

YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

The body's overlooked defense system

This is something worth considering in the present health environment. Are you aware your skin is a barrier that can help ward off disease? What exactly are the body's defenses? There is the immune system. Stomach acid that is essential to digest food and allow the body to absorb nutrients. There is beneficial gut bacteria.

But let's not forget to include our skin. It is one of the most important defenses we have because it keeps harmful organisms and substances from getting inside our bodies. Our skin weakens as we age requiring more effort to keep it healthy. With infection on everyone's mind, it makes sense to "pamper" our skin to strengthen it.

Here is what you need to know:

- The deepest skin layer is made up of connective tissue and fat providing insulation, energy storage, and shock absorption.
- The next layer contains collagen and elastin, blood vessels, nerves, sweat and oil glands, and hair follicles.
- The top layer is a barrier consisting of

five different layers. This is the skin we can see and a major part of our body's defenses. Taken together, all of it keeps moisture in



Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick

our body and protects us from toxins, ultraviolet rays, and bacteria. As we age our skin gets thinner and the cells get flatter with a lower water content. Everything becomes less vigorous and strong, particularly in areas of sun exposure. Dry, thin

skin is more porous than plump, healthy skin. It can crack or tear easily, like paper. Any time the skin splits or is excessively dry it becomes an avenue for an organism to get in and cause problems.

How do we fortify our skin defenses? The best thing you can do is lock in moisture. Ladies already know this. Men? You might want to listen to your wives and girl-

friends about their skincare regimen. When you add moisture, the skin gets fatter and more flexible; the trick is keeping it that way.

Here is a checklist:

Use skin creams containing ceramides, a type of fat and a main component of the skin.

Use moisturizing oils, such as mineral oil.

Use products with humectants. These substances help bind water to the skin for absorption.

Ingredients to look for include glycerin, lactic acid, alpha hydroxy acid.

Of course, avoid sun exposure and use sunscreen. Consider a humidifier to add moisture to the air in your home in the fall and winter. As the humidity drops the dry air sucks moisture out of your skin. Note: While drinking water is good hydration for our overall health, it does not directly hydrate the skin.

In our dental practice we help our patients achieve optimum oral as well as

overall health. We are here for you and your family. If you have questions, please call. Think of us as your hometown resource for guidance and support.

Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick is the owner of Grand Oaks Dental, located at 3905 Liberty Highway in Anderson. A strong believer that dental fear and anxiety should not prevent any patient from receiving the highest quality dental care, Dr. Cannick has received extensive training in Sedation Dentistry and is a certified member of the Dental Organization for Conscious Sedation. She is also a member of the South Carolina Dental Association, the American Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine.

For more information about Grand Oaks Dental and the services provided, please call 864-224-0809, or click to www.grandoaksdental.com or visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GrandOaksDental>.



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Gabrielle F. Cannick, DMD, PhD
Grand Oaks Dental, LLC

3905 Liberty Highway, Anderson, SC, 29621
Call 864-224-0809 or visit www.grandoaksdental.com