

# Botanical Antioxidants for Skin Health in the World of Cosmeceuticals

Andreea Simo<sup>1</sup>, Naiome Kawal<sup>1</sup>, Gopinadhan Paliyath<sup>2</sup> and Marica Bakovic<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Human Health and Nutritional Sciences, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1, Canada

<sup>2</sup>Department of Plant Agriculture, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1, Canada

Correspondence should be addressed to Marica Bakovic, mbakovic@uoguelph.ca

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**Abstract** The desire to maintain a youthful appearance in an aging population has accelerated several advancements in the cosmeceuticals market. The term cosmeceutical defines products containing bioactive substances that cannot be considered cosmetics or drugs. A variety of ingredients have been used in cosmeceuticals to improve the health and appearance of aged skin, and during the past decade, the utility of botanical natural products have gained much attention in the West. Throughout this review, the skin aging, and photoaging are discussed, mechanisms which underlie these processes are explored, and treatment options using natural plant extracts are examined.

**Keywords** *Skin Aging; Dermatology; Antioxidants; UV Rays; Cosmetics*

## 1. Introduction

Improved life conditions as well as medical and technological developments have led to an increase in life expectancy, with a higher number of people now living to a comparatively longer life, with the elderly population becoming a significantly higher proportion of the population in many countries (Giacomoni, 2005). Biologists and the pharmaceutical industry are seeking ways to achieve more success in improving the quality of life in the elderly. Some believe that it is possible to extend the lifespan of humans and therefore seek ways to increase longevity; while others have more reserved expectations and focus on applications that make it possible to grow older while avoiding aging and its associated pathologies. As a result, aging and longevity are considered as two different fields of research by most scientists (Giacomoni, 2005). A commonly accepted definition of aging is the accumulation of molecular damage with time (Giacomoni, 1992). Research employing this model definition has been able to make several advances in understanding the mechanisms of skin aging, given the easy access to skin tissues. Various research approaches use models such as cell cultures, animal research and human studies, thus facilitating the search for effective rejuvenating treatments (Giacomoni, 2005). Together with the aging of muscular and skeletal systems, skin aging is a process with very direct effects. The skin is a major sensory organ, as it is the body's first line of defence

against infectious organisms and physical harm, and it plays a critical role in controlling body temperature. While slowing the aging processes of the skin will not only help maintain a youthful appearance, but it will also have beneficial effects for the whole body. The skin is an ideal model for studying the onset of aging because it is the easiest organ to observe, and aging of the skin is not a life-threatening process (Giacomoni, 2005).

## 2. Inflammatory Models for Skin Aging

Collecting knowledge about the skin aging process has led to the micro-inflammatory model, which describes how both internal and external factors can contribute to the process (Giacomoni, 1996a, 2001, 2005). This model focuses on observations indicating that the majority of factors identified to speed up skin aging share common features, such as the ability to initiate the synthesis of intercellular adhesion molecule-1 (ICAM-1) in endothelial cells. Factors known to speed up the aging process include ultraviolet (UV) radiation, trauma, and hormonal imbalance, among several others (Giacomoni, 2005). After synthesis, ICAM-1 is transported to the surface of the endothelial cells in the capillary vessels of the dermis, where it signals monocytes and macrophages to attach to the surface of capillary vessels and migrate into the dermis.

These steps are controlled by the release of pro-oxidants and by hydrolytic enzyme activation which damage the extracellular matrix and surrounding cells (Giacomoni, 1996b). The cell damage triggers an arachidonic acid dependent inflammatory response to release prostaglandins and leukotrienes which signal the mastocytes to release histamine and tumour necrosis factor 1 alpha (TNF-1 $\alpha$ ). Histamine and TNF-1 $\alpha$  can further induce more endothelial cells of the skin capillaries to synthesize ICAM-1 and to bind circulating monocytes and macrophages. Numerous experiments provide research that this self-maintaining and self-amplifying micro-inflammatory is believed to be responsible for skin damage via production of highly reactive oxygen species (ROS), ultimately resulting in skin aging.

This model focuses on the importance of identifying major environmental and lifestyle factors which cause skin aging and avoid them. The sun is still the greatest environmental factor that accelerates skin aging. Many defences are available against solar radiation, including a number of natural and synthetic sunscreens with varying SPF. Sunscreens are photostable, non-irritant and non-phototoxic substances which are able to absorb UV radiation before it can cause cellular damage (Giacomoni, 2005).

## 3. Skin Aging Process: Intrinsic Aging and Extrinsic Aging

Several changes commonly linked with skin aging are a direct result of sun exposure. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, researchers observed differences in the facial skin of outdoor workers when compared to that of indoor workers (Nghiem et al., 2001). The skin of these outdoor workers had several changes associated with various skin cancers, such as thickening and brownish discoloration on light-exposed skin (Nghiem et al., 2001). The skin aging process falls into two categories: natural skin aging (intrinsic aging) and photoaging (extrinsic aging). Intrinsic aging is induced by internal physiological factors, while extrinsic aging results from exposure to various external factors (Thring et al., 2009).

