

Beauty products for men – which products are useful?

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Advertising campaigns for men's cosmetics have now come to fruition - the market already expects a double-digit growth rate. In the following find out more about the beauty products HE really needs.

It has taken quite some time to create the need for male perfumes, creams and make-up however times when they managed with shaving soap and after shave are finally gone now. Deodorants and perfumes have become well-established articles and lip sticks as well as make-up already have made their way into the daily routine in bathrooms. Men have become emancipated in this field. They are even supposed to spend more time in the bathroom than women.

Fine distinctions though

Many of the typical men's products have different names however the same ingredients whereas others are completely different from ladies products. Also the male skin is different.

Connective tissue and muscles: In comparison to women, the connective tissue and skin-adjacent muscles of the male body are tighter, the specific collagen content of the skin higher and the tendency to form fatty deposits is lower.

Sebum and sweat production: Sebum formation is more intense and consequently there is also a thicker lipid film on the male skin which altogether is the reason for an improved water retaining capacity. In addition, the male skin has more sweat glands and that is why men perspire easily and also profusely.

Hairs: In combination with the increased sebum formation their abundant crop of hair involves also a higher incidence of acne and pimples particularly during and after adolescence. Accordingly, a natural tendency towards cornification disorders at the exits of the sebum glands and the colonization with pathogenic germs have a stronger effect. The efficient endogenous greasing naturally smoothes the skin but also involves enlarged pores.

Wrinkle formation: Due to the favorable water balance in the skin, wrinkles tend to form later than on the female skin however they are more distinct and may add a very characteristic expression to the individual face. That is the reason why women more willingly accept aging skin on men than it is the other way around.

Just like the female skin also the male skin shows all kinds of individual reactions. It may be very sensitive and have similar problems in spite of the more compact skin structure. There is a high incidence of barrier disorders up to atopic skin conditions that have to be treated by analogy. A particular problem are micro lesions during wet shaving. For this purpose specific products have been developed. Details concerning the different product groups can be found in the following overview.

Family soap & Co

While the cleansing articles are the most frequently used products here their composition in general is rather similar to the ladies products. Frequently the whole family uses the same type of soap, shower cream and shampoo. However there are also two minor characteristics like the different perfumes that men prefer and their selection of shampoo as they are less peculiar here due to the shorter hair cut at least from what can be said of the majority. In those rare cases with longer hair today it is recommended to pay attention to conditioning and caring substances in the formulations to avoid certain surprises after blow-drying.

Before and after shaving

Shaving has increased in the last decade as not only the beard but also the hairs in armpit and pubic area as well as the hairs on the legs are cut. Chest hairs that used to be the pride of former days today already have become a taboo. The obvious advantage here is that aging men can eliminate their gray hairs. It can generally be said that heterosexual men continually adjust their appearance and their use of cosmetic products to the female behavior. Already in the nineties the term "metrosexuality" had been coined to describe this specific behavior.

Gels and emulsions: Products containing anti-inflammatory components have been added to the classic products like shaving

soap, shaving cream and after shave. Frequently these products are oil free gels or low fat emulsions to be applied before and after the wet shaving procedure. Typical anti-inflammatory substances are algae extract, allantoin, aloe vera, bisabolol, calendula, CM-glucan, D-panthenol, hamamelis extract, chamomile extract, linseed oil, linoleic acid, salicylic acid and ribwort. The gel bodies contain polysaccharide-like substances as for example xanthan gum, alginate and hyaluronic acid. The smoothing effect of the gels facilitates shaving. If additional barrier supporting substances are needed after the shaving it is recommended to add DMS substances (after shave balm).

Shaving soaps: They are used alternatively to the gels and even today still consist of super fat alkali soaps (potassium and sodium salts of the stearic acid and palm oil fatty acids). In case of an alkaline pH value several of the active agents mentioned above in connection with gels cannot be added due to stability problems.

Preshaves: It is sufficient to tighten the skin with cold water before shaving in order to optimize the shaving result. The same purpose is achieved by preshaves with high alcohol content which simultaneously are enriched with gliding additives - mostly silicones - to facilitate the shaving process.

Aftershaves: Lotions with a high alcohol content and tangy scent still form the majority of this product group. They also may contain anti-inflammatory ingredients. Besides there are alcohol containing (up to 20 per cent ethanol) or alcohol free balms with an additional content of different re-fattening and cooling components (altogether amounting to 10 per cent). While these products are relatively watery there are also creams specifically for the dry skin. Their market share however is not very significant.

