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**Common Sense and the
Complexion
Some Methods to Avoid**

Most articles that appear upon this theme are usually treated from the point of view of "Do this if you value your skin"; "Do this for a rough skin"; "Do that for another type of skin, and that for wrinkles."

Now let us think of the Don'ts. If you want to make the most of the care and attention you give to the skin, there are some things that must not be done.

The first thing is massage. Don't massage your creams and tonics into your skin. We are so accustomed to hear of face massage that this may sound surprising, but there is very good reason for the caution.

An athlete, after a strenuous football game or a foot-race which he has run with terrific effort, finds his muscles tight and hard as nails from the strain to which they have been subjected. In this case, massage is perfect. Massage will relax his muscles and let down the tension in the tissues. This is just the result the athlete wants.

But the treatment of a woman's face and neck is quite a different matter. Here we do not want to bring about relaxation. On the contrary, we want always to tighten up. As the years go by, all the tendency of a woman's face is toward relaxation. We want to check that, and to counteract it by scientific treatment which will lift and make firm the tissues. When the circulation and tone of the muscles are good, the tissues of the skin are full of vigour and elasticity. With the years, the circulation begins to lag; the muscles are under-nourished and the tissues get flabby. Like old rubber bands, they lose their elasticity. They need to be tightened up or the contour will soon lose its smooth youthful line.

Massage will only increase the harm, for the effect of massage is to relax the tissues still more. Instead, your method of treatment must invigorate the tissues, tighten them up and restore their elasticity and firmness.

The very foundation of a correct method of skin treatment is the scientific patting to stimulate the tissues. Every cream tonic, astringent and lotion should be applied with the same patting strokes. The patting should always be upward, to overcome the tendency of the face to droop. The pats should be smart, telling pats, so as to stimulate the tissues, to bring the blood coursing through the muscles and to galvanise the cells into action. Half the wrinkles, the flabbiness, the sallowness and blackheads and lines are due to a torpid condition of the skin. Pat your skin into wakefulness. Don't massage it into flabbiness.

Creams are patted best with the fingertips. Use the cushion part of

your fingers; let your wrist bend loosely, so that each stroke has some resilience. When you pat your creams near the eyes and on the upper and lower lids, pat very gently, of course, for these tissues are very delicate. But when you are applying your skin food and muscle oil along the edge of your contour, under the chin, around the mouth, on the cheeks and forehead—pat hard. It will do the skin lots of good.

Skin tonics and astringents are applied best with a cotton pad. Make a firm pad of absorbent cotton about the width of three fingers and 5in. or 6in. long. Wring it out first in cold water so as to make it very firm. Then dip it in your tonic or astringent and pat briskly with this.

Here again you must pat with some vigour along the jawbone, for these preparations are particularly important to correct any looseness or flabbiness in the muscles which make the contour of the face.

A second don't is even more serious than massage. Don't think of subjecting yourself to any sort of facial operation. The risk is too great, the result too uncertain, the need too small. If you care for your skin wisely and faithfully, you can keep your youth and good looks for years longer than you can by means of operations.

The operation most talked about to-day is the one called "face lifting." This is an actual surgical operation involving cutting—and so includes the everpresent possibility of infection in the process. It is an exceedingly delicate operation. The skin is cut on the temples, between the eyes and the hair. A piece of skin the shape of a crescent is removed, and the two edges brought together again and sewn up. If you put your fingers on your temples and pull up the sides of your face you will see what the result is. It seems to erase the line from your nose to your mouth- corners. But that is not all the story.

If you have ever done any dress-making, you can realise how difficult it is to sew together smoothly two sides of an opening from which you have cut a crescent shaped gusset. When this is not perfectly done, the operation leaves a scar.

And the results are so temporary. In making the cut, only the skin is removed. The muscles are still there. For a short time the skin will pull them up. But not for long, of course. How can it? With the heavy flabby muscles dropping downward, the skin will soon stretch and let them down and the wrinkles will be there again. The effects of the operation can last only a few months at best.

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