### 3.1. Intrinsic Skin Aging

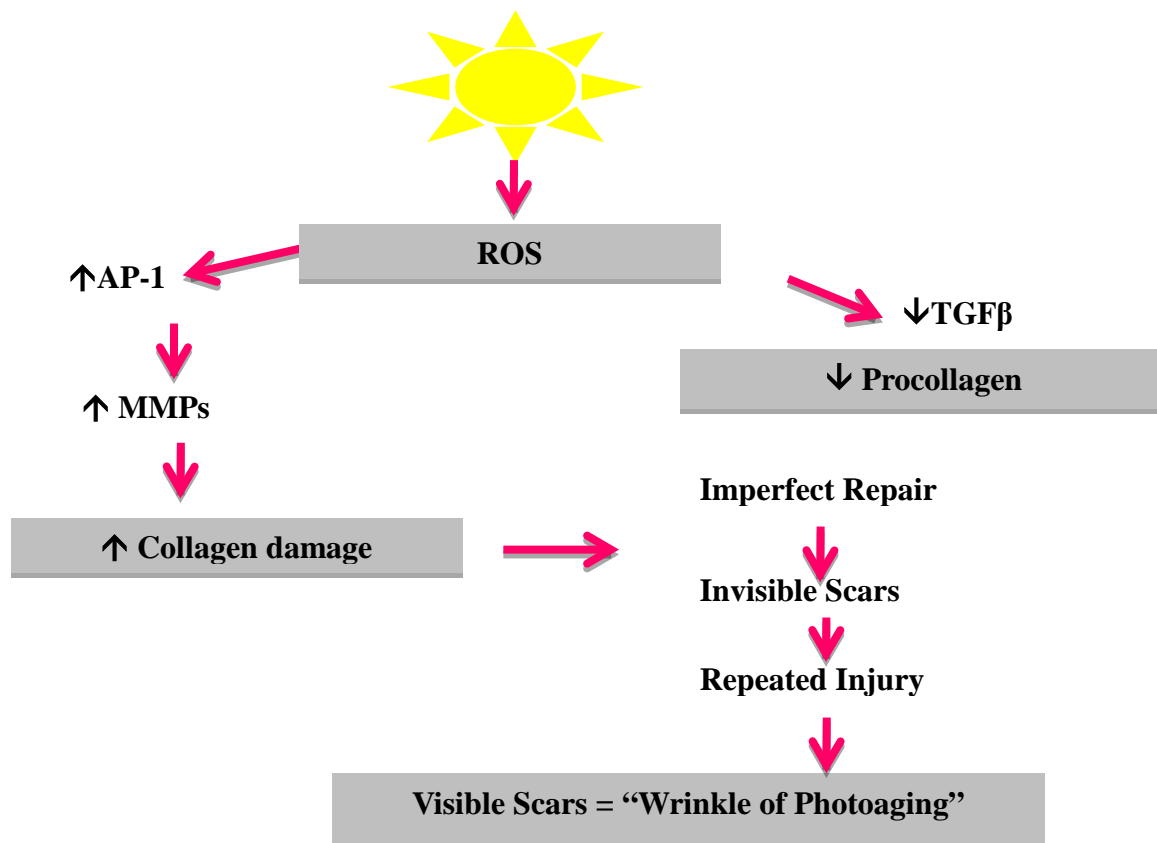
Intrinsic aging is characterized by reduced collagen synthesis, degeneration of elastic fiber networks, and loss of hydration, resulting in laxity, fine wrinkling and the development of benign growths (Criscan et al., 2012). This process occurs as slow but progressive and irreversible tissue degeneration. Telomere shortening and metabolic oxidative damage from ROS play a key role in the process of aging (Kosmadaki et al., 2004). In aged skin, there is elevation of transcription factor

activator protein 1 (AP-1) (Chung et al., 2000), which is involved in cellular processes such as differentiation, proliferation, and apoptosis (Ameyar et al., 2003). AP-1 is also involved in promoting collagen breakdown by upregulating matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) (Helfrich et al., 2008).

MMPs contribute to remodeling of tissue associated with several physiological and pathological processes including morphogenesis, tissue repair and cirrhosis (Helfrich et al., 2008). The activity of MMPs is elevated in aged skin, and is associated with increased levels of degraded collagen (4-fold higher in aged vs. young individuals) (Fisher et al., 2002). Furthermore, synthesis of types I and III procollagen is reduced in aged skin the combination of increased collagen breakdown and decreased synthesis of new collagen results in an overall decrease in collagen levels (Kim et al., 2004; Varani et al., 2000).

### 3.2. Extrinsic Skin Aging

Extrinsic photoaging is characterized by wrinkling and furrowing with a thickening of the skin, along with a variety of benign, premalignant, and malignant neoplasms (Gilchrest, 1989). UV irradiation from the sun leads to the generation of ROS which results in the upregulation of AP-1 and downregulation of transforming growth factor  $\beta$  (TGF- $\beta$ ). An increase in AP-1 activity leads to the augmentation of MMPs which would subsequently trigger the breakdown of collagen.



