

Shiseido Develops a Skincare Lipstick that Maintains the Purity of its Color By Reducing Dullness of the Lips

After extensive physiological research on the lips, Shiseido Co., Ltd. has identified the major causes of dull-colored lips, which can inhibit the effectiveness of lipsticks, namely poor blood flow in the lips and a change in the blood capillary structure. Shiseido also found that “ α -G hesperidin,” derived from hesperidin, a citrus fruit extract, works to improve such blood circulation and thereby reduces dullness of the lips. Shiseido then developed a lipstick with a high skincare effect, incorporating “ α -G hesperidin.” By using this lipstick, the dullness of the lips’ color is reduced, and the color of the lipstick has a translucent sheen, which in effect brings out the beauty of the lipstick color.

In recent years, translucent lipsticks, such as lip gloss, lamé pearl and others have enjoyed great popularity. However, translucent lipsticks have weak covering power. This has been a problem for people with, say, very dull-colored lips, as they could not create the finish that they desired.

It has long been known that the color of lips reflects the blood within. In lips, the capillaries close to the skin surface are numerous, hence lips are redder than the rest of the face, for example. However, research into lips and the lips’ skin is not as advanced as other dermatological research, such as research into facial or body skin, and little was known about the relationship between relatively colorless lips and skin blood flow.

Shiseido conducted research into the physiological differences between people who have noticeably colorful lips and those whose lips are relatively colorless. Shiseido used a state-of-the-art confocal microscope, which can observe inside the lips without damaging the skin.

Through such research, Shiseido found there was a difference in lip structure between those who had relatively colorful lips (generally the young) and those who had not (generally the elderly). The blood in the lips of those with relatively colorful lips tended to run straight and in parallel with the skin surface. This structure emphasizes clear red blood. Those with relatively dull-colored lips had lost this blood-capillary structure. Their blood ran from deep within the skin, and straight back down again, much as blood circulates within facial skin. Also, members of the latter group had fewer blood capillaries near the skin surface in the lips than members of the colorful-lips group.

In addition, Shiseido found that dull-colored lips and the corner of lips (generally dull-colored compared to the center of lips) show relatively poor blood flow (as measured by Shiseido using a two-dimensional laser Doppler blood flow analysis) and lower “oxygen saturation,” the ratio of hemoglobin and oxygenated hemoglobin (as measured by Shiseido using a Spectrometer). When blood circulation is poor, oxygen saturation decreases and this leads to darker, dull-colored blood, which manifests itself in dull-colored lips. Shiseido hypothesized that if it could improve blood circulation the color of lips would be less dull, which in turn would allow the lips to accentuate the color of lipstick.

Shiseido looked for ingredients that would improve blood circulation within lips, so that it could verify its findings and incorporate them in products. It has long been known that certain citrus fruits, including mandarin oranges, yuzu oranges and others, enhance blood circulation. This knowledge was useful in promoting blood circulation for warmth. The skins of these fruits contain a great deal of hesperidin, which strengthens capillary vessels, suppresses vascular permeability, reduces blood pressure and has other beneficial effects. In Europe, hesperidin is used as an oral medicine for chronic vascular diseases. However, the usefulness of hesperidin has been limited by the fact that it does not dissolve easily into water, and thus is difficult to incorporate into cosmetics. Shiseido’s breakthrough was to discover that water-soluble “ α -G hesperidin” a glucosylated derivative of hesperidin, enhances blood circulation within the lips, and can be used with ease in cosmetics for the lips, and is ideal for use as a cosmetics’ ingredient.

Shiseido incorporated “ α -G hesperidin” into a lipstick for trials. It found that 30 minutes after application blood circulation had increased, and after two weeks of daily application the lips were noticeably less dull. The lipstick did indeed reduce the dullish color of the lips, and in turn the more colorful lips accentuated the color of the lipstick.

Shiseido will now develop lipsticks and other lip-related products that contain “ α -G hesperidin.” Its goal is to reduce the dull color of lips and develop new products that bring out the beautiful color and the purity of lipsticks.