

NATURAL REMEDIES TO REMOVE BLACK SPOTS by 'Tola Alabi



Your beautiful skin owes its colour to melanin. But isn't too much of some things (*except love*) often bad? Over-secretion of melanin is known to cause dark spots or pigmentation. Some of the causes of this type of condition include *hormone imbalance, pregnancy, menopause, intake of certain medications, vitamin deficiency, mineral deficiency, intestinal disorders* and *stress*. Severe dark spots all over the body need to be appropriately diagnosed by a doctor, as there could be other unseen problems.

Many of the bleaching products that are available at medical stores and chemist shops contain bleach mixed with lubricating cream. In the end this may prove harmful to your skin. On the other hand, there are several home remedies that can (over time) achieve the same effect as those that can be found in the pharmacy. A few years ago, my client managed to fade the black spots on her elbow and knees, which were caused by friction from exercise and resting her elbows on a desk for years (*aha! those corporate jobs!*). She got rid of them by simply massaging lemon juice (*lemons aren't that expensive or scarce anymore*) in those areas and after about three months, the results were remarkable. Her skin got lighter until all the black areas were gone.

That's the power of some of the things that we have in nature to take care of our skin. The

beauty of home remedies is that they are cheap and they have no side effects. The lemon and other fruits do not come with a long list of *scary* side effects. Below are some natural remedies for getting rid of dark areas on the face and body. These remedies take a while to work [**and didn't it take you a while to get the spots on?**] but in the end they are worth their weight in gold.

1. LEMON/LIME JUICE



Lemon and lime juice is strongly acidic. Calm down! Not the kind of acid that could hurt your luscious facial skin. The juices from both are very popular in home remedies for bleaching out dark spots. Juices from both can be used on the affected areas without any other additives by gentle topical application. However, using other juices and can enhance the bleaching effect. These remedies can take up to a week or more for any discernible results to be seen.

Recipes

- *Lemon and honey rubbed on the dark spots and as face masks.*
- *Lemon juice, cucumber juice and rose water on affected areas.*
- *Lime juice and turmeric applied as a paste on face can fade suntans. This mixture can also be placed on elbows and knees.*

2. TURMERIC



Turmeric is another popular skin-lightening agent. It is said to effectively remove suntans and fades dark spots quickly.

Recipes

- *Turmeric, Milk and Lemon Juice applied to areas where there are dark spots.*
- *Turmeric, honey and olive oil- gently massaged on the face and left on 15 minutes.*

3. PAW PAW [papaya]



Papaya contains papain, an enzyme that exfoliates the skin, encouraging production of new, fresher-looking skin. Papain also inhibits the enzyme tyrosinase, which pigment-producing skin cells use to make melanin. Green papaya contains more papain

than ripe ones. However, it stings a bit when applied to skin. The ripe papaya works just as well though, so if that is all you have access to, you can use it and expect results.

Recipes

- *Papaya pulp rubbed on affected areas can be applied on the skin; this will remove whiteheads on skin.*
- *The skin of the papaya also makes for an excellent scrub for knees and elbows.*
- *Green papaya and lime juice pureed. Applied to dark spots and left to sit for 15 minutes.*

4. ALOE VERA



Aloes are exceptional when it comes to skin regeneration. That is why it is so popular as a treatment for burns, scalds, stings and scrapes. The plant is no less effective when it comes to the fading of those obnoxious dark spots.

Recipe

- *Put pure aloe juice on the affected skin twice daily. Leave the juice on for at least 45 minutes with each treatment. Dark spots should fade within a month.*

5. BUTTERMILK

[buttermilkpic] Buttermilk contains lactic acid, which is an alpha-hydroxy acid. This natural acid is good for skin as it removes dead skin, dirt and excess oil. Once the top layer of the skin is removed, the skin appears lighter.

Recipe

- *Apply buttermilk directly to dark spots using a cotton ball.*
- *Mix equal parts buttermilk with lemon juice and apply as a face mask.*

6. VITAMIN E OIL



Vitamin E is an antioxidant and it has complex effects on wound healing. Studies suggest that it can penetrate the dermis and it stabilizes collagen production.

Recipes:

- *Vitamin E oil mixed with castor oil and applied on pigmented areas to reduce dark spots is also an effective treatment.*

- *Vitamin E oil and aloe gel as a face mask will also work.*

A LITTLE EXTRA: *Priceless tips*

1. Avoid using soap (*especially those with high astringent properties*) too often as it has a tendency to dry the skin.
2. Drink plenty of water and eat fruits and vegetables as part of your daily diet.
3. Address the underlying cause of your dark spot condition. If your problem is acne, stress, constant insect bites or excessive sun exposure, take care of these issues before attempting to remove dark areas or they will recur [to your utmost surprise!] and you'll say *my* timeless recipes don't work.
4. Limit sun exposure while using natural fade treatments, but discontinue use if you notice the slightest skin irritation. Be quick to see a doctor if you notice any irregularly-shaped dark spots. Such dark spots could suggest melanoma.

Until I come your way next week, watch those dark spots; your skin is priceless. Expect my coming podcast soon. You'd hate to miss this!

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