wonderful glow.

Are some moisturizers better for addressing different skin types or concerns?

Yes and no. For skin types, a general rule is a light lotion or cream for oily skin, a mid-weight one for normal and combination skin, and a moisturizer rich in plant oils for drier skin. When choosing a moisturizer determine your needs and look for key words that specifically address your needs such as firm, clarify, purify, brighten, smooth or soothe. As you learn more about plant ingredients, you'll discover that certain ingredients are known to provide particular benefits. We offer three types of moisturizers: Normal, Dry and Oily skin

Should I use a moisturizer with an SPF factor?

Yes and no. If you experience limited sun exposure (just remember to get your vitamin D) you don't need a moisturizer with sun protection. It's better to get a moisturizer targeted specifically to what you need. But if you're outside a lot, and live in hot climates definitely seek SPF protection. It is nearly impossible to get a lightweight facial moisturizer with SPF that is organic and not tinted. So we often recommend you use a lightweight sunscreen instead or in addition to your moisturizer. Most moisturizers that have higher SPF factors contain synthetic sun filters that are absorbed by your body (these are not sold by Blue Oak Valley for that reason).

What is the difference between a facial moisturizer, facial oil, and a serum or gel?

A *moisturizer* is a cream or a lotion that is a blend of water, oil and plant extract.

Oil contains no water, only plant oils rich in antioxidants, vitamins and essential fatty acids. They also penetrate deeply into the skin leaving it velvety soft.

A *serum* contains less oil, more liquid and most often contains very potent concentrated plant ingredients without being heavy. Serums absorb almost immediately leaving your skin feeling hydrated, brightened, tightened and toned.

A *gel* is very similar to a serum and often contains a plant gel such as Aloe Vera as the base. It also usually absorbs quickly for instantly hydrated skin.

Should I use a moisturizer at night before I go to bed?

It depends on the individual. Some brands advocate that you *shouldn't moisturize at night-time* because it doesn't allow your skin to properly breathe during the skin's natural night-time rejuvenation period. Regularly using moisturizers at night can cause your skin to become dependant on this external product. Over time it will slow down producing its own moisture, causing further problems.

Our moisturizers can be used day and night.

What makes a beauty product anti-aging?

As far as natural, plant-based beauty products go, there are vital nutrients, mineral, vitamins, essential fatty acids and oils found in plants that are highly beneficial to the skin. Other natural and powerful ingredients include antioxidants found in Green Tea and a variety of seed oils such as Grape, Pumpkin and Cranberry. Antioxidants help fight off free radicals that contribute to skin damage to slow down the aging process. When you feed your skin these beneficial plants it 'eats' them up and often creates change at a cellular level by rejuvenating or making the cell network stronger. The end result is radiant, hydrated and younger-looking skin that glows.

Should I use a moisturizer on my neck area?

Definitely. This area is often forgotten and it's one of the first to show signs of age (along with the hands and eyes). We suggest using a serum on your neck as you apply one to your face, making sure to smooth it down towards your chest. Afterwards apply your facial moisturizer in the same manner. You may even consider bringing your body moisturizer or oil up to your neck as well.

IV. Hair FAQ

Why should I use an organic hair care product instead of a conventional one?

Conventional hair care products are typically one of the categories most riddled with plastics, silicones, petrochemicals and other unhealthy ingredients. They're bad for your hair, for your health and for your environment. Organic hair products offer a healthier alternative that can be more therapeutically beneficial for your hair, health and the environment.

Do you sell hair products that are okay for children and/or babies to use?

Yes. We carry specific shampoos that are formulated to be gentle enough for babies and children (you will see baby or child in the product name). However, as most of our shampoos and

conditioners are extremely gentle and natural, while we wouldn't recommend them for use on babies, they are safe for children. The Baby Kingdom range is specifically formulated for babies.

What products should I avoid if my hair is chemically treated?

Most products sold on Blue Oak Valley are fine for all hair types, included chemically treated hair.

Shampoos FAQ

Do "organic" shampoos & conditioners feel or perform differently than regular ones?

In short, often they do, but it depends on the product. It is important to realize that an organic shampoo is typically not going to lather up like a conventional one because it is not made with the same unnatural or unhealthy cleansing agents.

Many hair conditioners also feel different because they don't use synthetic anti-static ingredients. Hair care products are the hardest to formulate with pure food-based ingredients - though it is definitely happening, and can expect there to be more and more innovation within the organic hair care industry.

