

Iskra Lawrence: The model and body acceptance activist opens up about practising self-love and body confidence. Read more on **page 7**.



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SELF-LOVE & PERSONAL CARE

Body Confidence Is Being Unafraid to Be You

Finding our beauty and strength can seem like a challenge, but it becomes easier when we make an effort to empower one another.

Aisha Fairclough and Dr. Jill Andrew

Our bodies take us through the world, from our first breath to our last. They move us through society, socializing and creating memories with loved ones and the random strangers we encounter in our day-to-day lives. Our bodies get us through conflict. Very early on in childhood, however, we begin to learn the solemn truth that some bodies are seen, heard, celebrated, and even protected more than others — and crowned “the beautiful ones” while others are, well, not crowned.

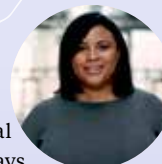
In the best of times, body confidence is our ability to see ourselves amidst the noise and false information

of diet, beauty, and self-help industries — engines that accelerate when we don't like the reflections staring back at us. They're the piggy banks getting richer and richer off our insecurities and our perfect “imperfections.”

As we redefine beauty standards and empower others to feel confident in the skin they're in, we become part of a revolution — one set to leave nobody behind or discriminated against based on their size, race, religion, gender expression or identity, class, age, sexuality, or ability. Our body confidence is knowing that we're good enough just the way we are. It's us breaking the stigma

around talking about our mental health. It's accepting that some days will be great, others not, and some will simply be neutral.

Finding our beauty during this pandemic has been a struggle for so many. Social isolation and uncertainty have taken their toll. It's times like these when we must remember our strength, endurance, and vulnerability. Sometimes showing up just the way we are — strong, afraid, solid, fractured, and everything in between — is the biggest, boldest step we can take toward our body confidence, and that's beautiful. ♥



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Natural Deodorant: A Natural Way to Feel Fresh All Day

If just the thought of swapping your go-to deodorant with a natural one makes you sweat, we have some good news.

Melissa Vekil

Natural deodorants have come a long way in recent years, and if you're looking to detox your beauty routine of harsh chemicals, your deodorant is a great place to start. Unlike conventional deodorants, truly natural deodorants are free of aluminium, parabens, and synthetic fragrances, and are certified natural. While the potential health problems associated with ingredients in conventional deodorants have been common knowledge for decades, the alternatives haven't always been reliable — until now.

"There's something about becoming a parent that has made me so much more self-aware about the products I use in my home and on my body," says Edmonton-based lifestyle blogger and toddler-mom Lyndsey Smith. "Over the last couple years, I've transitioned to using natural products in most areas of my life."

Natural ingredients that work

Non-toxic deodorants have come a long way in recent years. Not only are they made with clean ingredients, but they really, truly work.

Schmidt's Natural Deodorant is made entirely from natural-origin ingredients and is certified natural by Ecocert. The company started in 2010 when founder Jaime Schmidt, pregnant at the time, felt frustrated with the lack of effective natural products on the market. She wanted a healthy product that not only smelled great but actually worked. Formulated with 100 percent natural-origin ingredients, all-natural fragrances, and essential oils, Schmidt's deodorants are efficacious in delivering immediate odour protection. Plus, you only need to apply one

to two swipes to get long-lasting effects.

"I'm able to get more wear out of this deodorant than others I've tried to keep me smelling fresh with its 24-hour odour protection," says Smith. "I love that I can be running around with my toddler in a baggy sweatshirt or on a Zoom meeting in a silk blouse and I'm still protected. I've also converted some of my friends and even my husband to making the switch to Schmidt's, which is a testament to how amazing the product really is."

Schmidt's personal care products are also vegan and cruelty-free, making them not only good for your body, but also good for the planet. The company is committed to manufacturing products without harming animals and doesn't use ingredients from any suppliers that test their products on animals, either. ♥

i Make the switch to a natural deodorant that actually works by visiting schmidts.com.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSHUA SMITH

HOW-TO

CHOOSE THE RIGHT NATURAL DEODORANT

Using natural products is an essential aspect of loving your body, so it's important to know exactly what to look for when buying natural.

NATURAL, NOT NATURAL-ISH

Products should have 100% natural-origin ingredients. Look for products that are certified by Ecocert — it'll give you the peace of mind that the product you're buying is truly natural and not "natural-ish."

ODOUR PROTECTION

Once you go natural, you should be rewarded with a product that actually works. Look for deodorants that claim 24-hour odour protection so you can go natural with confidence.

