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Green Beauty 101

Exhale's Skin Expert Breaks it Down

We gave up plastic water bottles long ago, but we are still trying to get used to non-foaming natural shampoos and powdery toothpastes. Going green isn't easy, and it's tough to know where to start. We called on expert **Caitlin Conn**, the skincare director at the eco-chic **Exhale MindBodySpa**, for advice. Conn is constantly auditioning new lines and she's incredibly picky – "I can usually just tell from the ingredients whether I'll use a product or not." Here, your no-stress primer to natural beauty.

DEFINE GREEN

According to Conn, it's only green if it uses pure botanical ingredients. She says, "It's not enough to just be labeled natural, organic, or hypo-allergenic because those terms are not regulated by the government." Sounds confusing? It is. Start by reading product labels and educating yourself about ingredients.

RED FLAG INGREDIENTS

Conn only uses products that are free of chemical preservatives, mineral oils, and artificial fragrance and color. She avoids Sodium Laurel Sulfate (SLS), a widely used, inexpensive chemical that dissolves oils. "It's the same stuff that is in car-engine degreaser," Conn says, "and has a really harsh effect on skin." In addition, look out for parabens, which have been linked to cancer and interfere with the body's endocrine system.

BYE-BYE SLS AND OTHER VILLAINS

Swap our products with SLS, usually your cleansers, toothpastes, and shampoos. "Toss any exfoliant with polyethylene beads," Conn says, "which are tiny bits of plastic that never break down — they go straight into the waterways, where they destroy marine life."

CONN'S GREEN PICKS

Sircuit Skin produces very small batches every six weeks, eliminating the need for chemical preservatives. "The **Molecular Mist** is perfect for traveling, and I use Sircuit products in Smart Peels at Exhale Spa," says Conn. She also loves **Shaffali Skin Rituals**. "It's one of the most beautiful and thoughtful lines I have come across," Conn says. They use natural ingredients like tumeric, which reduces inflammation and hyperpigmentation, and fights free radical damage.

BIRCHBOX PICKS



Korres Guava Body Butter
Slather this lush cream all over for instant moisture – the island chic scent is an added bonus.



Kiehl's Ultra Facial Cream
A light textured cream that cools and soothes as it moisturizes.



Phyto 7 Daily Hydrating Botanical Cream
A daily-leave in that calms frizzies, hydrates fried tresses, and gives a boost to normal hair.

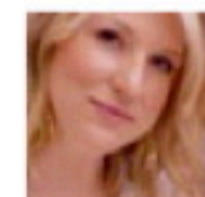
FEATURED CONTENT



Off with the Old
Dull, sallow skin? Exfoliators to the rescue! We'll help you pick the best one for your skin.



Most Valuable Product
Serums are the specialists of the skincare world. Use our cheat sheet to find your perfect match.



Skin Smarts
Decode your skin needs with help from cult facialist Renee Rouleau.