What's the deal with sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS), or sodium laureth sulfate (SLES)?

Commonly used in everything from shampoos to toothpastes, these chemicals are cheap to use and are added to products as a foaming agent because most consumers believe that the more bubbles a product produces, the more effective it is.

However they are known to commonly cause irritation to the skin and scalp. SLS can be made from natural or synthetic sources; but even being made from natural sources, it is often considered too aggressive a detergent. SLES is made using ethylene oxide, a toxic petroleum derivative. None of the products available on Blue Oak Valley are formulated with these chemicals. They may not provide the amount of lather you're used to, but they'll still clean just as good, if not better.

Hair Conditioners FAQ

My hair is extremely dry, how can I add moisture?

First, reduce the number of times you shampoo your hair a week. Shampoos can strip hair of its natural moisture, making it appear dull. Look for thicker formula conditioners and use one every time you shampoo, leaving it on hair up to three minutes. You can even condition hair on days you don't shampoo. A weekly treatment will also help deliver hydration. Try adding the treatment to your hair as instructed and then cover hair with a hot towel. The heat will help open up the hair follicles, allowing the nourishing ingredients to better penetrate your hair. Or at the gym saturate your hair with an [organic hair oil](#) before entering the sauna. The heat helps the ingredients penetrate into the hair. Also use organic shampoos, conditioners and styling products that deliver moisturizing properties from plant ingredients that offer additional moisturizing properties.

My hair often looks greasy, what can I do about this?

Look for a shampoo targeted to clarify your hair. Don't skip conditioning hair, however only condition the ends and make sure to rinse thoroughly. Look for a light conditioner as opposed to a deep, concentrated formula. Avoid brushing your hair too vigorously and too often as this allows the oil to travel from the roots down to the ends. Also abstain from using too many styling products on your hair. Serums, balms and glosses can especially add to the appearance of greasy hair.

My hair is oily close to the scalp but dry at the ends. How to do I achieve balance?

This condition is more common than most people think, especially on those with long hair. The scalp produces oil, which is distributed to the parts nearby. And as the ends of your hair are the oldest and most fragile pieces, they are often damaged. To help balance hair out, apply only a small amount of shampoo and only to your scalp. After you've washed your scalp, massage the suds down to the ends and rinse well. Add moisturizing conditioner only to your ends and avoid the scalp area.

Hair Styling FAQ

What products can I use to control my frizzy hair?

Start by using a hydrating shampoo and conditioner. A leave-in conditioner can also help reduce frizz. Styling products such as creams, balms and glosses are specifically formulated to add shine and prevent frizz.

How do I add more volume to my hair?

Start by using a light shampoo and conditioner. Avoid adding conditioner to the roots of your hair, which will only weigh it down. To style, apply an organic volumizer or a light hair gel to the roots of your damp hair. Blow dry on a light setting. Avoid heavy styling products such as balms, waxes and pomades that will weigh hair down.

What's the difference between a styling cream, balm, gel and gloss?

The main difference is the texture of the product which in turn produces slightly different results. Styling creams and gels are very similar - they both add a light hold to hair and can be used both wet and dry. However gels are typically more potent in terms of holding power and are slightly stickier. Hair balms are thicker than gels and creams and are great for styling short hair or slicking back longer hair when creating up-dos. A gloss is a very concentrated product that coats hair strands to add shine. Only a small amount should be used, and never on the scalp. Instead try rubbing a tiny amount between your hands and lightly run your fingers through your hair to tame fly-aways.

What's so bad about using a hair spray?

Even if you're not using an eco-damaging aerosol can, conventional hairsprays are still dangerous. Only instead of being a danger to the planet, they're a danger to you. These chemical-laden sprays often contain toxic ingredients that enter the body when you breathe, literally coating the lungs which can cause potential health risks.

Hair Treatments FAQ

What do you recommend for hair loss and/or thinning hair?

Although it is normal to shed 50 to 100 hairs a day, some people experience excessive hair loss. Gradual thinning naturally occurs with age but other factors can include extreme stress, hormonal fluctuations or various medications. Although there is no organic product that promises to reverse hair loss, specific our hair products are formulated to stimulate hair follicles and strengthen hair while simultaneously deep conditioning.

My hair is pretty healthy, what can I do to keep it this way?