ALL-NATURAL FRAGRANCE COMBINATIONS

All fragrances should be made with essential oils or plant extracts — never artificial fragrance.

NO "BADDIES"

Products should be free of aluminum, parabens, sulphates (SLS), propylene glycol, phthalates, artificial fragrance, artificial flavours, and dyes.

SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY-CONSCIOUS

Ingredients should be "active naturals," which means that they should deliver functional benefits. No water! No fillers! And no unnecessary impact on the environment!

KITCHEN LOGIC

Know where your products and ingredients are being made. You should be able to find all the ingredients at your local health food store.

CONSUMERS LOVE IT

Look for products that are validated with 5-star ratings and reviews by your fellow natural deodorant users. "#1 natural deodorant" claims are another great way to validate that you're making a great purchase.

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The Impact of Psoriasis Is More Than Skin Deep

Chronic inflammatory autoimmune disease can affect quality of life and mental health, but new targeted therapies are bringing hope to sufferers.

Abigail Cukier

When she was 11, Deva Murthy broke out in an itchy, uncomfortable rash all over her body. At age 12, she was diagnosed with severe plaque psoriasis and spent a year in hospital receiving UV light therapy and coal tar baths. The treatments would help, but after a few weeks, her plaques would return.

She remembers her mom applying ointment to her skin and wrapping her body in plastic wrap. “That was very difficult for my mom, and for me, especially being a teenager. I remember trying to cover up with makeup and clothes when my body was covered in sores,” says Murthy, 48, who lives in Long Harbour, NL. “My parents missed a lot of work taking me to doctor appointments. I missed a lot of school. Even when I did go, I couldn’t do any physical activity. It was just too uncomfortable.”

Psoriasis affects one million Canadians

Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory autoimmune condition that affects the regeneration of skin cells. Skin cells usually

grow, mature, and are shed over 28 to 30 days. With psoriasis, faulty signals in the body’s immune system trigger new skin cells to form in just three to four days. Because the skin cells grow so fast, they aren’t shed normally and pile up on the skin, creating sores, often called plaques. Thick, silvery scales form on top of these itchy and sometimes painful red patches.

Psoriasis can also cause inflammation in other areas of the body, such as the joints or blood vessels. In about one third of cases, patients develop psoriatic arthritis, which can lead to joint pain and stiffness and if untreated, can cause deformity in the joints.

According to the Canadian Dermatology Association, psoriasis affects about one million Canadians. It can be mild, moderate, or severe, depending on how much of the body it covers, the location of the plaques, and the effects on the patient’s overall quality of life.

Shame and depression are common

Psoriasis also carries a large emotional impact. “On its own, systemic

inflammation can be associated with anxiety and depression. On top of that, you have the stigmatization of living with a visible skin disease. People who don’t understand it may think you’re contagious or withdraw from you. That exacerbates the mental burden of the condition,” says Dr. Melinda Gooderham, a dermatologist and Medical Director at the SKiN Centre for Dermatology in Peterborough, ON.

Murthy knows this all too well. “The shame of it all digs into every portion of your life. The trauma of psoriasis is very real,” she says. “I suffered from depression when I couldn’t go to school or work.”

During high school, Murthy took traditional immunosuppressants like methotrexate, which can cause harsh side effects. She and her parents were desperate for her to get some relief. In her 20s, newer medications gave her hope. Then about 13 years ago, she started biologics and has been virtually rash-free since. “My life has completely changed. The new medications are amazing,” she says.

Targeted therapies are safer and more effective

Biologics are made from proteins that are similar or the same as proteins naturally occurring in the body. They target specific parts of the immune system that are responsible for inflam-



Navigating Access to Care During COVID-19

To better understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people living with psoriasis, three patient advocacy groups — the Canadian Association of Psoriasis Patients (CAPP), the Canadian Psoriasis Network, and Unmasking Psoriasis — surveyed 830 patients, 96% of whom had psoriasis.

YES (45%)

NO (55%)

Almost half of respondents avoided seeking care with a doctor or at a hospital

68%

of respondents
had a virtual appointment



Average rating was 3.6/5

Changes to Access to Treatments During COVID-19

13%

I had to change my treatment in order to manage new flares

10%

My treatment plan was disrupted because of the impacts of COVID-19

6%

I decided to change or stop my treatment because of the impacts of COVID-19

3%

My doctor changed my treatment plan because of risks related to COVID-19

Impact of COVID-19 on the Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis Community in Canada, Canadian Association of Psoriasis Patients.