**Figure 1:** The Effects of UV Rays from the Sun in the Process of Photoaging Indicating where Botanicals can Mediate Positive Changes, to Prevent and/or Decrease Signs on Photoaging

As a down regulation in TGF- $\beta$  activity is associated with a decrease in procollagen production, together an increase in collagen breakdown combined with a decrease in procollagen production results in repeated exposure to UV irradiation. This repeated exposure leads to the accumulation of damage, and eventually results in visible solar exposure scars or wrinkles associated with Photoaging

(see Figure 1) (adopted from Helfrich et al., 2008). Histologically, when compared to sun-protected skin, a 20% reduction in total collagen and a decrease in cellular content were observed in photo-damaged skin (Schwartz et al., 1993). The molecular changes of photoaging are considered to amplify natural skin aging (Fisher et al., 2002). As a result, UV radiation suppresses cell-mediated immunity, and predisposes individuals to skin cancer, immune system failure, and infection. Furthermore, UV radiation induces suppression of the local effector mechanisms involved in immune responses to recall antigens and inhibits the contact hypersensitivity response (Cooper et al., 1992; 1995; Damian et al., 1997; Morison et al., 1985; Yoshikawa et al., 1990). Such exposure causes alterations in the connective tissue through the formation of lipid peroxides, cell contents and enzymes, as well as ROS (Thring et al., 2009). ROS are free radicals, defined as atoms or molecules with an unpaired electron; and it is this electron that causes much of the damage (Giacomoni et al., 1992). Lipid peroxides can be broken down to secondary products that damage the extracellular matrix, while ROS are associated with the loss of skin elasticity (Benaiges et al., 1995; Kaur et al., 2006). Biological systems require ROS for various metabolic pathways, thus the body is able to generate reactive oxygen species such as superoxide and nitric oxide through defined pathways (Han et al., 2001; Lupo et al., 2007). However, overproduction ROS can cause severe oxidative stress and thus damage tissues, through inactivation and degradation of protein, lipid, carbohydrate and cellular DNA components (Brooker, 2011). In addition to nuclear DNA, mitochondrial DNA can also be transformed by oxidative stress. As DNA repair is less efficient in mitochondria, mutations rapidly accumulate. A common deletion in the DNA has been identified and shown to be very common in photoaged cells; this deletion can be generated by UVA and such mutations may alter the ability of cells to carry out oxidative phosphorylation, ultimately generating additional oxidative stress (Pinnell et al., 2003).

#### 4. UV Rays and Skin Cancers

The foundation of photoaging therapy consists of a broad spectrum ultraviolet-A radiation (UVA) and ultraviolet-B radiation (UVB) sunscreens. UVR causes several acute effects in the skin, including immediate pigment darkening, delayed tanning, sunburn, epidermal thickening, as well as several immune responses. Most importantly, UVA and UVB radiation have been observed to contribute to the disruption of extracellular matrix, which is a characteristic symptom of photoaging (Sorg et al., 2005; Talwar et al., 1995). It has long been thought that UVB causes most damage, but it is becoming increasingly evident that the biological effects of UVA is significantly more important; UVA also penetrates the skin more deeply than does UVB (Dekker et al., 2005). The mechanism of UV radiation associated dermal damage includes, decreased collagen I and III synthesis, increased collagen degradation by TGF- $\beta$  and activator protein A, infiltration of inflammatory cells predominantly by neutrophils into the dermis releasing ROS (Saha, 2012; Sorg et al., 2005; Talwar et al., 1995). Biomolecules weakly absorb UVA, but it can generate ROS, which oxidize proteins, DNA, and lipids (Cooke et al., 2000; Hattori et al., 1996; Struthers et al., 1998). Cells have developed defense systems to protect themselves from ROS, including endogenous, exogenous and enzymatic antioxidants (Dekker et al., 2005). Heme oxygenase-1 (HO-1) has a cytoprotective function and is strongly inducible in several mammalian cell types by chemical and physical stresses (Elbirt et al., 1999; Noel et al., 1997). This has been shown that HO-1 is highly inducible in skin fibroblasts by UVA; however it does not induce HO-1 expression in human but can induce HO-1 expression in epidermis of hairless mice (Allanson et al., 2004; Applegate et al., 1995; Dekker et al., 2005).

UVB irradiation is a carcinogen and can induce squamous cell carcinomas (Pinnell et al., 2003). As DNA absorbs UVB radiation, DNA mutations can arise. The UV action spectrum for generation of squamous cell carcinoma occurs mostly in the UVB region, though there is some activity in the UVA (Pinnell et al., 2003). While UVB contributes to tumor initiation, UVA primarily causes tumor promotion and generates more oxidative stress due to higher lipid peroxidation efficiency. Additionally, UVA extensively damages DNA by causing strand breaks and oxidation of nucleic acids (Pinnell et al.,

2003). In addition, UVA can induce MMP synthesis that can enhance the aggressiveness of skin cancer. Sunlight can suppress the immune function of skin and promote skin cancer formation (Pinnell et al., 2003). Approximately 40% of human beings are susceptible to UV immunosuppression. Although most studies of UV immunosuppression have been conducted using UVB, recent studies demonstrated the role of UVA in immunosuppression, and the capacity of antioxidants to prevent such immunosuppression (Duthie et al., 1999; Nghiem et al., 2001; Pinnell et al., 2003). Moreover, in addition to more efficiently generating ROS in skin, UVA causes additional biological effects different from UVB. Sunlight contains significantly higher amounts of UVA in comparison to UVB, and the UVB is almost entirely absorbed in the epidermis, while UVA is capable of reaching deeper dermal layers and even disrupting circulating blood cells (Pinnell et al., 2003).

