

Beauty at what COST?

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From the beginning of time women have striven to be externally beautiful. From the days of Cleopatra bathing in asses milk to more modern advances such as collagen injections it seems that women will go to any lengths and expense in their quest for eternal youth and beauty, even to the extent of dying for it.

Did you know that In the 17th Century people used to use a face cream/powder, which contained chalk and lead, or mercury so that it would whiten their faces which was the fashion then, however repeated use caused bad scarring and often death.

In the middle ages people wanting to remove unsightly stains on their teeth went to visit barber-surgeons. The stains were filed off the teeth and the remaining stubs were soaked in a concentrated solution of nitric acid. They did end up with whiter teeth but the patients also ended up with no enamel on their teeth and extensive tooth decay.

Or that even today in the Middle East and Asia women use a lot of eye-make up especially Khol, an eyeliner that contains lead.

Every day we are bombarded with the media telling and showing us how we should look, open a magazine or watch a television commercial, see bill boards, look in catalogues, watch film stars, the list goes on. We compare ourselves and feel demoralized, overweight, unattractive and or old compared to them, so our quest begins, and the cosmetics industry and cosmetic surgeons clap their hands in glee all the way to the bank.

However, why stop with women. Years ago any self-respecting man would just about have managed to use a bar of soap yet alone a face cream, he would have been considered effeminate but how times have changed. The male cosmetics and cosmetic surgery industries are booming and the "new man" wouldn't leave the house now without having a facial scrub first. Well that just leaves the teenage, toddler, and baby market to concentrate on! There already is a brand of perfume for babies on the market!

Some interesting facts are,

- Cosmetic surgery revenue is rising by 10% per year in the UK, estimated to be £255.8m by 2004.
- About 8.5 million cosmetic procedures were carried out in the US last year, at a cost of \$11bn to the consumer.
- The cosmetics and fragrances market in the UK in 2003 was worth £1.55bn at retail selling prices.

UK women spend over £3.3 billion a year on cosmetics and toiletries

UK Men spent in 1999 on cosmetics and toiletries £580.4 million.

The British **spend** around £200 million a year on **cosmetic surgery**

Breast cancer rates in the UK, are rising, each year 38,000 women are newly diagnosed and 13,100 women die from breast cancer. There is a suggestion that this increase may be due to the use of under arm sprays and deodorants because of the chemicals they contain being absorbed into the body. Some tumours when examined contained chemicals that are in deodorants.

Alzheimer`s disease is increasing among long term users of aluminium based anti-perspirants.

Did you know that most of the perfumes you use everyday day are synthetic, your rose, lavender, or jasmine perfume has nothing to do with the flowers themselves.

Every time you colour your hair the dye (a chemical) is absorbed into your body.

The next time you buy your age reversal cream or your shampoo that gives your hair a personality of its own, stop and look at the ingredients they contain. The most they will contain are preservatives, (for the life of the product not for you) foaming agents, humectants, acids, mineral oils, and petroleum extracts most of these are not only bad for the skin but are toxic when absorbed into the body.

It is believed they can contribute to

- Cancer
- Hormone disruption
- Neurotoxicity
- Organ damage

One ingredient in particular Propylene Glycol which is used in moisturisers, hand lotions and many other cosmetics is also used as brake-fluid, de-icer, and anti-freeze.

Also think of the animals that may have given up their life or their eyesight so that you can strive to be more beautiful.

Did you know that many lipsticks still contain whale blubber and some face creams contain animal urine (often pregnant mares) and or animal placentas!

Nature gave us everything we need to be able to live and also gave us beauty products and perfumes as well. Next time you want a face pack or bubble bath go to see an Aromatherapist or Herbalist it will not only be healthier for you, safer for animals and the environment; but by not having to throw away the unnecessary often non-recyclable packaging that cosmetics come in, will save you money as well ;-)

Personally I think the only thing a person should put on their body is a SMILE! What could be more beautiful than that?

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Julie is a qualified Midwife and Nurse – now practicing Allergy dowsing and therapeutic massage. She promotes environmentally friendly living and natural Health remedies. You can find out more about her new book –“101 tips for environmentally friendly living” and sign up for her monthly newsletter at;
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