Laser epilation: In order to suppress hyper pigmentation after the laser epilation, tyrosinase inhibiting substances on vegetable basis with vitamin C content (ascorbyl phosphate) may be added.

Gentle deodorants for HIS needs

The above mentioned change of hygienic habits (increased shaving) automatically involves an unexpected increase of deodorant use. This leads to the fact that a moist micro climate develops particularly in the armpit and the pubic area which favors germ colonization as the insulating cover, i.e. the armpit and pubic hair has been removed. The moisture actually is trapped due to the skin-to-skin contact. What seems to be an esthetic solution can abruptly involve negative side effects like fungal infec-

tions and irritations. The situation can be compared to the toe areas that are well-known to be specifically susceptible to fungal infections. The shaving process itself frequently leads to micro lesions which additionally facilitate the penetration of micro organisms.

Men tend to sweat easily and more profusely and beyond that they are more sensitive than generally assumed. That is the reason why gentle deodorants are required particularly in the armpits and in the genital area. Besides the antiperspirant and germ inhibiting substances recently developed products also contain substantial skin-caring components. Well-tolerated are emulsifier free products since emulsifiers are an additional strain for the skin barrier. Main active agents besides the well-known aluminum salts are farnesol and vegetable extracts as for instance the antiperspirant sage extract.

Peelings are also part of the beauty treatment

Treatments in beauty institutes mostly include peelings. They are not specifically focused on the male customer and generally carried out with enzyme and cream peeling products containing wax abrasive bodies, or alternatively as salt peelings or fruit acid treatments whereas the latter named are the most stressful for the skin and even though the male skin is more compact it is recommended to apply them in close consultation with a dermatologist and following the medical indication particularly if they are applied more often.

Lotions are the favorites

Men usually like to do things at a push and that is the reason why lotions are their very favorites. There is a huge selection of facial and body lotions from refreshing to skin-caring varieties. Apart from the perfume notes which vary from the ladies products, the overall composition rather is the same whereas the lipid content may be lower. In terms of the physiology of the skin water based products are preferable to high alcohol contents. Emulsifier free barrier lotions based on liquid nanoparticles are an ideal solution not only for the normal but also for the barrier disturbed skin.

Masks and creams

With exception of enriched vitamin creams which can also be used for the beauty care at home, masks belong to the domain of the institute. In this product range variable modular systems are recommended as this helps to avoid costly stock keeping of various different

substances and products. The active agents of the masks depend on the results of a skin diagnosis or specific individual requests. Creams in general are low in lipids (see above).

Frequently also fat free or low fat gels are applied - particularly for the treatment of lachrymal sacs and dark rings around the eyes. Typical active agents for the treatment around the eyes are vitamin K, hyaluronic acid, butcher's broom, D-panthenol and cucumber extract. This subject has recently been covered in Kosmetische Praxis (3) 2008, pg. 12-15.

Men already have used sun screens for quite some time. Their favorites are fast penetrating creams with low fat content. Self tanning lotions still are marginal products.

Wearing a natural makeup

Modular systems are also recommended with respect to decorative cosmetic products in the institutes. The colors of the products as e.g. make up, powder, liner, lip sticks etc. are rather unobtrusive and underline the natural skin tone. Main field of application is the problem skin. Frequently adolescents get to know cosmetic applications in connection with their acne treatment. Low fat products based on linoleic acid are the first choice for the long term treatment. Phosphatidylcholine containing lotions in form of liposomes have proved successful in first and second degree acne vulgaris cases and also are helpful for the treatment of acne scars. Beyond it several hair gels and re-fattening shampoos may have counterproductive effects on the basis of their ingredients especially in cases of juvenile acne. Creams should be free of ethoxilated alcohols (PEG). Despite of the frequently mentioned contradictory claims regarding its influence, it has to be pointed out that nutrition and particularly the selection of fatty acids in fact play a major role in this connection.

Treatment programs for couples are in vogue

In all, the male beauty institute customers seem to be easy-care and open for professional advice. As also their word of mouth recommendation is well working quality-conscious beauty institutes can count on generating part of their future income with the treatment of male customers.

A certain degree of skepticism towards the advertising campaigns of cosmetic companies however should be taken into account as men tend to react more rational. They welcome clear and understandable argumentation. Male customers like to see prompt results. An interesting trend so is the treatment program for

couples in larger institutes, hotels or thermal spas with wellness area or preferable even medical wellness.

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