## 5. The Skin Care Industry

Skin care is the largest of the cosmetic products worldwide, valued at approximately 96 billion in 2011 (Tyrimou, 2012), with the Asia-Pacific accounting for 43% of the skin care market in 2011. (Tyrimou, 2012). What's more, the sales for anti-aging products in North America rose by nearly 14% in 2011 and are estimated to continue to increase around the world (Tyrimou, 2012). The realm of cosmeceuticals is rapidly expanding in numerous countries. This expansion is a result of the availability of new ingredients, the financial rewards for developing successful products, consumer demand, and a better understanding of skin physiology (Tyrimou, 2012). The cosmeceutical industry combines the many skills of cosmetic creators, along with the creativity of marketing experts, the requests of an aging population and the understanding of dermatologists into several products (Giacomoni et al., 1996a).

The search for effective and safe sun protection has propelled cooperation and mutual exchange between scientists within the industry and academia, collaboration most successful within the science field of photobiology (Giacomoni, 2005). Sunscreens are the "gold standard" for photodamage protection (Choudhary et al., 2010). However, it has been shown that sunscreens provide much less protection than expected, but providing a false sense of security. Sun protection factor (SPF) of individual products is measured by testing the efficacy of the component to filter UV at an application rate of 2 mg/cm<sup>2</sup> of skin (Pinnell et al., 2003). In fact, controlled studies of actual sunscreen usage demonstrated that sunscreens are applied to skin at only 0.5 mg/cm<sup>2</sup> or less, and given that SPF concentration is not linearly proportional, 0.5 mg/cm<sup>2</sup> application of high SPF sunscreen to skin only provides less than SPF 3 protection (Autier et al., 2001; Pinnell et al., 2003) (not clear). Moreover, synthetic sunscreens can potentially cause harm as free radicals may be produced by ingredients in the products themselves when activated by UV radiation (Cross et al., 2001; Pinnell et al., 2003). Therefore, such problems enhance the introduction of natural products for sun protection, and are considered safer. As a result, this allows for innovation in the cosmeceutical market to develop safer, naturally derived products. Some of these naturally derived products have proven to be helpful, whereas more evidence is needed for others (Amer et al., 2009).

## 6. Natural Skin Care Therapy

Due to extensive research on different plant species and associated therapeutic principles, traditional medicine is being re-examined (Moulisha et al., 2010). It has been demonstrated that plants synthesize chemicals with powerful antioxidant activity to control the oxidative stress caused by sunlight and oxygen (Moulisha et al., 2010). Anti-collagenase and anti-elastase activities have been found in secondary metabolites and plant extracts (Thring et al., 2009). Collagenase and elastase are enzymes that contribute to the degradation of collagen within the skin. Several Plant polyphenols such as flavonoids, phenolic acids and tannins have been found to be collagenase inhibitory compounds which may serve as a platform for synthesis of other inhibitory molecules (Kim et al., 2004). Polyphenols, such as epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), extracted from green tea (*Camellia*

*sinensis*) have been extensively explored and found to be effective inhibitors with particular good anti-elastase activity at concentrations of 250  $\mu$ M (Kim et al., 2004; Thring et al., 2009).

Triterpenoids known as boswellic acids isolated from frankincense (*Boswellia spp.*) resin have also indicated anti-elastase activity (Mereish et al., 1991). In a study analysing 150 plants extracts for their ability to inhibit elastase, six showed activity over 65%. These included cinnamon (*Cinnamomum cassia*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) and nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*). Polyphenols isolated from persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*) leaf showed anti-collagenase and anti-elastase activity (Lee et al., 1999; Thring et al., 2009). This activity was thought to be a result of flavonoids present in the polyphenol extract. Plant extracts and natural products which have shown anti-enzyme activity represent a wide variety of the types of phenolic compounds found in plants (Lee et al., 1999; Thring et al., 2009). White tea and cleavers extracts also demonstrated high anti-elastase activity, suppressing over 89% and 57.9% of enzyme activity respectively. Similar anti-elastase effects were observed in burdock root (50.9%), bladderwrack (50.2%), anise (31.9%) and angelica (31.6%) (Thring et al., 2009).

Sunscreens are useful but not ideal due to incomplete spectral protection and risk of toxicity (Pinnell et al., 2003). Antioxidants, common ingredients in cosmeceuticals, have been used by the industry for many years as a result of several benefits such as anti-aging and anti-inflammatory properties. In addition to blocking UV-induced inflammatory pathways, antioxidants provide protection by quenching free radicals (Reszko et al., 2009). While skin uses antioxidants for protection against sun damage (Pinnell et al., 2003), the system can be overwhelmed by excess exposure to various sources of pro-oxidants, which induce oxidative stress (Rabe et al., 2006). UV radiation absorbed by various chromophores in skin result in photochemical reactions (Amer et al., 2009). These reactions result in DNA alterations such as oxidation of nucleic acids and gene mutations and can change proteins and lipids, causing changes in cell function and leading to tissue aging (Amer et al., 2009).

