

Exfoliation

This is the process of removing dead skin cells from the body. It is used in both facial and body treatments to improve skin texture and allow a more efficient penetration of hydrating and moisturising products into the skin. Exfoliation treatments may be used as a stand alone treatment, or as a preparation for other spa and beauty treatments

Exfoliation may be classified as manual, mechanical or chemical.

Manual exfoliation uses products containing an exfoliator such as; salt, sugar, oatmeal, wheat germ or crushed nut kernel. These products are referred to as scrubs and are formulated for use either on the face or the body. A more gentle scrub is recommended for the face and a much stronger version for the body and feet.

Alternatively a body brush or loofah may be used. These methods are all used in salons and spas but are often recommended for use at home in between salon treatments.

Mechanical exfoliation treatment used in salons today involves the use of a micro dermabrasion machine. This uses crystals or diamond wands, to exfoliate the dead skin cells as part of a facial or body treatment to improve skin texture, colour and remove congestion.

Chemical exfoliation uses products containing; enzymes, alpha hydroxy acids, beta hydroxy acids or salicylic acids. Stronger and more potent products may be applied by a dermatologist and the effects are more extreme causing the skin to blister and peel off. Enzymes work through biological action rather than physical abrasion and alpha and beta acids work by a dissolving action on the skin cells.

Whichever product or method is used, exfoliation must not be carried out too often as it exposes new skin to the elements and it is far more sensitive to environmental damage.

Salons offer exfoliation treatments using the following descriptions:

Microdermabrasion

Chemical peel

Enzyme mask

Natural exfoliation

Sugar glow

Body polish

Body scrub

Body buff

Body brush