Continue your usual hair routine, making sure to use a deep treatment weekly or bi-monthly to strengthen and nurture hair. Try to avoid washing hair too often, as it can strip hair of its natural protective oils. Also try to avoid chemical treatments including straightening and single process color (highlights are less damaging), using too many heated styling tools, and being extremely aggressive when it comes to handling your hair.

I swim a lot, how can I keep my hair from drying out with all the chlorine or salt?

Both chlorine and salt can cause extreme damage to hair follicles if exposed regularly. Always thoroughly saturate hair with clean water before swimming. This water will get penetrated into the hair shaft, making it harder for the chlorine or salt water to seep in. Also try coating hair with a deep conditioner before swimming to further protect strands. After swimming rinse out the chlorine or salt water immediately and follow with a pure shampoo and rich, hydrating conditioner. Make sure to use a deep treatment once a week to strengthen hair and prevent damage.

How can I prevent or heal split-ends and breakage?

Once they happen, split ends cannot be completely repaired. However a nourishing conditioner can help smooth the hair shaft, making ends appear glossier. A styling product such as a gloss or cream can help mask the appearance of split ends. To prevent them avoid overusing heated styling tools such as hair dryers, curling irons and flat irons, as the extreme heat can damage the fragile ends. This is especially the case with wet hair, and it's a good idea to use a low heat setting on your hair dryer to avoid literally boiling the water within your hair. Rubber bands and clips also contribute to breakage, so only use gentle options and avoid using bands and clips daily. A weekly hair treatment, focusing on the dry, damaged areas can also help. Additionally, trim hair every 6-8 weeks to keep it shinier and healthy looking.

How often should I use a treatment on my hair?

Depending on your lifestyle and hair type, a treatment can be done 1-2 times a week or even once every other week. Extremely damaged hair, chemically treated hair and hair that is often exposed to wind, sun, chlorine and salt water should be treated more often. However even healthy hair will benefit from an occasional treatment.

What can I do to treat and prevent dry scalp and dandruff?

A chronic condition that causes excessive flaking and itching, dandruff can happen to anyone. To help prevent dandruff, avoid overusing styling products, including sprays, gels and mousses that create build up on the scalp. Instead focus on treating hair with targeted plant ingredients, including Tea Tree oil and Rosemary, which have been known to calm scalp conditions and reduce dandruff.

VII. Makeup FAQ

What makes mineral makeup so special?

Natural ingredients such as Titanium Dioxide and Zinc Oxide help absorb oil, provide opacity, reflect light and act as natural sunscreens. Mineral makeup also feels weightless on your skin. And although you'll get enough coverage to even out your skin tone and hide imperfections, the makeup is still sheer enough to let your skin radiate through. In fact the minerals themselves give skin a luminous glow and are known to have healing properties.

Will mineral cosmetics clog my pores?

No. They allow the skin to breathe easier, so they won't plug pores. Also unlike conventional makeup, which can become a breeding ground for bacteria and microbes, there's less chance of skin breaking out. Mineral makeup helps absorb oil, so it's a good choice for oily or acne-prone skin types.

There are so many brands of mineral makeup available, how do I know mine is truly pure?

If browsing elsewhere, read the ingredients. Truly pure mineral makeup contains no BHA, BHT, D & C Colorans, Eugenol, Formaldehyde, P-Phenylenediamine, Phthalates and Triethanolamine.

If I have extremely sensitive skin, can I wear mineral makeup?

Usually yes. Known to be amazingly gentle, people with rosacea, dryness and other skin sensitivity issues usually have no problems wearing mineral cosmetics. In fact they can help calm skin with anti-inflammatory minerals like Titanium Dioxide. Most mineral makeup also contains natural sunscreens, so they help protect against daily exposure to UVA and UVB light without any harsh chemicals.

What's the difference between loose and pressed powder?

Pressed powder is a solid formula that leaves a matte finish on the skin. It's easily portable and convenient for touch-ups. Loose powder is softer, finer and doesn't usually travel well. However it's more natural looking on the skin. Both formulas can be found in a variety of skin tone shades, which are ideal when you're not using foundation. Translucent (or colorless) powders work well when setting your foundation and won't alter the color.

What is the difference between tinted moisturizer and foundation?

Typically a foundation will offer more coverage than a tinted moisturizer. It will completely hide skin-for better or worse. This means not only your spots and discoloration, but your freckles too. A tinted moisturizer is not only more hydrating, it also allows for a more sheer application. So it evens skin tone while allowing your natural skin to shine through. If you have specific skin issues that aren't covered by a tinted moisturizer you can apply a spot concealer first.

