

The Massage Monthly

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Natural vs. Organic Products

What's the difference--and how can you tell?

Kathleen Neves

Now, more than ever, people are questioning what is being put into the skin care products they use. With terms such as "natural" and "organic" being used on all kinds of packaging, it's important to know not only what these terms really mean, but how they affect the way a product is labeled, the way ingredients are listed on the packaging, and the overall effectiveness of the product.

Terms Defined

What exactly does it mean when a product is labeled "natural" or "organic"? In the broadest sense, a natural product is something that originated from a plant or animal

difference between products labeled "natural" and "organic" is the amount of regulation imposed by the government. The US government does not regulate natural skin care products, which means anything can be labeled or described as natural, regardless of what it contains or how it was produced. Organic products, however, are heavily regulated by the government.

Organic Isn't Easy

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) sets strict regulations for organic products: how ingredients must be grown and processed; where the word organic can appear on the product label; and how the label may be presented on

The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.

-Alice Walker

Office Hours and Contact

Ohana Therapeutic Massage
218-263-1501
Winter Hours
Mon. thru Thurs. 9am-6pm
Friday 9am-2pm
Saturday 1/6 and 1/20 9am-1pm

In this Issue

Natural vs. Organic Products
Prevent the Afternoon Slump
Hibernating is for the Bears



Check the labels and know what they mean to buy organic.

source, and an organic product is a natural product that was grown without the use of artificial fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides. Many ingredients used in beauty, makeup, and skin care products are already derived from plant sources, but exact definitions vary.

the actual product. Growers must adhere to a special system of farming that maintains and replenishes the soil fertility without the use of toxic materials such as pesticides or fertilizers. Third-party certifiers appointed by the USDA enforce these regulations with annual inspections of organic farms and

In the world of skin care, the biggest

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

processing facilities.

The National Organic Program (NOP) is a government agency that works with the USDA to help regulate the use of organic ingredients in skin care products, and to make sure these types of products are correctly labeled. There are four labeling categories for certified organic products:

- 100 PERCENT ORGANIC

Products that have been certified by the government as containing 100 percent organic ingredients. The product is permitted to display the USDA Organic label on the front of the packaging.

- ORGANIC

Products that contain at least 95 percent organic ingredients. They are also permitted to bear the USDA Organic label on the front of their packaging.

- MADE WITH ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

Only 70 percent of ingredients need to be organic for a product to be certified in this category. These products cannot use the USDA Organic label, but are allowed to have descriptive text on the product label to say it is made with organic ingredients.

- LESS THAN 70 PERCENT ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

These products cannot use the USDA Organic label, and the only place where the word "organic" can be used on the product's packaging is in the ingredient list on the back of the product.

What's Natural?

The main reason why the federal government doesn't regulate natural skin care products is because there is no formal definition of what natural means within the beauty industry. Different brands may use the word in completely different ways. This creates confusion and frustration for the consumer.

In May 2008, the Natural Products Association (NPA), along with brands such as Burt's Bees, JR Watkins, and Yes To Carrots, created the Natural Standard for Personal Care Products. This voluntary standard is the closest thing the beauty industry has to a formal definition of natural. It consists of the following four components:

- Natural. At least 95 percent of the

ingredients in the product must be formulated without any artificial ingredients, and minimally processed.

- Safety. The product must be completely void of any ingredients deemed harmful to human health by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- Responsibility. The product cannot have been used in any sort of animal testing.

- Sustainability. The product, its ingredients, and its packaging must be environmentally friendly. Ingredients should be biodegradable, if possible. The product's packaging should be made up of recycled materials, or at least be easy for the consumer to recycle.

To use the NPA Natural Seal on its label, a product must meet all four components, and its manufacturer must disclose all ingredient information, fully and accurately. The NPA Natural Seal is

the closest equivalent for natural products to the USDA Organic label for organic products, but it is a voluntary standard that is neither required, nor endorsed, by the federal government.

While it's important to know the difference between natural and organic, it's no less important to make sure you're using the most suitable product. Just because a product is labeled "natural" or "organic" doesn't necessarily mean that it will be the best choice for your skin type, concerns, and conditions.

Kathleen Neves is a licensed esthetician, makeup artist, and beauty blogger based in San Francisco.



Finding the best product for you is often a struggle.

Prevent the Afternoon Slump

Some Tips for P.M. Energy

Jerry V. Teplitz

If you're like most people, you've experienced the afternoon slump. You know the feeling -- it's only 2 p.m., yet you feel drained. Fortunately, you can employ methods to reduce the slump's frequency and shorten its duration.