Two mechanisms are involved in free radical natural skin defense: 1) enzymatic defense by glutathione peroxidase and extracellular superoxide dismutase; and 2) non-enzymatic processes through components such as vitamin C, tocopherols and other food derived antioxidants (Pinnell et al., 2003). Antioxidants pair up with free radicals, ultimately minimizing cross linkage and DNA damage (Amer et al., 2009). Topical antioxidants provide a great treatment option due to the close proximity of the molecules to the skin where it can block the solar radiation and as oral antioxidants. In some cases the orally administered components may not reach the skin in sufficient amounts to be effective (Amer et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 1999). However, several recent studies have shown that orally administered components (omega -3-fatty acids, lycopene) are more effective when consumed through diet (beauty from within). Several obstacles exist within the industry regarding effectiveness of topical application of antioxidants: 1) instability, such compounds can be reduced or oxidized easily; 2) color, difficulty to produce an acceptable aesthetic product; 3) lack of adequate skin penetration; 4) photo-protection of the antioxidant etc., (Amer et al., 2009). Recent categories of antioxidants include a wide variety of natural plant components such as polyphenols (Amer et al., 2009).

## 7. Polyphenols

Polyphenols are a large class of chemical compounds synthesized by plants and are rich in fruits, vegetables, tea, cocoa and other plant products, and have been related to health benefits shown by these products. Polyphenols have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic and other biological properties which may protect from oxidative stress and several diseases (Kanti et al., 2009). Polyphenols are abundant in nature and extremely diverse with over 8,000 different polyphenolic compounds currently identified (Kanti et al., 2009). Although all polyphenols have similar chemical structures, subtle differences exist which allow for subdivision into main subclasses: phenolic acids, stilbenes, tannins, diferuloylmethanes and flavonoids (Kondratyuk et al., 2004; Kanti et al., 2009; Spencer et al., 2008). Flavonoids and phenolic acids are capable of scavenging free radicals and

chelating metal ions such as iron and copper known to participate in the initiation of free radical reactions (Utara et al., 2009). Flavonoids act as scavengers of free radicals and terminate the process of ROS production as well as inhibit the activities of several redox enzymes, and act in redox-sensitive signalling cascades to inhibit cell damage caused by free radicals (Cao et al., 1996; Parmar et al., 2010; Patel et al., 2005; Robak et al., 1988; Svobodova et al., 2003; Torel et al., 1986).

## 8. Botanicals for Skin Health

### 8.1. Soybeans

Soybeans and related food products are a rich source of a subclass of flavonoids called isoflavones (Pinnell et al., 2003). Isoflavones have gained increased popularity because epidemiologic studies suggest that they may be responsible for the lower risk of cardiovascular disease and breast cancer in populations that consume large amounts of soy (Glazier et al., 2001).

The most abundant isoflavones in soy are genistein and daidzein, which are present as glycosides that are converted to the free isoflavones forms (Brandenberger et al., 1997). The glycosides are not estrogenically active, and may be used for topical applications (Miksicek, 1995). Isoflavones are weak estrogens; however their affinity to the estrogen receptor is 4-5 folds lower than the hormonal estrogens. Estrogens function by coupling with estrogen receptors in the nucleus, turning linked genes on or off, which leads to proliferative or differentiation responses. Two types of estrogen receptors (ER) have been identified and are both present in the skin: ER alpha (ER- $\alpha$ ) and ER beta (ER- $\beta$ ) (Brandenberger et al., 1997). Genistein has a 30-fold higher affinity for ER- $\beta$  than ER- $\alpha$ ; however, greater ER- $\alpha$  agonist activity has been shown (Barkhem et al., 1998; Katiyar et al., 1999). Bioavailability of isoflavones, just as any other polyphenols, is considerably low. Still, the circulating levels of phytoestrogens are capable of inducing a biological effect (Pinnell et al., 2003). Isoflavones may block the estrogen receptor leading to anti-estrogenic effects (Pinnell et al., 2003). Skin properties change dramatically during and after menopause (Affinito et al., 1999; Brinchat et al., 1987; Castelo-Branco et al., 1992). The thickness of the skin reduces along with the collagen content. Oral or topical administration of estrogen has shown to increase thickness and collagen content of skin (Brinchat et al., 1987; Castelo-Branco et al., 1992; Maheux et al., 1994; Varila et al., 1995). Genistein might also exhibit collagen-stimulating effects. Throughout studies using skin fibroblasts, genistein increased collagen, type I, alpha 2 (COL1A2) gene expressions (Greenwel et al., 1995) which may be an alternative process independent of the estrogen receptor action (Greenwel et al., 1995).

Genistein is an effective antioxidant, as it scavenges peroxy radicals and protects against lipid peroxidation in vitro and in vivo (Hwang et al., 2000; Wiseman et al., 2000). This isoflavone has also been shown to inhibit in vitro UV-induced DNA oxidation and reduced hydrogen peroxide-generated DNA damage in human lymphocytes (Giles et al., 1997; Widyarini et al., 2001). This antioxidant has also demonstrated anti-inflammatory properties by suppressing UVB-induced expression of cyclooxygenase-2 in keratinocytes and inhibiting UVB-stimulated prostaglandin E2 synthesis in human epidermal cell cultures (Isoherranen et al., 1999; Miller et al., 1994). Finally, genistein has immune-modulating effects as it has proven to inhibit UV-induced immunosuppression in mice (Widyarini et al., 2001).

