

# Learning to Nourish Your Skin

Rebekah Kelley



## Learning to Nourish Your Skin

**David Stouder:** Welcome to the Humanized podcast, all about personalizing your health. I'm your guest host today, Dave Stouder, and today we'll be talking about Learning to Nourish your Skin with Rebekah Kelley. You may recognize Rebekah because she is the usual host here at HumanizedHealth.com, but we're going to ask her about her skincare line because she is the creator of Virtue Skinfood. But I do want to remind you before we start the interview to subscribe and get our whole variety of casts. You can get just audio. You can get transcriptions. They're all free and they're at HumanizedHealth.com, and we invite you to subscribe. And I'd like to thank our lead sponsor, Village Green Apothecary, at MyVillageGreen.com, where you can come in and talk to me or any of our wonderful staff and you can actually see, experience and purchase any of the Virtue Skinfood lines.

Now, Rebekah is a marketing consultant with expertise in health, wellness, and active lifestyle factors. Her focus in life is to create the best self and develop a vibrant, energetic, and strong body in alignment with a strong mind and spirit. Rebekah is passionate about sharing her experience and knowledge on healing, personal growth, as well as continuing her learning journey with others. Not only is Rebekah, as I said, the host of Humanized Health, but she has created her own skincare line, Virtue Skinfood. Now, this is a line of products that uses the wisdom of natural plant medicine and food grade nutrition to provide a line of optimal skincare products. She originally developed these products for her own use to solve her skin sensitivity challenges. By following Rebekah's unique and integrated wellness practices, anyone can have a healthier body, inside and out.

Well, Rebekah, it's fun to have you back here as a guest. So you can just relax and answer the questions and take it easy.

But now, you know, sometimes I watch people when they deal with their skin, not only with skin issues, but makeup and looking attractive and presenting your best face, if you will. It seems that people sometimes think that skincare items are like, sort of painting a house. Like this is just like coloring my shirt a different color, and that they're not really thinking of, they're putting stuff on... they're feeding their skin whatever they're putting on it. Is that sort of how you... is that an issue that led you to create this skincare line?

**Rebekah Kelley:** Completely David, you nailed it. Matter of fact, obviously, Virtue SkinFOOD. So skincare, I look at as it's food for your skin. So I literally put it in the name of my skincare because I believe and know whatever you put on your skin, you do absorb, depending upon where you put it on your skin. Obviously different areas of the body are more sensitive than others. But we know that there's more permeability, for instance, in the genital area, the facial area, and then there's going to be less around the rest of the body. So you get more absorption depending upon where you put it. And to me, that means it's definitely not painting a house. It's definitely an organ that takes it in. So yes, I would agree with you on that.

**David Stouder:** Okay. And this is sort of a, it's not a trick question, but how many synthetic ingredients do we want in our skincare?

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**Rebekah Kelley:** It is personalized health, obviously. Right? So everybody's going to make a different call on that one. And I don't want to lay on anybody my values, but I do think that, ideally, zero. Is that possible? In the United States, definitely not. But I was actually... I just wanted to Google because I was trying to remember. The EU, I know bans a certain amount, and then the United States bans a certain amount. FDA. FDA oversees cosmetics and skincare. So I did look it up and apparently the EU law bans 1,328 chemicals and the United States bans 11. So there are a lot of products right now in the market which would be illegal in Europe. And then the average woman uses, I think they say 12 different beauty products every day. I think that's a low number. I think it's higher than that, but you think of cleansers, conditioners, hair dyes, fragrances, skincare products, lotions, nail polish, makeup, right? Like there's... I think there's way more than 12. We're a little low on that.

**David Stouder:** So, shampoo, conditioner, yeah.

**Rebekah Kelley:** I mean, all of that is your body burden. And then if you add in cleaning products because that also goes through your skin. So while it's skincare related, you have to think of anything that touches your skin. That just really speaks to the fact that we also want to be looking at even very natural, non-synthetic cleaning products.