The key message from Rachael Manion, Executive Director of CAPP, is for patients to know that they're not alone. There are resources available online and it's important to continue to work with your health care team to find a plan that works for you. If you've been considering seeking professional help from a dermatologist, you'll need a referral from a general physician first. Here's a list of tips and questions to help you discuss this with health care provider.

BEFORE YOUR VISIT:

- Write down the symptoms you've been experiencing and think about the ways these symptoms are impacting your daily life.
- Be sure to bring a pen and paper so you can take down what the doctor says.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR:

- What could be causing my symptoms?
- What's the most important thing (or few things) I should know about this condition?
- How can I easily explain to people what psoriasis is? Do you have any suggestions or strategies for how to manage people's responses and reactions to psoriasis?
- Now that you've seen my psoriasis and understood how this disease is affecting my life, how would you qualify my psoriasis in terms of severity? Mild, moderate, or severe?
- (If you've been diagnosed with moderate to severe psoriasis:) Can you recommend a dermatologist that specifically treats psoriasis or uses advanced therapies to treat psoriasis?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR AND DERMATOLOGIST ABOUT TREATMENTS:

- What's the stepwise approach you'd take to treat my psoriasis? How can we make a tailored treatment plan for me?
- What treatment goal would we set together in regard to my psoriasis?
- What treatment are you proposing? What should I expect from this treatment?
- What are the normal side effects and what should I be sure to notify you about? Are these side effects permanent?
- Are there things I should do (or avoid) that would maximize the impact or efficacy of the treatment?
- How quickly will I see results? How will I know when it's successful? Will my skin completely clear up?
- What timeline do we set to evaluate the success of this treatment and move on if it's not successful? Can I book an appointment now for that timeline?



To learn more about psoriasis, visit canadianpsoriasis.ca or psoriasisNL.ca.



Deva Murthy
Psoriasis patient



Dr. Melinda Gooderham
Dermatologist & Medical Director,
SKiN Centre for Dermatology

mation. These targeted therapies regulate the faulty signals that occur with psoriasis and are safer than medications that broadly suppress the immune system.

Dr. Gooderham says that some people may worry about receiving treatments that affect the immune system during the COVID-19 pandemic. "These newer biologic treatments are very targeted, so they aren't suppressing the other parts of your immune system," she says, adding that patients shouldn't be afraid to visit their health care provider during the pandemic. She stresses that stringent safety protocols are in place in medical offices and hospitals, that there are also virtual care options, and that it's important for patients to seek diagnosis and treatment.

Murthy wants people with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis to know that they don't have to suffer. "You may need to try a few treatments until you find the right one for you, but there are so many options now and they're so fabulous," she says. "It's easy to get depressed. It can be a dehumanizing disease. You suffer in silence for so long because you're embarrassed. It's important to have faith and hope and to talk about it. If you shed light on it, then the darkness goes away."

Talk to your dermatologist or your health care professional for a referral to a dermatologist who treats psoriasis. ♥

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ALESSE STANDS WITH WOMEN.

Together, with **Plan International Canada** and its **Because I am a Girl** movement, we give back by empowering young women to reach their full potential and achieve greatness.

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Q&A: Read the full interviews online at truenorthliving.ca.

Choose to Be Kind to Yourself Every Day

Iskra Lawrence — a model, body acceptance activist, and Global Brand Ambassador for Aerie — is a role model in every way, using her platform to empower women of all shapes and sizes while taking down body shamers. Mediaplanet asked her about body confidence and self-love.

What makes you feel body-confident?

Knowing that my body is my home and that it's capable of so many incredible things. I feel confident when I love my body or achieve a new goal I set for myself — maybe lifting a heavier weight, trying a new type of exercise, or hiking in a new location.

What advice would you offer to people struggling with self-image?

You have to break down where

any negative feelings towards yourself stem from and start to redefine how you value yourself. We all have so much to offer the world and so many beautiful and unique qualities, so you need to find those things and remind yourself of them when you're feeling down — whether it be by affirmations, post-it notes on your mirror, or having a friend work with you to send little positive reminders.

Why is it important for women to practise self-love and personal care?

Self-care is important for all people. Just like we learn a skill in life that aids our career or we do kind things for others, we deserve to also invest time into caring for ourselves. We have to take care of healing ourselves on the inside, too. Showing yourself kindness can really change your whole life and I believe that self-love starts with choosing to be kind to yourself every day. ♥

PHOTO COURTESY OF MILES DIGGS



Self-Care and Skin Care with Sasha Exeter

Self-care is a necessary part of making sure we stay healthy mentally, physically, and emotionally. To entrepreneur and content creator **Sasha Exeter**, alone time is as crucial as ever. Here she shares her self-care routine, skin care tips, and advice for modern moms.