### 8.2. Tea

Tea (*Camellia sinensis*) is a potent source of polyphenols, containing approximately 30% to 35% of the dry weight of the leaf. Tea polyphenols are widely studied for their anticarcinogenic activity mostly in animal models of various cancers including that of skin. Tea polyphenols have shown strong skin cancer inhibition in mouse 2-stage carcinogenesis models (Alexis et al., 1999; Bickers et al., 2000; Bode et al., 2000; Katiyar et al., 1996; Yang et al., 2002). Both oral and topical green tea polyphenols

lowered chemically induced and UV-induced skin tumors (Huang et al., 1992; Wang et al., 1991). Green tea also inhibited growth of established skin tumors, as it prevented conversion of benign skin tumors to squamous cell carcinoma (Miller et al., 1994; Wang et al., 1992). Green tea and black tea were equivalent in effect and decaffeinated tea was shown to be less effective (Wang et al., 1994).

While the nature of anticarcinogenic effect is unknown, tea polyphenols are powerful antioxidants as they quench singlet oxygen, superoxide radical, hydroxyl radical, hydrogen peroxide, and peroxy radical (Grinberg et al., 1997; Guo et al., 2003; Jovanovic et al., 2000; Reszko et al., 2009; Shi et al., 2000; Unno et al., 2002). It has been shown that tea polyphenols reduced UV-induced lipid peroxidation in skin (Kim et al., 2001) and oxidation of proteins in a free radical-generating system in vitro (Nakagawa et al., 2002). Tea polyphenols also regulate cellular redox signal transduction. In human keratinocytes, (-) epigallocatechin-3-gallate inhibited factors involved in the photoaging process such as UVB-induced AP-1 activity and mitogen-activated protein kinase cell signaling pathways (Barthelman et al., 1998; Katiyar et al., 2001).

Studies indicate that tea polyphenols are anti-mutagenic. Tea polyphenols protected DNA from oxidation by hydrogen peroxide and UVB in vitro (Wei et al., 1999). In human skin fibroblasts, tea polyphenols protected against radiation-induced DNA damage (Parshad et al., 1998). In Jurkat lymphocytes, epigallocatechin gallate decreased DNA damage caused by free-radical generators and hydrogen peroxide (Johnson et al., 2000). Topical application of green tea polyphenols reduced UVB-induced pyrimidine dimers in epidermis and dermis (Katiyar et al., 2000).

Tea polyphenols have anti-inflammatory effects. Topically applied green tea polyphenols reduced UV-induced erythema and sunburn in human skin (Elmets et al., 2001). Topical (-) epigallocatechin-3-gallate decreased UVB-induced inflammatory responses and infiltration of leukocytes in human skin (Katiyar et al., 1999). Green tea polyphenols also have immune-modulating effects. Green tea polyphenols protected human skin from UV-induced Langerhans cell depletion skin (Elmets et al., 2001). Topical epigallocatechin-3-gallate protected against UVB-induced immunosuppression and tolerance in mice, while topical application of EGCG inhibited carcinogenesis and selectively increased apoptosis in UVB-induced skin tumors in mice (Katiyar et al., 1999; Lu et al., 2002).

In a human study, topical green tea extract inhibited UV-induced erythema and reduced DNA damage (Elmets et al., 2001). In another study, the combined use of oral and topical green tea on the clinical and histologic characteristics of photoaging was evaluated in 40 women with moderate photoaged skin (Chiu et al., 2005). The subjects received a green tea 10% cream plus an oral 300 mg green tea supplementation twice daily or a placebo treatment for 8 weeks. Through patient self-assessments, it was revealed that the green tea group had significant improvements in overall appearance (Chiu et al., 2005). Those receiving the green tea regimen also had a significant improvement in elastic tissue (Chiu et al., 2005).

### 8.3. Coffee Plant

The whole fruit of the coffee plant has been shown to contain a wide range of polyphenol compounds, including proanthocyanidins, quinic acid, caffeic acid, caffeine and chlorogenic acid (Lupo et al., 2007). In the past, coffee growers discarded the fruit of the coffee plant, harvesting the coffee bean alone, however in vitro and ex vivo studies revealed that the outer fruit of the coffee plant has effective hydroxyl radical scavenging activity (Baumann, 2007a). Another study also found a positive relation between the level of chlorogenic acid in the extract and antioxidant activity (Baumann, 2007a). Additionally it was shown that caffeic acid inhibits UVB induced expression of COX-2 which can eventually lead to skin cancer (Kang et al., 2009). Moreover, positive effects on UVB induced carcinogenesis, as well as patches induced by UVB were ameliorated with caffeine administration and



topical application respectively in mice (Conney et al., 2008). In addition, co-incubation with quinic acid prevented skin death that was caused by UV damage in skin cultures (Mammone et al., 2006).

