

Seafood like crab is rich in zinc and copper, which are essential for the production of collagen. Photographed by Tina Patni for *MOJEH* September 2019



TIKTOK

MADE ME DO IT

From beef tallow to snail secretions, MOJEH looks at some of the wildest ‘natural’ beauty hacks clocking up millions of views. We suggest proceeding with caution. And in some instances, not at all...

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When it comes to beauty, few places on the internet are as resourceful and buzzy as TikTok. After all, 2024 gifted us the glass-skin-inducing Biodance Bio-Collagen Real Face Mask and Huda Beauty’s Easy Blur Natural Foundation, for which we say a hearty thank you. And while it isn’t yet possible to pin down 2025’s crowd-pleasers, Huda Beauty once again sped out of the TikTok beauty blocks with the launch of her cherry blossom setting powder last month. As it turns out, merging undereye concealer and blush with baby pink is an absolute game-changer — we’ve been a fan of Patrick Starr’s ultra pink blurring setting powder for this very reason. Meanwhile, Glossier’s Black Cherry Balm Dotcom is also getting some early influencer love, with the new burgundy tint poised to succeed Clinique’s Black Honey Almost Lipstick, which dominated last year. But, if there is one thing TikTok has taught us (actually, it has taught us many things), not all beauty recommendations are created equal. Elsewhere on the app, you’ll find a collection of more ‘unique’, and sometimes questionable, endorsements circulating.

BEEF TALLOW
Yes, you read right. Beef tallow is essentially rendered beef fat, and applying it topically is not just a TikTok thing; it’s an age-old remedy for dry skin. Referred to as nature’s Botox, the butter-like tallow is credited for smoothing wrinkles, fading scars, soothing eczema and fighting acne. Its composition is similar to sebum — the oily substance produced by your sebaceous glands (most exist on the face and scalp), making it compatible with human skin. Too much sebum production can cause oiliness and

acne, so beef tallow probably isn’t advisable for certain skin types. This animal by-product is, however, rich in omega-3 fatty acids and a host of vitamins and can apparently stimulate collagen production and skin cell renewal. But it’s not something that is scientifically proven or regulated. A high-quality ‘grass-fed’ tallow product obviously trumps that derived from factory-farmed antibiotic-fed cattle. It’s also worth noting beef tallow skin products are not FDA-approved. This is because of a potential risk of mad cow disease, which is a pretty big red flag and a firm no from us.

SNAIL MUCIN
‘Glass skin’ is the global skincare phenomenon that continued to grow in 2024 and is still very much the aspirational look in 2025 thanks to the continuing rise of beauty pioneer South Korea, and its K-beauty products have been using snail mucin (secreted by snails when stressed) for years for their hydrating effect. The popular brand COSRX collects mucin from giant snails gliding over mesh in a darkened room before the snails are returned to graze on a farm. Hydrating, rejuvenating and collagen-promoting, snail mucin helps the skin retain moisture. For best results, apply to damp skin, pat the product in, and follow with a moisturiser to lock the mucin in — something we, of course, learned on TikTok.

EXCREMENT
Kim Kardashian once joked she would eat her own poop for younger-looking skin, but on TikTok, someone chose to apply it to their face. We, along with a legion of healthcare professionals, categorically do not recommend this — but Brazilian model



Beef tallow is packed with omega-3 fatty acids capable of nourishing and strengthening the skin barrier.

Débora Peixoto got attention last year for applying her own faecal matter to her face before covering it with coconut oil ‘to moisturise.’

While the 31-year-old claimed it stopped her skin from flaking, the chances of infection on top of general grossness is significant. A cocktail of harmful bacteria exists in faeces, including E. coli and salmonella. Bleurgh. Just bleurgh.

SALMON SPERM / DNA
Hollywood A-listers Kim Kardashian (yes, Kim K is always in pursuit of younger skin), and Jennifer Aniston have put their hands up to having a salmon sperm facial in the past, and in South Korea, it’s currently in hot demand. The treatment involves injecting rejuvan — a concentrated polynucleotide (PN) extract from salmon DNA — to boost collagen production and skin regeneration. You can also apply it topically in a serum, as seen on TikTok. Salmon DNA, extracted from the testicles of salmon fish, is said to help reduce wrinkles, brighten skin tone, purify and increase skin firmness. And these claims may well be founded. A 2024 aesthetic scientific review in the International Journal of Molecular Science flagged several studies that demonstrate significant skin elasticity and hydration improvements thanks to polynucleotides.

RAW GARLIC
Apparently not just for cooking, over on TikTok, raw garlic is being rubbed into the skin — or swallowed — often whole in a bid to clear acne. And it’s getting millions of views. With its natural antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties, garlic has been used for centuries to treat various health ailments; however, no solid research shows that it helps with acne despite the growing trend. Indeed, one of TikTok’s best-loved dermatologists, Shereene Idriss, debunked the myth when she shared that a patient came into a hospital with a clove lodged in their oesophagus. “Whether you eat it, ingest it, chew it, rub it on your skin, or soak in it, garlic will not clear your acne,” the straight-talking derm informed her followers.

While we can all agree TikTok is a trove of ingenuity and our official go-to for new products (2025, keep ‘em coming), when it comes to more ‘unique’ skincare ingredients, you would indeed be forgiven for sticking with the La Prairie nestled in your cabinet. (N)



Snail mucin contains glycolic acid, which promotes collagen production, reducing the appearance of fine lines.

Image courtesy of Robert Slump