

Get Your Glow On! The Best Skincare Products and Spa Services for Pregnancy

Pregnancy is an exciting and exhilarating time for most women...but it can also be exhausting, and you can see changes in your skin and body that you might not be particularly happy about.

With all of these changes, it's hardly surprising that many women feel hormonal, stressed out and emotional. This is where some good quality spa and at-home pampering should make all the difference.

There are lots of dos and don'ts while pregnant, spa and skincare treatments are no exception. But depending on what stage you're at in the pregnancy, we've put together a few lovely things that you might want to treat yourself to when the mom-to-be blues strike...

Spa and Facial Massage

When you're achy and hormonal, a massage can really hit the spot.

Make sure to tell your massage therapist that you're expecting and how far along you are when you book though, so that he or she can adapt the techniques and any oils used to suit you.

Your massage therapist will know to avoid certain areas during a massage, for example massaging some points on the wrists and ankles

in pregnancy can cause cramping. They'll also position you properly so that you don't lie on your back after a certain point as this can make your blood pressure drop and leave you feeling a bit dizzy or faint. Don't be afraid to ask for extra pillows or suggest lying on your side if that's how you feel most comfortable. All in all, massage is a great pregnancy treatment, so go for it.

Beauty and The Bump Skin Care

Some women find that their skin is more sensitive than usual during pregnancy, but skin care and spa treatments can still be a real treat. If you're not sure, don't be afraid to ask for a patch test pre-treatment.

Perk yourself up with a nourishing facial – some women boast of their pregnancy glow but others, especially if they've been dealing with morning sickness or tiredness, feel a bit flat and a facial is a relaxing, boosting treatment. Tell your therapist so that she can avoid any facial treatments that include retinoids – they can harm your baby and are best avoided. Many spas and skin clinics offer facial treatments that are specifically designed for pregnancy so opt for one of those if you want to spoil yourself.

Gentle is always best in pregnancy although if you want to keep up a specific skincare routine you should still be able to carry on with some treatments, like microdermabrasion, which is perfectly safe in

pregnancy. Leave chemical peels and Botox/fillers for post-pregnancy if you're a fan.

At home – avoid retinol-based treatments and anything containing salicylic acid and opt for skincare ranges that are designed for pregnancy if possible. Glycolic acid, which is found in a lot of anti-aging products (and is helpful for evening out skin tone) is a safe alternative for pregnant women in the skin clinic or at home. Remember that your skin can be extra sensitive.

Find a good body nourishing oil to massage your bump with (your beauty therapist may be able to recommend one for you) and treat yourself every day to minimise stretch marks as baby grows...

Baby Safe Beauty Treatments

If you're a fan of luxuriant lashes you'll be pleased to hear that you might not need them extended while you're pregnant; most women have the best lashes of their lives while they are pregnant because when you're pregnant, your hair stays in a permanent growth cycle. However, if you fancy lash extensions they are perfectly safe in pregnancy.

If it's getting difficult to see your feet, a pedicure might be the perfect antidote for swollen ankles and aching feet. There's no reason why you shouldn't have a manicure or pedicure while you're pregnant, in fact

many mom-to-be spa and beauty packages include them as standard. Some women like to avoid chemical beauty treatments completely during pregnancy, including nail polish. There's no evidence that occasional use of nail products will cause any harm but if you prefer a 'naked' mani-pedi it's something most spas and beauty clinics will be able to accommodate.

You can also ask your nail technician to avoid products that contain formaldehyde and toluene.