

Face Lift? Humbug! Erase the Years without Surgery or Botox

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A quick glance in the mirror confirms Rhonda's suspicions. Not only does she feel old, but she also looks old. She sighs, shrugs her shoulders, and trudges off to work.

During the commute, she frowns at the traffic delays and curses at all the idiots who think they own the road. She stops and picks up a double espresso. Last night she slept poorly. Small wonder - with all the changes at work lately, she has to plan the following day as she falls to sleep.

Lunchtime comes and goes, but she works through, eating a bag of potato chips, a jelly doughnut, and a bran muffin while she slowly sips more coffee as she pounds on her keyboard.

The commute home is even more hectic than her morning traffic ordeal - thank heavens for that extra espresso she grabbed before she got into the car.

Supper is never a sit-down affair with the family. Everyone grabs something out of the freezer, and pops it into the microwave before rushing off to ballet lessons, night courses, or other pursuits.

As Rhonda gets ready for yet another sleep-deprived night, she realizes that she has only had one glass of water all day. Oh well, if she drinks one now, she will be up to use the bathroom during the night. It is bad enough to be tossing and turning while she worries about work, without adding a bathroom break into the equation.

Does Rhonda's life sound a little bit like yours?

Stress, poor nutrition, lack of sleep, and not enough water or exercise can quickly age a person. Who has the time to pamper themselves with relaxing hot tub soaks, invigorating facial masks, or beauty creams - never mind even thinking about Botox or a face-lift.

However, you can do something to slow down - and even reverse - some of the aging that has crept into your face. It is called *breathing*. Yes, you read that correctly - breathing!

Although the initial reaction of the body when confronted with stress is to breathe more deeply and to flush itself with adrenalin, extended periods of stress can actually result in shallow breathing. Add to that the fact that most of us hold our breaths slightly to keep our abdominals pulled in, using only the top part of our lungs to breathe, and the shallow breathing is exacerbated.

Every cell in our bodies requires an abundant quantity of oxygen in order to function at peak efficiency. Reduce the oxygen, and efficiency begins to decrease. Skin and organs robbed of oxygen begin to function poorly and age prematurely.

The solution: begin and end your days with deep breathing in bed. Banish all thoughts and concentrate on only one word, 'relax', as you take several deep breaths. Make sure that you empty your lungs completely before beginning each new breath. You can infuse your brain with extra oxygen by bending your knees and raising your legs into the air. Keep the knees bent slightly to protect your lower back.

Work deep breathing into your daily schedule:

1. Any time you are waiting for your computer to do something.
2. Whenever you have to stop at a stop sign or a stop light.
3. Every time you hang up the phone.
4. Whenever you open the refrigerator or turn on the microwave.

Use your imagination, and make deep breathing a part of your life. By concentrating on the *relaxation* process and infusing your body with oxygen, you will increase its efficiency and reduce the effects of stress.

An added bonus: you will probably sleep much better every night!

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