Winter Skin Tips

If you have dry skin, the winter and its cold dry air can make skin drier and more severe. The following are tips to prevent dry skin or keep it from getting worse:

- **Do not use hot water.** Hot water will remove the natural skin oils more quickly. Best to use warm or tepid water for bathing.

- **Use a gentle cleanser or soap free cleanser.** Soaps will strip the oils from our skin. Do not use deodorant soaps, antibacterial soaps, perfumed soaps (“designer” soaps) or skin care products that contain alcohol (ie: hand sanitizers). Examples of gentle cleansers are White Dove, Basis, Vanicream or Lowila.

- **Limit time in the bath or shower to 5-10 minutes.** A short bath/shower will actually add moisture to your skin. Longer than that, and the skin is less hydrated than before. Do not bathe or shower more than once daily.

- **Moisturize immediately after leaving the shower or bath.** To lock in moisture, apply your moisturizer while the skin is still damp.

- **Before shaving, soften the skin.** This is best done by showering or bathing first, and then shaving while the hairs are soft. It is best to use a shaving cream or gel to decrease the irritating effects of shaving. Apply the shaving cream or gel, wait 3-5 minutes and then shave. Be sure to shave in the direction that the hairs are growing.

- **Change your razor blade after 5-7 shaves** to decrease the likelihood of using a dull blade which will irritate the skin.

- **If possible, use a humidifier** to replace the moisture that is lost with the cold winter air and heat.

- **Apply cool cloths** to itchy dry skin.

- **Don’t forget to soothe your lips.** Apply a lip balm at night that contains petrolatum (petroleum jelly or mineral oil are other names for Petrolatum).

- **Be sure to cover up your skin when outdoors** with a scarf and gloves. This will prevent chapping of the lips and hands.