Do I need a cream or liquid concealer?

When it comes to choosing a formula, it can all come down to simple preference. However there are a few guidelines you can follow. If under eye circles are your main complaint, try using a liquid concealer because it won't settle into the lines of your eyes. Cream concealers are wonderful at hiding blemishes. It just takes a little practice.

How do I cover blemishes?

Using a thin, pointed concealer brush and a cream or powder concealer dot the concealer *only* on the spot. Get a small amount of the product on the end of the brush and dot it into the center of the blemish. Then slowly blend it outward towards the outer edge of the blemish. A second layer may be needed. Then finish with a light dusting of powder to set the concealer.

How do I conceal under eye circles?

Apply several small dots of liquid concealer under your eyes. Use your fingers or a brush to lightly tap the color in. If you rub too harshly the color will just smear away and off the area you're trying to conceal. Make sure to blend the outer edges of the concealer area well. Add another layer if needed. It's better to add a few sheer layers rather than one thick, noticeable layer. Finish with a sheer powder to set the concealer. Use a very small amount, as too much will settle into the lines, making you look older.

Should I use a cream or powder blush?

It depends on your personal preference, skin type and coverage needs. A powder blush provides the densest coverage. It's also long lasting and is best for oily to normal skin types. Cream blush is slightly more sheer, to let your skin show through and can be smoothed on with your fingers. It's more hydrating and is suited for normal to dry skin. Some experts recommend layering the products together for color that goes the distance. Apply a cream blush and massage in the color-especially at the edges-to appear most natural. Follow with a light dusting of powder blush on top.

How do I use a bronzer and make it look natural?

The most important rule is to start light and layer for more depth. If you're wearing the bronzer right after you moisturize, make sure to let the moisturizer completely soak in first. Otherwise the powder will stick to damp areas. Using a powder brush lightly dust around your forehead, cheeks, nose and chin (where the sun naturally colors your face the most). After you've applied your bronzer make sure to follow up with a warm or rosy blush for a more realistic sun-kissed appearance. If your neck is an obviously paler shade, feel free to dust a little bronzer there. However if your face is more than a shade darker than the rest of your body, it's a sign you've used too much.

Makeup: Eyes

How can I fill in my eyebrows?

You can use a brow pencil (or eye liner) and lightly "draw in" the areas that need to be filled. However this option rarely looks realistic and can easily fade. A better option is using a colored powder that's three shades lighter than the darkest part of your hair. Alima Pure has a great range of natural-looking shades that will work. Use an angled brush to tap the color into your eyebrows.

Are natural mascaras waterproof?

No. The ingredients that make a mascara resistant to water are chemical related, so none of the mascaras featured here are completely waterproof. However many are formulated to last a very long time. And it may be necessary to remove them completely using a targeted makeup remover.

Can I use organic makeup if I wear contact lenses?

Yes. Natural cosmetics are formulated with pure mineral pigments and nurturing plant ingredients so they are generally safe for contact lens wearers. The gentle formulations rarely cause irritation and can actually benefit skin.

What's the difference between a pencil, cream, cake and liquid eye liner?

Pencils

The most widely used liner is also the easiest to use. The formula is also versatile because you can create a thin dramatic line or a softer smudged one. To use it, move the pencil from the inner corner outward in short strokes as close to the lash line as you can get. Use more pressure for darker results on the outer corners and lighter pressure on the inner corners.

Cream

Cream formulas are more intense than pencils but are easier to use than a liquid. Depending on how much makeup you usually wear, the results may be better suited for a nighttime look. To apply the cream liner, grab a small amount of the color onto the edge of an angled brush and pinch the tip into a thin point. Using short strokes, dab the tip of the brush along the lash line. The line can be a bit thicker at the outer corners to mimic thicker lashes and open up the eyes.

Cake

Cake eyeliner is super long lasting and can be used wet or dry. For a soft look get a small amount of product on an angled eyeliner brush and apply it to your eyes in short, precise strokes. When you're finished blend the edges. For a bit more impact lightly dampen the brush first. And for the most intensity, add a drop of water to the cake to create a liquid liner.

Liquid

The most difficult to use, liquid liner takes some practice. The formula lasts a long time and offers intense definition. Hold the liner applicator in one hand while using the other hand to pull your eyelid flat to remove any natural creases. Starting from the inside and going out apply the liquid as close to the lash line as you can get. Very slowly draw your line all at once. If you try to do it in sections you could end up with an uneven, jagged line.

