

HEALTH, BEAUTY & FITNESS

Skin deep with Samantha Altea

Lip Service

It's that time of year again; the time when we all have the chance to tell that special someone we love him or her. Telling someone how you feel can be done in many different ways: flowers, cards, little thoughtful tokens, expensive, over-the-top gestures and gifts. But there's one thing that's a constant. No matter who you are and whom you love, whether mother, brother, lover, or friend, the one thing that we all do on Valentine's Day and to express our love is to kiss.

With this in mind, and with V Day just around the corner, it's always good to make sure that your smackers are in tip top working order and in winter, that's no small feat. So, how to keep flaky winter worn lips up to kissability? I spoke with Jodi Pollock, vice president of Barielle, a wonderful beauty line, who told me, "The natural elements in the summer or winter, due to dry air or cold winds, chap lips. Licking your lips will only soothe them momentarily and cause redness and irritation later. Lip products that contain petroleum just sit on top of your lips, so try to use one that is petroleum free."

Barielle has a great product. "A revolutionary Lip Butter that literally melts on your lips to seal in moisture and keep lips protected through the hardest winters or driest summers. It comes in five fat free flavors including Vanilla, Chocolate, Strawberry, Berry Juicy, and Simply Pure." So give them a try. www.barielle.com.

My personal favorite lip replenisher is Clarins Moisture replenishing lip balm. It smells wonderful and feels amazing. You can get it at most department stores, or at www.clarins.com. Clarins also has my favorite lip gloss...it gives the best shine for the perfect pout. It's called Super Glossy Shine. My only cau-

tion - like me, you may become addicted to it.

The bee-stung appearance is always thought to be the most appealing and irresistible lip look, but some of us aren't blessed with Angelina Jolie-like smackers. However, there's a new lip plumper on the market that's supposed to work wonders, all without going the "injected" collagen route. Fusion Beauty had improved its old lip plumper and promised extra volume with the new LipFusion XL, \$50. For best results, they suggest applying at night and sleeping wearing the product, after which you'll wake to plump, pert and kissable kissers. So, on Feb 13th, apply Lipfusion XL, cross your fingers and hope to wake on V Day with the perfect pout. Find it at www.sephora.com.

All this smooching and lip maintenance is well and good, but it might also interest you to note that kissing is very good for your health, too. Who knew? Kissing relieves tension and so should certainly be done on a regular basis. Kissing helps us to lose weight, too. Honest. "The calories burned depend on the intensity, but in general, one burns about 10 calories for every 10 minutes," says one fitness consultant.

Kissing helps to tone your cheek and jaw muscles - now that's a fun work out. Overall, kissing boosts fitness levels. "Your heart is pumping, your pulse is racing...If kissing is exciting, you release adrenaline into the bloodstream and your heart pumps more blood around your body," according to one physician. Who



Photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt, 1945

needs a treadmill? Skip the gym on Feb. 14th and begin a new workout routine.

And here's a good one - kissing actually helps prevent tooth decay. Dr. Peter Gordon, Dental Advisor to the British Dental Association, says "After eating, your mouth is full of sugar solution and acidic saliva which cause plaque build up. Kissing is nature's own cleaning process," he adds. "It stimulates saliva flow and brings plaque levels down to normal." Now, I know the Brits aren't known for their dentists, to say the least. But I have had this confirmed by

my own American dentist.

Lastly, here are some tips to keep your lips in great working order, as well as smooth as a baby's bottom. There's nothing worse than rough, sore, scaly lips, for the kisser or kissee. So:

Drink plenty of water. It keeps not only the lips, but also the skin hydrated.

Wear lip balm in extreme elements, whether heat or cold.

When exfoliating your face, avoid the lip area.

Be careful what cosmetics you use.....some have drying agents in them.

Try not to lick your lips; it makes any imperfections much worse.

Enjoy the week, and kiss as much as you can. Remember to keep moisturized for optimum effect. But beware of braces and too much lipstick. They might cause messy and awkward situations.

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