

Helping Clients Deal with Cancer

Clients dealing with cancer tend to have sensitive skins. How their skin responds to treatment can change at any time. We have to treat what we see and evaluate what the client tells us about how their skin is feeling and acting.

Use products designed for sensitive skins. They should be color free and fragrance free. If the client has oily skin, they should be water based and oil free. More frequently the skin will be dry and dehydrated.

Dehydration can occur on any skin. It happens when the skin's natural protective barrier is compromised. Dehydration needs something to hydrate the skin, (serums, hyaluronic acid.) After placing a hydrator on gently cleansed skin, have the client apply protection to retain the moisture.

If the client is concerned that their skin is looking tired and aging the use of peptides in home care can be very helpful. Antioxidants like resveratrol (grape seed extract), Meeker raspberry extract, or macadamia oil are beneficial and protect the skin. Look within your product lines for things that will gently coax the skin to looking better.

Chemotherapy drugs make the skin much more sun sensitive. Good SPF protection is mandatory.

In the treatment room choose services that deal with what you see happening on the client's skin. If you see redness treat that inflammation first. Once the client's skin calms down, then next treat for dehydration. When you have the skin calm and hydrated then you can deal with pore clearing and the symptoms of aging.

For clients undergoing radiation treatments, avoid areas of a burn, irritation or broken skin. If the skin is just slightly pink, use calming, soothing, healing products.

Exfoliation should also be gentle. Starting with a gentle enzyme is the best way to see how the skin responds to treatment. Other safer

alternatives are Ultrasonic exfoliation or a hydro-derm. Avoid abrasive exfoliation until you know how the client's skin reacts.

Clients with previous breast cancer and lymph nodes removed, should not have underarm waxing. There is a risk of lymphedema, permanent swelling of the arm. This can happen at any time, even years later.