



BEAUTY ENQUIRER

You snooze, YOU WIN

We all know that if you sleep better, you look better. But how can you use those precious Zs to take your beauty regime to the next level? Jess Lacey probes the science of shut-eye

SPRING-CLEAN YOUR SKIN CELLS

You know the routine: you spend a sleepless night thrashing around, finally fall asleep, then wake up feeling as if you've aged a decade overnight. It turns out that, actually, you may be right: new research has proved that lack of sleep can be directly linked to skin ageing. Poor sleepers have a higher skin age, more lines and wrinkles, dullness and a compromised skin barrier that loses water more quickly, according to the Sleep Center at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Ohio. One reason is the skin clean-up process is at its peak during sleep. 'Damage accumulated inside the cells during the day is cleared away to leave healthy, purified skin cells,' explains Dr Nadine Pernodet, executive director of skin biology at Estée Lauder. So, the less sleep you get, the more you miss of this internal housekeeping. To make matters worse, as you get older your body

becomes less efficient and the process gets out of synch with sleep. Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Synchronized Recovery Complex II 30ml, £48, has 'clock gene' technology that sets the cleansing process back on track.

GET ACTIVE – BY LYING DOWN

Your evening skin regime should be double the intensity of your morning one. 'Studies have shown that the physiological changes in the skin overnight, such as increased vascular flow, can translate into better absorption of topical ingredients applied at night,' explains NYC dermatologist Dr Adam Geyer. This boost in blood flow allows the active ingredients in products to work harder and faster. Guerlain Midnight Secret Late Night Recovery Treatment, £65, contains hydronoctine, which boosts microcirculation and oxygenation of cells, so works even quicker.

BREATHE FOR A BETTER COMPLEXION

'The skin and lungs are like brother and sister, and their power-hour is 3am. People who worry usually wake around then because they are not breathing properly and it reflects in dry, itchy, flaky skin,' says holistic therapist Marie Reynolds. If you find yourself awake, try a simple exercise of lying flat and getting your stomach – rather than your chest – to rise as you breathe in. Three sets of ten will release anxiety and get you back into a restful sleep, which will in turn help prevent anxiety-related breakouts.

HOW TO HYDRATE WITHOUT DRINKING MORE

Sleep is the time our bodies become most dehydrated, but, rather than a glass of water – and spending all night running to the loo – eat water-rich foods before you go to bed, such as watermelon or grapes, which are less likely to fill your bladder. Water taken this way, at any ►

time of day, also has greater benefits. 'When we drink water it flushes right through our cells, sometimes taking vital nutrients with it,' explains Dr Howard Murad, dermatologist and associate clinical professor of medicine at UCLA. 'Structured water, like that in raw fruits and vegetables, is the best, because it stays in your system for longer. The more hydrated our cells are, the healthier and better our skin looks.' Antioxidised cells hold water better, so try Murad Pomphenol Sunguard Dietary Supplement, £47 for 60 tablets, with pomegranate extract, which has three times the antioxidant activity of green tea, and are more effective at night.

BUILD MUSCLE WHILE YOU SLEEP

Taking an organic protein, such as Bodyism Serenity shakes, £50 for 30 servings, before bed will feed muscles and replace the amino acids used in exercise. It's good to boost this process because muscles speed up your metabolism and burn fat. And before you start worrying, this isn't the kind of artificial protein gloop swilled back by bodybuilders. For starters, it's organic. It also contains calcium and magnesium, both of which encourage deep sleep. This in turn boosts the body's production of human-growth hormone, which also works to build muscle.

IMPROVE YOUR DIGESTION

Indigestion commonly hits between 11pm and 3am, when our digestive systems are processing our evening meal. This is the last thing we want, because poor digestion manifests in breakouts between the eyebrows, over the chin and red flaky lips, according to holistic therapist Marie Reynolds. Eat before 8pm and take Vitabiotics WellWoman Inner Cleanse, £8.99, with plant extracts including artichoke and dandelion root to speed up your body's cleansing process and help remove waste from your digestive system, so it works more efficiently.

DETOXIFY YOUR BODY OVERNIGHT

Toxins are harmful chemicals we take in from what we eat and the environment we live in. Throughout the night our liver and kidneys purify our bodies by steadily breaking down the waste chemicals from the gut, digestive system and blood. Taking ten drops of The Organic Pharmacy Milk Thistle Tincture, £10.50, in water an hour

Sleep affects the level of eating hormones – nine hours is the optimum you need to feel less hungry



before bed helps repair any cell damage in the liver. Follow with an organic nettle tea such as Pukka Cleanse, £2.29, an anti-inflammatory and diuretic. Wearing Bodytox Detox Foot Patches, £10.99 for six, draws out toxins while you sleep – you'll wake to the pads saturated with the dark residue. Another detox strategy is massage. 'I break down toxins during sleep by performing a lymphatic body massage in bed,' says Nichola Joss, beauty therapist to Angelina Jolie. 'Do this by lifting each leg and squeezing downwards, starting at the ankle and working towards the hip. Then repeat from wrist to shoulder, and gently but firmly massage in a circular clockwise motion around the tummy area.'

SLEEP MORE TO EAT LESS

Having problems saying no to afternoon snacks? Your appetite can be changed overnight. Sleep affects the levels of your two eating hormones: ghrelin, which tells the brain to keep eating, and leptin, which tells it to stop. The longer you sleep, the higher your leptin levels. In fact, Columbia University's New York Obesity Nutrition Research Center found that when women slept for four hours per night for six days in a row, they ate on average 329 more calories and 31g more fat than when they slept for nine hours. Nine hours is the optimum sleep duration to make you less hungry, but if you can't seem to get that, Bryon Richards, author of *The Leptin Diet* (£8.40, Wellness

Resources Books), advises eating small meals, five hours apart, to keep leptin levels in check and curb your appetite for good.

SLUMBER YOUR WAY TO THICKER HAIR

Deep sleep generates the secretion of important proteins that strengthen hair follicles and help prevent thinning hair, but an overnight scalp treatment can boost volume, too. 'Active ingredients such as caffeine and panthenol help strengthen hair fibres and increase the diameter of individual strands,' advises Kathy Rogerson from scientific research and communication at P&G. For more voluminous-looking hair by morning, massage Nioxin Diaboost, £39.99, into your scalp to stimulate blood circulation in the follicles, and leave overnight so the formula takes full effect.

ERADICATE EYE BAGS

The eye area has the least effective lymphatic drainage system in the entire body, and puffy bags are the accumulation of fluid waste. There are 22 muscles around the eye and we blink around 10,000 times a day, so it's only at night that they rest. Sisley Supremya Yeux La Nuit, £170, containing yeast extract to kick-start drainage and caffeine to tighten the skin again, has undergone clinical trials and manufacturers claim it will eradicate eye bags within two months. I've tried it and the results definitely justify the price tag. ■