

03. Ayurvedic Cosmetics for Uneven / Dark Skin Tone (Complexion-Brightening & Varnya Therapies)

“Dark skin” here refers to **uneven tone, dullness, photo-tanning, melasma patches**, or post-inflammatory marks—not an attempt to bleach the natural melanin barrier. The following **8 classical-inspired preparations** safely encourage a clearer, more radiant complexion by:

- cooling surplus **Pitta-rakta** heat
- gently modulating melanogenesis (licorice, manjishtha, saffron)
- providing antioxidant rasayana support
- avoiding harsh acids or synthetic bleaches

All recipes are scaled for a **50 g retail jar / bottle** (except single-use masks). Tools: water-bath, pH strips, immersion blender, stainless ware. Use **pharmacopeial herbs**; observe local cosmetics regulations.

#	Formulation	Core Goal	Classical Lineage*
1	Manjishtha-Licorice Gel Serum	Night brightening concentrate	<i>Raktaprasādana</i> yogas
2	Kumkumadi “Lite” Day Oil	Daytime glow; fast-absorbing	Kumkumādi taila (Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya)
3	Saffron-Lotus Tone-Up Cream	Daily moisturizer + subtle radiance	Nālukka-chūrṇa & Padma dravyas
4	Raktha-Chandan Dew Mask (single use)	Weekly cooling, spot fade	Śārṅgadhara—Rakta-chandan yoga
5	Triphala-Rose Micellar Wash	Gentle surfactant-free cleanser	Triphalādi gana
6	Kasthuri Turmeric Spot Stick	Targeted PIH roller	Kasturi Haridrā lepa
7	Lotus-Vetiver Body Ubtan	Full-body brightening polish	Padma-usheera snāna yoga
8	Amla-Manjistha Hand Cream	Fade sun-spots on hands	Amlādi rasāyana + manjishtha

*Lineage column shows classical inspiration; formulas are modernised.

1. Manjishtha-Licorice Gel Serum (30 ml airless pump)

Ingredient	Botanical	Qty
Aloe-vera juice (cold-pressed)	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	15 g
Manjishtha CO ₂ extract (1 %)	<i>Rubia cordifolia</i>	0.3 g
Licorice glycerite 10 %	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	10 g
Niacinamide (optional 2 %)	—	0.6 g
Sodium PCA	—	1 g
Xanthan-Sclerotium gum blend	—	0.4 g
Potassium sorbate + Na-benzoate	—	0.6 g
Rose hydrosol (q.s.)	—	to 30 g

Method

1. Bloom gums in rose hydrosol (part).
2. Add aloe, glycerite, niacinamide, Sodium PCA; stir.
3. Homogenise; disperse manjishtha CO₂ thoroughly.
4. Adjust pH 5.4–5.8; add preservative; fill.

Indications melasma shadow, dull Pitta-prakopa cheeks.

Contra-indications active cystic acne, known licorice allergy; patch-test if pregnant (niacinamide).

2. Kumkumadi “Lite” Day Oil (30 ml dropper)

A silicone-free, fast-absorbing version for daytime wear.

Ingredient	Botanical	Qty
Fractionated coconut oil	—	18 ml
Jjoba oil	—	8 ml
Saffron infusion (solar-infused in jjoba)	<i>Crocus sativus</i>	0.3 g filaments
Red sandalwood macerate	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	0.5 g
Manjishtha extract (oil-soluble)	<i>Rubia cordifolia</i>	0.3 g
Vitamin E	—	0.4 ml
Geranium EO (0.4 %)	<i>Pelargonium graveolens</i>	0.12 ml

Infuse botanicals 3 weeks sun-warmth or 3 h @ 50 °C, filter, blend, bottle amber.

Indications daily luminosity, uneven tan.

Contra-indications photosensitivity test; avoid overuse on very oily T-zone.

3. Saffron-Lotus Tone-Up Cream (50 g)

Phase	Ingredient	Bot. name	Qty
Water	Blue-lotus (2 %) decoction	<i>Nymphaea caerulea</i>	26 g
Water	Glycerin	—	3 g
Oil	Rice-bran oil (γ-oryzanol)	—	12 g
Oil	Shea butter	—	5 g
Oil	Emulsifying wax O/W	—	3 g
Actives	Saffron tincture 1 %	<i>C. sativus</i>	0.5 g
Actives	Licorice extract (oil-disp.)	<i>G. glabra</i>	0.7 g
Preservative	Geogard ECO	—	0.8 g

Method standard 70 °C emulsification; cool to 45 °C; add actives, preservative; pH 5.5.

Indications normal-dry skin seeking gentle brightening.

Contra-indications latex/shear allergy.

4. Raktha-Chandan Dew Mask (One use - 20 g paste)

Ingredient	Botanical	Qty
Red sandalwood ultra-fine pwd.	<i>P. santalinus</i>	3 g
Licorice powder	<i>G. glabra</i>	1 g
Amla fresh pulp	<i>Embllica officinalis</i>	4 g
Manuka honey	—	8 g
Rose water	—	q.s. to 20 g

Mix; apply 12 min; keep moist; rinse.

Indications weekly glow boost, tan removal.

Contra-indications extremely sensitive skin (patch-test).



5. Triphala-Rose Micellar Wash (100 ml)

Ingredient	Qty
Rose hydrosol	60 ml
Triphala aq. extract 5 %	30 ml
Decyl glucoside (3 %)	3 ml
Veg-Glycerin	5 ml
Sodium benzoate	0.5 g
Citric acid (pH 5.5)	q.s.

Mix; gentle shake. Use with cotton pad.

Indications morning cleanse for dull / pigmented skin.

Contra-indications none major; watch ocular stinging.

6. Kasthuri Turmeric Spot Stick (10 ml roll-on)

Ingredient	Botanical	Qty
Kasthuri turmeric CO ₂	<i>Curcuma aromatica</i>	0.1 g
Manjishtha tincture 5 %	<i>R. cordifolia</i>	2 ml
Aloe juice	—	6 ml
Propanediol	—	1 ml
Leucidal ECO	—	0.3 ml
Xanthan (<0.3 %)	—	sprinkle

Blend; thicken slightly; bottle roller.

Indications post-acne dark marks, insect-bite PIH.

Contra-indications turmeric-savvy staining; avoid on open wounds.

7. Lotus-Vetiver Body Ubtan (100 g dry powder)

Ingredient	Bot. name	Qty
Lotus petal powder	<i>Nymphaea lotus</i>	30 g
Vetiver root micro-powder	<i>Vetiveria zizanioides</i>	20 g
Rice powder (fine)	<i>Oryza sativa</i>	30 g
Orange-peel powder	<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	10 g
Sandalwood powder	<i>S. album</i>	5 g
Saffron threads (crushed)	<i>C. sativus</i>	0.2 g
Kaolin	—	4.8 g

Client mixes 1 tbsp powder with milk/rose water; scrub-mask 5 min; rinse.

Indications body tan, rough texture.

Contra-indications extreme dryness (add oil or honey).

**8. Amla-Manjishtha Hand Cream (50 g)**

Rich but non-greasy fade cream for dorsal hands.

Phase	Ingredient	Qty
Oil	Kokum butter	6 g
Oil	Sesame-amlam infused oil	12 g
Water	Manjishtha decoction	26 g
Emulsifier	Olivem 1000	3 g
Actives	Niacinamide 3 %	1.5 g
Preservative	Optiphen BS	1 g

Procedure like standard emulsion; target pH 5.3.

Indications sun-spots, dull hands of gardeners/drivers.

Contra-indications active dermatitis; sesame allergy.

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