So, ideally zero. But when I say that, I understand that a lot of women, we focus on being attractive. Not that men don't, but I feel like it definitely is something that sits squarely in the female gender. So I have had a lot of people say to me, hey Rebekah, I really appreciate how clean your skincare is, but I just need those chemicals. They're like, you know, I need everything I can get. And they see it as a positive, which I find very interesting. But what I would say is, I like to differentiate between clinical and clean. So if you're going to choose something every day, just think of your body burden. Because every day you're using these same products. So choose clean skincare. Ideally, I like to flip it [the packaging] over and say, okay, do I understand what these ingredients are? And if there's anything that ends with a paraben, definitely don't include that. And then if you feel like you need something particularly, that I would call clinical, like some people go to do a face peel at a spa, so separate that as something that you do maybe rarely, but you do it for a specific reason. And then very much you can focus on clean skincare every day.

**David Stouder:** Well, that's a very reasonable, and I think an easy-to-follow definition because there's no sort of zero toxin life. But I always say when you have a choice, make a good decision. So if you're going to buy skincare products, especially like you said, the ones you're going to use every day.

Now, my general assessment has been, if you go into the drug stores, most of that stuff is mostly chemicals. And some of your salon products have a pretty high percentage of good ingredients, but they still have 10, 20% chemicals.

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Now, if you go into a good health food store, you're going to get the cleaner kinds of products. Not necessarily 100%, but I look at the labels and there's still a lot of words I don't know. When I found out, when I first met you and we started doing these podcasts, I did not know you had a skincare line right away. So I went over and looked at it. Now, I've looked at skincare products for the health market for 50 years. I mean, it was just the cleanest I'd ever seen. I think you told me you could eat them. There's so many skincare lines out there, but you seem to have really made the cleanest I've ever seen.

**Rebekah Kelley:** I've been working on my skincare line since I was 16. And it wasn't a "skincare line." I was just trying to survive skin that was upset about so many different things. And so there was really not a lot of options. I'm in my 50s now, so that was decades ago [laughs]. Now when you go [to the store], I feel like there are a lot of much more viable options that are much healthier. So it's a different world now than it used to be and it excites me because it means that people are paying attention. People are being thoughtful. There are some amazing creators now that are bringing products to the table that are SO much better for your skin. And I just find that I think people are getting smarter, paying more attention, being more careful. Just like we were watching what goes IN our body, hopefully now we're starting to watch what goes ON our body. But when you look at what goes on your body, you want to make sure that it is organic. That it's something that you can read [on the label]. Something that it... I say never put anything on your skin you can't eat. That's MY comfort level. So I think that, while there are so many, more and more skincare lines out there... the Environmental Working group does a great job of this. It's an app or it's also a website. Anyone who actually has some products and they want to double check them, they're not really sure, go in and they've got a great list. You can plug in what that particular product is, and most likely they have it in their database. Now, some of the more boutique products like mine, we're not in it because we're smaller, but if you can flip it over and you recognize every ingredient, you know you can eat every ingredient, you know it's pretty clean.

**David Stouder:** Well, exactly. Now, I would say a fair amount of people, sort of one of the reasons they do clinical things is they want to go to the bottom line; I want to get rid of my wrinkles, maybe I care if it's really clean, maybe I don't. But obviously you had great success cause, as I said, and it's true, you have great skin. So the way you eat and treat your skin and your products are obviously doing you well. You have to get feedback from your customers. You got a couple of good stories to tell us?

**Rebekah Kelley:** I do, but I did just want to mention something since you brought up the fact that people, you know what I had said that they really wanted the chemicals. The thing is, is that a lot of people don't realize, but you know, just because a marketer – and being a marketer myself, right? – just because there's a claim made, it doesn't always mean that that is actually accurate, right? [Laughs] So I just want to put out there that the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act has not been updated since it passed in 1938. So a lot of statements that are made, they actually... the FDA assumes that companies are self-regulated. So, you know, people can kind of put a spin on things. So it's not necessarily always the most accurate. So while I certainly

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understand that someone believes what someone has to say, remember that, I just want to remind everyone, this is a \$60 billion personal care product industry. It's to make money. And so one of the things you really want to do is be aware of that, right? So when someone says something's going to prevent you from wrinkles, wrinkles are a natural part of living life. And the healthier and more vibrant you are, you can actually see it. You see people who are glowing, you know they're healthy and vibrant. So, I just want to remind people, just because it says anti-wrinkle [laughs] does not necessarily mean that's what it does.