How can I prevent my mascara from smudging, giving me "raccoon eyes"?

The obvious answer is to avoid rubbing your eyes, which can cause the mascara to flake off your lashes onto other areas. And although it's impossible to prevent mascara from completely staying only on your lashes, not applying the product to your lower lashes can help. The lower lashes smudge easier causing the under eye area to look shadowy and tired.

How can I wear more than one color of eye shadow at a time?

The easiest option is to stay in the same color palette and choose various depths of the same general shade. Try wearing a darker blue shade at the inner corners of your eyes. Apply a lighter shade towards the outer corners and blend the shades together. Rim your lids with a smoky dark blue liner and blend well. Or instead of going from side to side, layer your hues from bottom to top. Apply a light shade from the lid to the area slightly above your crease and blend. Follow

with a darker shade only on your eyelid. Another method is using shades that sit together on the color wheel. Green paired with gold and blue paired with lavender are two good examples.

Makeup: Lips

Is it true that some lipsticks contain lead? Is this harmful?

A study from the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics tested 33 brands of lipstick and found that more than half contained lead. And one third actually had more lead than allowed by the US Food and Drug Administration. Lead is most dangerous to children due to their developing brains and nervous systems, but it also poses threats to adults. In pregnant women lead can cross the placenta to cause birth defects or even miscarriage. Lead has also been linked to infertility issues (for men as well).

What are the main differences between a lipstick and lip gloss?

Although many products cross the line between the two, there are a couple general differences. A classic lipstick has more pigment, so the color will appear more true to what it looks like in the tube. Lipstick lasts longer than a gloss and can come in different varieties from mattes to shimmers. Typically a lipstick is also more drying than a gloss, although the natural options found here are formulated with hydrating plant ingredients. A lip gloss is usually sheer and the color will appear less saturated than how it appears in the tube. Glosses are even more moisturizing and leave lips slick. They are easily removed however and don't last nearly as long as a lipstick. For the best of both worlds you can apply a thin layer of gloss over your lipstick.

What's a lip stain and how do you use one?

More heavily pigmented than a traditional lipstick, a lip stain will last longer on your lips. Conventional lip stains do not add any moisture, and can leave lips feeling dry. Look for lip stain fortified with Vitamin E and Jojoba to hydrate while delivering brilliant color. Apply a stain with a lip brush or your finger (keep in mind it may stain your finger for awhile). You can layer the color for more intensity and/or finish with a balm or gloss on top for more shine.

Dark and bright lip color shades can be intimidating. How do I wear them?

Even if the color appears dramatic in the tube, it doesn't have to appear that way on your lips. For a toned down shade apply the lipstick directly from the tube or with a lip brush and blot well. Finish with a clear lip balm or gloss. Once you get used to the toned-down version, get a little more daring and try to wear it at full strength.

Is there a trick in knowing which lip color shades to buy?

Look for a color that's one or two shades darker than your bare lip shade. This color will add impact, while working with your natural skin tone. If you're looking for a shade of red, arguably the hardest lip color to shop for, find one that works with your undertones. Pink undertones should wear cherry reds, olive skin tones can wear fire-engine reds and dark skin looks good in deep reds.

Is it necessary to use a lip liner?

No. Using a lip liner is never absolutely necessary, however it provides a few benefits that can make the extra step worth it. Using a liner around the edge of your lips will help prevent your lipstick from bleeding to the lines around your mouth. Extremely long lasting, a lip liner can also be used to shade in your entire mouth before topping with a lipstick or lip gloss for added

staying power. If you're afraid your lipstick will fade before the liner, use a nude liner that's the same shade as your lips. It will help prevent bleeding yet won't leave that dreaded ring around the lips.

Can I use a lip balm with my lipstick?

Yes. Though using a lip balm under your lipstick will provide additional moisturizing benefits, it may also reduce the depth of pigmentation and allow it to fade faster. You can also use a lip balm over your lipstick to add a bit of shine.

Makeup: Tools

Do I really need to invest in makeup brushes?

It depends on the type of makeup you use, but usually yes. Some cosmetics such as eye shadow, liquid foundation and cream blush can be applied with your fingers. However most makeup requires a brush including mineral face powders. Also you'll get a smoother, more flawless application with a brush.

What are the basic brushes needed for everyday use?

