



## SKIN BRUSHING

The skin is one of the major organs of elimination in the body. By keeping the skin free from dry, dead skin cells, efficiency of the skin to remove wastes from the body is enhanced.

### Benefits of Skin Brushing

- Assists skin exfoliation and removal of waste: Removal of dead skin cells opens skin pores, allowing for efficient removal of waste products.
- Decreases the quantity of bacteria on the skin surface: Bacteria are normally present on the skin surface. Layers of dead skin provide a habitat for them to flourish, resulting in a toxic load of bacterial debris that the body needs to handle.
- Enhanced lymphatic drainage: The lymph system removes waste fluids and is an important component in the circulatory system. Skin brushing invigorates the lymphatic drainage and its effectiveness in eliminating waste.
- Enhances and supports the venous system: By helping the veins move blood from the extremities back to the heart.
- Improves the movement of nutrients and oxygen into the skin: By enhancing the lymphatic and venous drainage, skin brushing improves the movement of nutrients and oxygenated blood into the skin.
- Improves skin tone, especially in aging skin: By removing dead skin cells, stimulating the surface oil and sweat glands and enhancing circulation, the tone and suppleness of aging skin is enhanced.

### Procedure

The best skin brushes are natural vegetable bristle brushes, although a loofah brush or a baby's hair brush can also be used. You can find these brushes in most health food stores. Skin brushing is best done on dry skin, prior to your shower or bath. Brushing should be gentle and can be done in short strokes.

1. Start by brushing on your legs. Brush from your toes towards the center of your body, as this is the direction of venous and lymph flow toward your heart. When finished, your skin will tingle, but do not brush so hard that your skin is bright red.
2. Next, brush lightly up your stomach and lower back making sure to include your buttocks.
3. Move to your arms and brush from your fingers to your shoulders in short strokes toward the center of your body.
4. Finally, lightly brush your shoulders and upper back toward the center of your body.
5. Do not brush your face, as this skin is very delicate. However, you can lightly brush the back of your neck.

Some of these areas may be more easily reached with a long-handled skin brush. If you are unable to reach all these areas, just brush what is most comfortable for you to brush.

### Areas that should be avoided:

1. Open wounds
2. Your face
3. Areas of skin that are easily damaged, open and weeping rashes
4. Areas of known skin malignancies or lymphatic malignancies

### Resource:

Berkowsky N.D., B. Forgotten Art of Skin Brushing. British Naturopathic Journal. 17 (1), 2000, p.12-15.

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