And matter of fact, they're doing so many studies now, which I'm really excited about. They're doing so many studies now. And actually, there was a study that came out with, actually I just pulled it. [Referring to notes] The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists wrote in a 2013 report, that there is robust evidence linking toxic environmental agents to adverse reproductive and developmental health outcomes. So, while I think it's wonderful to want to be beautiful and look fabulous, and certainly we don't want to embrace wrinkles earlier than we need to, although a lot of times it is a rite of passage and a beautiful part of being on this world, we do want to really be thoughtful about our reproductive and developmental health. And when that's what's impacting it, it's something to really be aware of. There's a lot of studies out there now that really point to the fact that we want to be super, super thoughtful about our skincare and make sure that it's as clean as possible.

And the other thing that I did want to mention is that Dr. [Michael] Murray and Dr. [Joseph] Pizzorno have both been on other [Humanized] podcasts talking about getting plastics out of our diet. And I think the other thing that I hate to flag and make it more complicated, but a lot of skincare comes in plastics. So even if you're getting great skincare, but it's in plastic, it's absorbing those things as synthetic compounds and you're putting it on your skin, you're also absorbing it that way too. So look for something that's in glass, ideally, that's not necessarily absorbing plastic.

But anyway, do I get feedback from people? Yes, I do. Matter of fact, it's one of my favorite things, is hearing from others about how actually they've been able to heal their skin by using it as a support and giving their skin nutrition. And matter of fact, that's actually how I ended up starting making skincare for other people besides me. I actually started making it for my girlfriends and I would give it to them because I was so happy by the concept of them not taking on an additional toxic burden that I used to go and do little drop-offs and deliver to different girlfriends. And finally, someone, actually my girlfriend said to me, you can't keep doing this. You've got to start charging us. And I was like, really? And she's like, yes, Rebekah, this costs money. It is actually very expensive. It's all organic. It's all natural. There's no water in my skincare products, so it's super nutritious. So it is very pricey to make [laughs]. And so when she said that, I started making it more thoughtfully because I'd be like, wait, I've got to think about this. I've got to put it in this kind of container. How do you use it? Before, I would just glob it on sometimes, because I didn't really care. It was just getting something on my skin that was going to care for me. Then I started thinking about how other people were going to be using it, what the experience was, and it just got to a whole other level. And then now, I'm at Village Green

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Apothecary, I'm in some hotels and spas, and it's just been wonderful then to see it being used and embraced as a way for people to support their health and wellness. Which is really what's important to me. So I encourage people, go look in the Environmental Working Group's website, look at your products and then go choose something that's really good and healthy and sustaining for you and for your family.

**David Stouder:** That is well said. And I want to remind everybody listening. Know, when you walk into a store, let's say like Village Green Apothecary, you look at all of their supplements, you look at all the skincare. If you've heard what Rebekah has said in this podcast, and that's the kind of person I want constructing my skincare products, somebody with her values, her attention to detail. So, I want to remind you, you can find Rebekah at [www.VirtueSkinfood.com](http://www.VirtueSkinfood.com) – just like it sounds – dot com. And I want to remind you to subscribe and get all the Humanized podcasts. You should subscribe, it's free. And we've got a lot of great thought leaders. You can get the video podcast, you can get the audio, you can get a transcription. And so that's all for your personalized health at [HumanizedHealth.com](http://HumanizedHealth.com).

Rebekah, thank you so much for being on the program and it was nice to have you as guest.

**Rebekah Kelley:** It's lovely to be here. Thanks David.