From brow brushes to blending brushes, there are plenty to choose from. At the very least we recommend a large powder brush, a blush brush, a basic eye shadow brush and a concealer brush.

How often should I clean my makeup brushes?

Brushes not only build up makeup deposits, but they're a breeding ground for bacteria and should be washed regularly, at least once a month. When using liquid or cream makeup, brushes should be washed daily.

How do you clean makeup brushes?

There are specific brush cleaning products out there, but a simple shampoo or face cleanser will work just as well. Run water over the bristles and apply just a tiny drop of shampoo. Work the cleaning agent through the bristles, especially concentrating on the base. Rinse extremely well, making sure to get rid of the shampoo residue. Then gently squeeze out all of the water with a towel. Allow the bristles to air-dry fully. For large fluffy brushes, sit the handle so the bristles hang off a counter to dry. This will prevent them from conforming to the shape of the counter and flattening out. Also keep in mind not to let them dry right side up. The water will seep into the base of the brush, contributing to mould and bacteria.

VIII. Men FAQ

What's the difference between "men" and "women's" personal care products? Do men really need to use 'men' products?

No. Generally, there isn't a difference. The only difference in some cases is scent (by that we mean essential oils because we don't allow synthetic fragrances). Most skin care products are unisex and work just as well on men's skin as they do on women's skin. However some men find

they like certain scents in specific products better than others. So if you are a guy, use what works and look at the scent before you buy. Or call us if you are not sure. Most of our products have a neutral scent.

Is there something that can help my thinning hair?

Although there is no completely pure product that promises to reverse hair loss, specific hair products are formulated to stimulate hair follicles and strengthen hair while simultaneously deep conditioning.

How do you manage unruly eyebrows, moustaches or beards?

A simple hair balm can be used to help tame out of place hairs. Apply a very small amount of product onto your fingertips and use them to smooth and sculpt the area into place. Remember that less is more, so start with the least amount possible and add more if needed.

How do I get the perfect shave?

Always shave in the shower or after taking one as the steam softens and expands facial hairs. Dip a towel in very warm water, wring it out and drape on your face. After allowing the heat to further soften beard hairs for a moment, wash your face. A few times a week you should switch from your regular cleanser to an exfoliator, which will buff away dead skin cells allowing for a closer shave. Apply an even layer of shave cream or lotion over face and neck. Using a double or triple blade, start at the sideburns and work down in short strokes, shaving the same direction the hair grows. For the neck area, use your free hand to hold skin taut and shave upward. Save the hard-to-shave chin area for last. Finish by squeezing a dime-size amount of after-shave into the palm of your hand and massage it onto your face.

How do you prevent and treat razor burn?

Razor burn is often caused by using a blunt blade, applying too much pressure or by shaving too closely, too quickly or against the grain. To help prevent razor burn, always cleanse the face before shaving and exfoliate a few times a week to remove dead skin cells. This helps achieve a closer shave with just one stroke of the blade. Keep the face moist when shaving with a moisturizing shave gel or cream and apply minimal pressure to the area with the blade. After shaving avoid using harsh products that can irritate skin such as colognes and instead use a calming product to help heal or soothe razor burn.

Will an after shave tonic burn or clog my pores?

Many conventional after shave products contain high amounts of alcohol, which can cause a burning sensation to skin that's just been shaved. Use products that are formulated with soothing plant ingredients such as Calendula, Jojoba and Aloe Vera that gently heal. These products will not clog pores or cause breakouts on most individuals.

Why can't I find an organic anti-perspirant ?

Unlike conventional antiperspirant/deodorants, organic deodorants on Blue Oak Valley contain no aluminum, phalates or chemicals and won't clog pores. Classified as a drug by the FDA, antiperspirants prevent the body from excreting liquid with aluminum, considered a neurotoxin

by many that can potentially cause **DNA damage**. Our selection of natural deodorants contains plant ingredients that neutralize odor-causing bacteria without harming the body.

Why can't I use a bar soap to wash my face?

There are different tools for different jobs. Although some bar soaps are designed specifically for your face and are pH-balanced as such, others aren't. It is not recommended that you use a body soap to cleanse your face.

I'd like to find a new cologne, is there really a big difference between "mainstream" colognes and "organic" ones?

Mainstream colognes derive their fragrance components from chemicals and other ingredients that are considered hazardous. Our 100% pure fragrances contain unique and tantalizing blends created only with essential oils. They are gentler than conventional options and can be used on most sensitive and highly allergic skin types.