



## Traditional and Ethnobotanic Dermatology Practices in Africa <sup>☆</sup>

Nooza C. Dlova<sup>a</sup>  , Moses A. Ollengo<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Dermatology, Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

<sup>b</sup> Department of Chemistry, Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, Nyeri, Kenya.

Available online 10 March 2018

 [Show less](#)

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clindermatol.2018.03.009>

[Get rights and content](#)

### Abstract

Approximately more than 80% of the global population depends on traditional medicine for their basic primary healthcare needs. Africa has a well-established history of botanicals use. These contain a vast array of compounds which can be used to treat various skin related conditions. The rationale for the use of traditional medicine in skin care stems from the physical effects these compounds have on skin, such as the ability to control bleeding, speed up wound healing, as well as the potential to treat burns and other disorders of pigmentation. Most African traditional healers employ decoctions and infusion methods in medicinal plant preparations, the former entails, boiling of the whole or parts of the plant in water or other solvents to extract the active ingredients. Infusions involve immersion of the plant in hot or cold water for some time and then topically applied to the affected skin area.

The cosmetic skincare products are formulated to protect, enhance, and preserve the skin in its healthiest state to maintain its barrier function, thus protecting the human body. This review examines a number of botanicals that are used across Africa and the phytochemical actives that are responsible for skin care.