#### 8.4. Fern

The extract of the *Polypodium leucotomos* (PL), a fern plant grown in Central America, was found to contain active components which include a variety of phenolic compounds such as p-coumaric, ferulic, caffeic, vanillic, and chlorogenic acids (Gombau et al., 2006). These compounds have shown to retain antioxidant, photoprotective, and chemopreventive properties, inhibiting lipid peroxidases and scavenging free radicals (Gombau et al., 2006; Middelkamp-Hup et al., 2004). PL appeared to be an effective photoprotective agent post oral administrations. It has been shown that there was a significant decrease in erythema in treated skin in healthy participants exposed to varying doses of UV radiation; with or without an oral administration of the extract (Middelkamp-Hup et al., 2004). Histologically, treated skin was characterized by less epidermal damage, fewer cells with sunburn, and fewer cyclobutane pyrimidine dimers (mutagenic and carcinogenic compounds), less epidermal proliferation, and less dermal mast cell infiltration (Middelkamp-Hup et al., 2004). Moreover, PL was also able to suppress the production of ROS that was induced by UV, therefore acting as antioxidant agent (Gonzalez et al., 2011). In addition, orally administered PL to mice resulted in inhibition of UVB radiation that triggered skin cancer (Siscovick et al., 2008).

#### 8.5. Pine Bark

Pycnogenol™ is an extract from French maritime pine bark which contains several phenolic and polyphenolic flavonoids (Berson, 2008; Yoshikawa et al., 1990). Antioxidant properties of such compounds include prevention of lipid peroxidation and reductions in oxidative stress via an increase in glutathione (GSH) and the GSH antioxidant defense enzymes (Sime et al., 2004; Yoshikawa et al., 1990). In a mouse model, when a pycnogenol extract was applied after daily irradiation, UV radiation-induced inflammation, immunosuppression and carcinogenesis were reduced (Kanti et al., 2009; Yoshikawa et al., 1990). The wound-healing properties of this extract were further confirmed in an experimental rat model, where application of a Pycnogenol™ 1% to 5% gel significantly shortened wound healing time in a dose-dependent manner (Brincat et al., 1965). Moreover, Pycnogenol™ supplementation resulted in beneficial effects on skin hydration as well as skin elasticity which are mediated by hyaluronic acid and collagen, therefore suggesting this compound role in skin aging (Marini et al., 2012).

#### 8.6. Mushroom

Various types of mushrooms such as shiitake and reishi have been consumed by people in many Asian countries for centuries (Berson et al., 2008). Mushroom extracts have been shown to have potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, including inhibition of lipid peroxidation, activities of superoxide dismutase and metalloproteinases, and levels of proinflammatory cytokines (Berson et al., 2008; Mau et al., 2002). In addition to these effects, the shiitake complex has been shown to inhibit the enzymes elastase, involved in elastin breakdown, and AP-1, involved in collagen breakdown (Berson et al., 2008). Moreover, a study on 45 healthy adults demonstrated that mushroom extracts stimulated growth of epidermal skin cells (Berson et al., 2008). Mushroom complex was applied as a serum twice daily or as a cream once daily to randomized sites of treatment (Nebus et al., 2007). Sites treated with all formulations of the mushroom extract were associated with significantly faster cell turnover rates compared with untreated sites of control subjects (Nebus et al., 2007). Similar effects were observed in a study involving 31 women subjects with moderate facial photodamage. Assessments revealed significant improvements in skin texture, clarity, a reduction in overall photoaging, fine lines, and pigmentation within only 8 weeks of treatment (Nebus et al., 2007).

### 8.7. Milk Thistle

Silymarin, a flavonoid isolated from milk thistle plant, is composed of different flavonolignans including silybin, silidianin, silychristin and isosilybin (Mereish et al., 1991; Wagner et al., 1974). Silybin shows more antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties than other compounds in milk thistle, and is known to be an antioxidant compound with skin cancer chemopreventive properties (Comoglio et al., 1990; Wagner et al., 1974). Several experiments show that topical application of silymarin significantly inhibited UVB-induced skin edema, formation of sunburn and apoptotic cells (Katiyar et al., 1997). This evidence suggested that silymarin might provide protection against different stages of UVB-induced carcinogenesis (Afaq et al., 2002). It was shown that topical application of silymarin protects against UVB radiation-induced non-melanoma skin cancer in mice (Afaq et al., 2002). Female SKH-1 hairless mice were subjected to UVB-induced tumor initiation, phorbol ester-mediated tumor promotion; as well as DMBA-induced tumor initiation, UVB-mediated tumor promotion, and UVB-induced complete carcinogenesis (Katiyar et al., 1997). In all three procedures, topical application of silymarin prior to UVB irradiation/DMBA exposure significantly lowered tumor incidence, tumor multiplicity per mouse, and average tumor volume (Afaq et al., 2002).

### 8.8. Grape Seed

Grape seed extracted from various plants such as grapes are rich in pro-anthocyanidins, part of the flavonoid family (Vinson et al., 1995). Pro-anthocyanidins are powerful antioxidants with strong free radical scavenging activities (Guo et al., 1996). A potential antioxidant mechanism of photo protection by grape seed proanthocyanidins (GSP) has been suggested, as GSP inhibited the depletion of antioxidant defense components caused by UVB and appears to enhance SPF in humans (Afaq et al., 2003; Mantena et al., 2006; Mittal et al., 2003). Additionally, grape seed extract demonstrated photochemopreventive effects on skin cancer induced by UVB (Perde-Schrepler et al., 2012). Moreover, oral administration of this compound was also beneficial in reducing hyperpigmentation (Baumann, 2007b). Additionally, grape seed extract supplemented mice noticed chemopreventive effects on skin cancer induced by UV (Filip et al., 2011a; 2011b). Furthermore, oxidative stress and apoptosis induced by UVB in skin was reduced when mice consumed grape seed extract (Filip et al., 2013).