As an extremely busy entrepreneur and mother, how do you manage to take time for yourself?

Since becoming a mother three years ago, I've found it difficult to take time for myself but I've also learned how important it is to make time for myself. Time's quite limited as a busy entrepreneur and single mother, as you can imagine. What's worked for me has been to schedule this

time into my calendar just like I would any work meeting. Workouts, massage treatments, bubble baths, meditation — it all has to be scheduled into my weekly calendar because, just like a meeting, I wouldn't cancel it.

What advice do you have for moms on maintaining healthy skin as their bodies change?

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. You can use the best products in the

world in your skin care routine, but if you're not nourishing yourself from the inside out, none of the topical stuff matters. Use a face mask treatment to exfoliate, detox, and unclog pores one to two times per week. Find a toner or clarifying lotion that works for your skin to deep clean and refine your pores after cleansing, and remember to apply a sunscreen with at least SPF 30 every day. ♥

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID PIKE



Allana Davison's Top Tips for Clean Beauty

Mediaplanet spoke with **Allana Davison**, a Toronto-based content creator and blogger, about her top tips to keep your skin care routine clean. Read on for her advice to readers.

With Canadians looking for clean beauty alternatives, do you have any tips for evaluating new products?

There are so many incredible products in the clean beauty space and I'm such a sucker for all things skin care within it! My biggest tip is for those with sensitive skin who are newly exploring the clean beauty space: a lot of products contain large amounts of essential oils and they can be very irritating for a lot of skin types. I tend to get breakouts when I

use products that pump up the essential oils for fragrance and hydration. Try samples first if you can, or patch test the products on a smaller area before going in deep on your face.

What do you do to feel confident in your skin when you're not feeling your best?

I'm the queen of multi-masking when my skin is feeling blue. I try to target whatever's going on with my skin, whether it be a breakout,

ultra-dryness, or just feeling dull overall from a stressful day or from travel. I keep a bunch of different masks around that serve different purposes, from my collection of go-to masks for all-around feeling amazing to those that help me with breakouts. Breakouts come and go and I just try to remind myself that whatever's happening with my skin will be temporary, not to stress about it, and to feel fabulous with a mask on in the meantime. ♥

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHERINE HOLLAND



How to Look and Feel Your Best on Video Calls

Whether the COVID-19 pandemic has you working remotely, learning from home, or connecting with friends and family virtually, look no further for the best tips on how to look and feel your best on-screen.

Melissa Vekil

1 Prep your skin

Keep your skin plump and hydrated by prepping it pre-camera with a hydrating face mask or eye mask to reduce dark under-eye circles. Boost your glow with a luxurious serum or oil, and work it into your skin with a gua sha tool or jade roller (pro tip: store them in the fridge to further reduce puffiness). Finally, don't skip the SPF — even when indoors. Your skin can still reap damage from the sun or from the blue light emitted from your laptop and phone.

2 Find your light

We've all snapped enough selfies to know that lighting is everything. Find a spot with natural light, and make sure the light source is either right in front of you or angled to the side (a bright light behind you will create a shadow over your face). If you want to go the extra step — and why wouldn't you? — invest in a ring light to clip directly onto your laptop screen or phone.

3 Put your best smile forward

Nobody likes a dull video call, so liven it up with smiles and laughs. Colgate's got you covered with the Optic White® Overnight Whitening Pen, which removes 15 years of stains in just one week.* Apply a thin layer of gel nightly after brushing and let the treatment work its magic as you catch some Zs. The special enamel-safe formula means no sensitivity during or after the treatment. Couple it with the award-winning Colgate® Optic White® Renewal toothpaste, which includes 3% hydrogen peroxide, a professionally-recommended whitening ingredient proven to deeply whiten beyond surface stains, for Colgate's best at-home whitening regimen ever. Everyone knows that the secret to success is a winning smile.

* When used as directed.

4 Business on top, casual on the bottom

Sure, you've been wearing the same pajama bottoms for a week, but no one needs to know that. A few key pieces can help you look perfectly pulled together in minutes. Throw on this season's favourite accessories like a chunky gold necklace, hoop earrings, or some chic hair clips to level up your look. Blue light glasses can also help you look polished while protecting your eyes from the glaring computer screen.

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Purchase the Colgate® Optic White® Overnight Whitening Pen and Colgate® Optic White® Renewal toothpaste at your local retailer or visit colgate.ca to learn more.



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of Yellow Stains*