DRINK WATER.

Your body uses water even if you're not exercising. If you wait until you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated. Keep a water bottle handy all day.

AVOID SUGAR AND SIMPLE CARBOHYDRATES.

While a mid-afternoon candy bar may give you a quick rush, it actually worsens the slump. Instead, choose protein-rich foods and complex carbs.

EAT SMALL MEALS.

Have six small meals over the course of the day instead of three large ones. Big meals cause the digestive process to divert blood from your brain to use in the digestive track.

EVALUATE YOUR LIGHTING.

Most offices are lit with cool, white fluorescent tubes, which have a terrible effect on how people feel and function at work. A better option is full-spectrum, fluorescent tubes.

TAKE TIME FOR WALKS.

Walking gets your blood circulating, helps you breathe better, and stimulates your brain due to the increased blood flow. Take a 5- or 10-minute walk during the day.

MEDITATE.

Meditation is great for rejuvenating your body. By meditating for 15 to 20 minutes twice a day, you're keeping your body continually energized and rested.

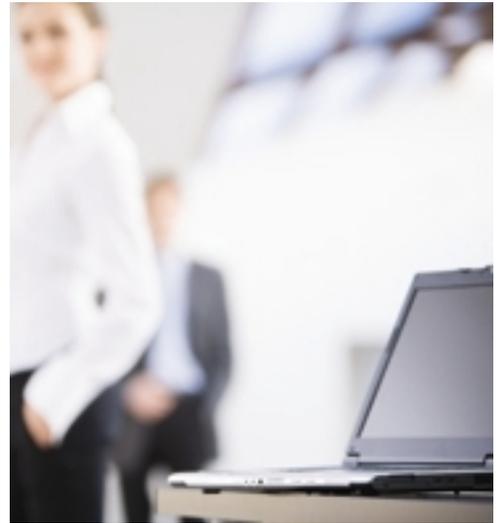
TAKE TIME TO BREATHE AND STRETCH.

Deep breathing exercises give you an energy boost. Also, stand up and stretch to increase blood flow and stimulate the lymphatic system.

HANDLE NEGATIVITY.

Negative people and images can have a

draining effect on your energy. Make a conscious effort to stay positive.



Avoid the drain office settings can bring on.

Hibernating is for the Bears

Plan to Stay Fit This Winter

Winter's here, and you've moved your running shoes to the back of the closet until April. Yet that piece of pumpkin pie has your name on it.

With the onset of colder weather, shorter days, and snow-covered streets, we eat more and exercise less, waiting for the spring thaw to get back in shape. Instead of having to make New Year's resolutions to lose holiday weight and join a health club, why not set goals to stay fit this winter?

MOVE FITNESS INDOORS

Winter is the perfect time to start a weight-training program. When it's sunny and warm in summer, you'd rather be outside cycling or rock climbing. When it's snowing, why not lift weights for 30 minutes during lunch? Statistics show that more people

suffer heart attacks in winter from shoveling snow, often because they're out of shape. With regular strength training, you'll be able to shovel that snow and get a head start with outdoor sports when spring comes around.

WALK OUTSIDE ON WEEKENDS

Going for a jog or walk during mid-day when the sun is high is a great time to get outside and catch a few rays. Be sure to dress warmly, wear sunscreen, and drink plenty of water. Dehydration is most common in colder months when you're less aware of fluid loss.

TAKE A DANCE CLASS

Accept that invitation to the New Year's Eve celebration and take a class in ballroom dancing. While you're dancing, you're not hanging around the buffet table or the bar, and your

waistline will thank you for it.

REDISCOVER ICE SKATING

Whether it's on a frozen pond or at a rink, ice skating provides seasonal exercise opportunities, especially good for the legs. And it's great fun, bringing out the kid in all of us.

CONSIDER SNOWSHOEING

Snowshoeing is just a matter of strapping snowshoes onto your boots and walking. Snowshoes make hiking trails and snowy city parks accessible and can be rented from sporting goods stores at a relatively inexpensive price.

Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.

-Soren Kierkegaard

As readers of our Newsletter, we like to give you the first peeks of the happenings at Ohana Therapeutic Massage. Check out below for the latest news!

WeGiveBack January Honorees!

It's back by popular demand - FREE massage for pregnant women! From Januray 8th-20th, Pregnant Women can qualify to receive a FREE 30 minute massage at Ohana Therapeutic Massage! For more details or to schedule your free 30 minute massage, please call us at 218-263-1501.

Call or visit our Facebook page to learn more!

Ohana Therapeutic Massage

208 E Howard St
Hibbing, MN 55746



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