### 8.9. Sea Buckthorn (SBT)

SBT is thorny nitrogen fixing deciduous shrub native to Europe and Asia, which is used as a medicinal plant in Tibetan and Mongolian traditional medicines (Lu, 1992; Patel et al., 2012; Rousi et al., 1971). Since the 1950's, many curative preparations of SBT have been clinically used to treat radiation damage, burns, oral inflammation and gastric ulcers in China and the former Soviet Republics (Fu et al., 1993; Geetha et al., 2002; Isoherranen et al., 1999; Mereish et al., 1991).

Leaf and fruit extracts of SBT at a concentration of 500 µg/ml were found to inhibit chromium-induced free radical production, apoptosis, and DNA fragmentation, and restored the antioxidant status. This data suggests that these extracts have cytoprotective properties, which may contribute to the antioxidant activity (Geetha et al., 2002). More than 200 bioactive components have been found in SBT plant, containing several chemical compounds including carotenoids, tocopherols, sterols, flavonoids, phenolics, lipids, and ascorbic acid. These compounds are of interest due to their biological and therapeutic activities including antioxidant and antiproliferative effects, hepatoprotective effects, antimicrobial effects and immunomodulation effects (Cheng et al., 2003; Christaki et al., 2012; Geetha et al., 2008; Grey et al., 2010; Nemtanu et al., 2009).

Berries of the SBT are an excellent source of phytochemicals such as ascorbic acid, tocopherols, unsaturated FA, phenols, and carotenoids. Berries have been used for the treatment of radiation

damage, burns, oral inflammation, and gastric ulcers (Kumar et al., 2011). Other observed positive health effects include reduction in plasma cholesterol level, inhibition of platelet aggregation, and regulation of immune function (Yang et al., 2002). Study findings reported that phenolics were main contributors to the antioxidant activity of SBT berries, leading to increased focus on using SBT berries for medical and cosmetic purposes as well as functional foods (Beveridge et al., 1999; Greenwel et al., 1995; Yoshikawa et al., 1990; Zhang et al., 1989). Seventeen phenolic acids were tentatively identified in SBT berries. Salicylic acid was the predominant phenolic acid, as it constituted between 55.0% (Otradnaja and Trofimovskaja cultivars) and 74.3% (Nevlejena cultivar) of the total phenolic acids present (Zadernowski et al., 2005). Another study tentatively identified only four phenolic acids, namely p-coumaric, ferulic, p-hydroxybenzoic, and ellagic acids in SBT berries harvested in Finland (Hakkinen et al., 2000).

Phytosterols are main constituents of sea buckthorn oils.  $\beta$ -sitosterol and 5-avenasterol are the major phytosterols found in sea buckthorn oil (Bal et al., 2011). The amount of phytosterol in SBT is significantly high and may exceed soybean oil by 4–20 times. Research indicates that the total phytosterol content, varied between subspecies and collection sites, in the seeds, fresh pulp/peel, and the whole berries were 1200–1800, 240–400, and 340–520 mg/kg, respectively (Yang et al., 2001).

## 9. Conclusion

Oxidative stress can occur from many internal and external factors including metabolism, pollution, and sunlight radiation. A wide variety of information supports the photocarcinogenic damage to the skin from sunlight and its relationship to oxidative stress. Antioxidants work together in skin, supporting and regenerating each other. Topical antioxidants may provide several advantages for photoprotection not provided by dietary supplements alone. As antioxidants are delivered into skin, they can provide protection by accumulating in pharmacologic concentrations and targeting exposed skin. As oxidative stress depletes natural antioxidant stores, these concentrations offer protection by supplementing reserves.

There are several natural ingredients found in many plants with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties that appear to be effective for photoprotection (see Figure 2). More notably, some of these agents such as soy, mushroom extracts, and tea, also have chemopreventive properties that offer potential for the prevention/treatment of skin diseases and cancers. The botanical compounds discussed here show significant anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and cell protective effects. These protective effects may contribute to their anti-photocarcinogenic effects and act to inhibit various biochemical processes induced by solar UV radiation. Based on the epidemiological evidence and laboratory studies conducted using *in vitro* and *in vivo* systems, it is suggested that regular consumption and topical treatment of these polyphenols may provide effective protection against the harmful effects of aging and UV radiation.

Consumer-driven demand has led to rapid development of products to counteract signs of aging skin. Botanicals found in cosmeceuticals may offer skin protection from photodamage and repair skin by improving or stimulation of new collagen production.

Combined with sunscreens and other sun protection, cosmeceuticals can help enhance skin appearance and health. More importantly, as many cosmeceuticals claim different effects, future trends should include multifunctional cosmetics which will allow for optimal skin health benefits to be plausible.



**Figure 2:** Botanicals Beneficial for Skin Health

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