

THE SKIN

The skin is the largest and most sensitive organ in the human body.

It spans 16 - 20 sq. feet and weighs around 8 pounds in an adult body.

It creates a semipermeable border between our internal and external worlds.

It lets in that which is nourishing and releases metabolic wastes.

It eliminates wastes in the form of sweat.

It defines our size, shape, colour, texture and odour.

The epidermis is the outer air-exposed layer composed of stratified squamous cells without blood vessels.

The dermis is the inner skin layer and thicker than the epidermis. It is richly woven with sensory receptors, nerves, sweat glands, hair follicles, fibrous connective tissue, smooth muscles, blood and lymph vessels.

The skin breathes and in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) it is referred to as the third lung.

It regulates the body's temperature.

It has around 640,000 sensory receptors that are connected to the spinal cord via nerve fibres.

Stimulating the skin due to its direct connection to the Central Nervous System (CNS) supports organic functions. For instance, animals lick their young to stimulate respiration and digestion. In the same vein, touch to human organs can stimulate their functioning.

Touch is the sense of the skin, and it can feel varying degrees of temperature, pressure, vibration, pleasure and pain.

Touch receptors are present in all parts of the skin. The exteroceptors are outside receivers of pressure, vibration, cold, heat and pain. Proprioceptors are self-receivers discerning the movement and location of body parts in space.

Touch is regarded as the mother of all senses and is the first sense to emerge in the womb at around 6 weeks.

It sends signals to the immune system regarding infection attack.

It denotes the aging process from the soft smooth texture of a baby's skin to the dry thin wrinkled coating found in the elderly.

It is an elastic organ, with the thickest skin areas on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet.

It is a waterproof protector of regulation which holds fluid.

By rubbing up against the external environment a person discovers who they are and as such defines themselves.

The skin lies at the periphery of self and its direct CNS connection enables us to respond to our environment; touch at our surface level stimulates the deeper self.

The skin is the outer surface of the brain while the brain is the deepest level of the skin.

How we feel about ourselves our inner state of mind and our physical functions affect the condition of the skin.

The sensory activity of the skin is a major factor in the development of disposition and behaviour.

The skin enables body awareness, the maturation of the nervous system and the tissue resilience to resist toxins. It additionally repairs damage.

The skin, the central and peripheral nervous system are formed in the same bodily layer called the ectoderm; they share the same primitive cells. of connective tissue.

Between weeks 3 and 4 the embryo's ectoderm begins to differentiate into skin tissue which moves outwards and the neural tissue.

Fear makes the skin creep, and the hairs stand on end.

Due to blood vessel constriction, the temperature of the skin lowers when anxious or fearful.

The skin reacts to danger such as pulling a hand away from at hot surface.

Direct skin touch can either calm or arouse. It can lower blood pressure and heart rate which increases the parasympathetic nervous system and therefore lowers stress.

Through contact with the mother's body or mother replacement, a baby senses whether the external world is a place that is safe or threatening.

Touch is a basic behavioural need in the same way as breathing is a physical need.

Untouched animals and babies can become anxious, bewildered, frightened and tense in human presence. This unfamiliar presence may appear alien and something to be wary of.

The outer skin layer is formed of dead cells, which like a snake continually sheds and is replaced from within.

The third layer of skin holds deposited fat cells which provide important insulation and shock absorption.

It is an organ of appearance through which a person presents themselves to the world and is seen by the world.

The skin senses the environment continually; it never shuts off.