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**Critical Argument Paper #1: Snail Mucin ingredient used in Skincare.**

Throughout history, consumers have often been oblivious to the background of how and why products come to fruition. In particular, the beauty industry has many facets that have underlying reasons as to why people from the past used the same products, we use today but for a completely different reason than ours. Our ancestors knew the importance of utilizing their natural environment by understanding which animal byproducts to use to take care of the largest organ of our body, our skin. It is one of the quickest indicators of our general health because if something is going array outwardly then there must be something detrimental going on within our bodies. In other words, skin mucin is a natural ingredient that is derived from snail secretion of one of many products they use that have been trending throughout social media.

Skin mucin has made its appearance on and off for a long time since the 1980s, but little do a lot of people know that this “re-newfound” product has become re-introduced in recent years because of its scientific research that has come up with distinct benefits to the skin that your skin would absolutely love. According to the article, it states “chemically speaking, snail mucin is a complex mix of proteins, enzymes, hyaluronic acid, copper peptides, antimicrobial peptides, iron, zinc, and proteoglycans. Smith says” (Lawler, 2023). These ingredients are

usually lab-created to be able to achieve these elements for healthy skin but, surprisingly skin mucin has so many benefits all wrapped into one product. There is a lot of money to be made from this business because people are turning to more clean products and are becoming conscious of what is being put into our skin. According to the article, it stated “According to a perspective published October 2021 in *Frontiers in Bioengineering and Biotechnology*, the snail mucin skin-care market is expected to grow \$770 million by 2025. (Lawler, 2023). Since it is considered still to be a niche/ new ingredient and has gained newfound popularity within the last couple of years it has drastically made an impact on clean beauty because of how aware people are now of certain chemicals that would make our skin react in a negative way over time.

The slimy substance has made its debut by being able to make it positively safe to use in layering it with other products and not create negative reactions to the skin. According to the article, it states “The main benefit of this slime substance lies in its ability to retain moisture. Unlike some ingredients, it doesn’t evaporate quickly or irritate. Plus, the mucin contains natural proteins and antioxidants that help protect against sun damage and free radicals, using it regularly can help reduce wrinkles over time” (Smith, 2023). Among other great factors for this skincare ingredient, it has been proven that this ingredient has made significant improvements to people’s skin and helped maintain its elasticity and keep its skin healing at a constant. According to the article, it states “It can help reduce redness and inflammation while boosting collagen production and moisturizing the skin. Plus, snail mucin contains hyaluronic acid, which helps strengthen and protect your skin barrier against environmental pollution. All these features combine to create a powerful anti-aging effect that will leave your skin smooth and soft” (Smith, 2023). Snail mucin has taken the internet by storm with this incredible ingredient that has been

introduced as a replacement item for hydration that lasts longer and has a longer effect than traditional moisturizers that don't have as many benefits as snail secretion to the skin.

Apparently, magical snail mucin has been a part of history for centuries and isn't a new fad that people have used within the last couple of years in different cultural backgrounds in their own rituals. According to the article, it stated "Traditional Chinese medicine has long incorporated snail slime in a variety of uses. The ancient Greeks used snail slime to reduce inflammation. More recently, snail slime was taken up for skin-care purposes in South Korea. From there, the snail mucin fad was picked up by "skin tok" and other social media" (Wills, 2023). Therefore, since the new age of skincare emerged ancient Chinese and Greek people have been using the same ingredient as their base for their own skin for the same purposes to reduce inflammation as well as other reasons. Snail mucin could mean a wide array of types but not all snails are created equally in terms of making sure the environment, handling the snails, and stress all contribute to the quality of the snail mucin/ slime. According to the article, it stated "Thankfully, others work to harvest snails in a more humane manner. This usually involves keeping the snails in a controlled, sanitary environment. The temperature, humidity, and light levels are optimized, and they are well-fed and hydrated; the snails are handled minimally and are allowed to just roam around making slime organically" (Smith, 2023). Hence, the skin mucin being a natural by-product of the snail itself and how it is treated to get what it secretes; lessens the value of it being under major cruelty since the basis of how it is treated is more humane than its counterparts.

Furthermore, the ancient Greeks and the Romans long before advocated for reasons other than skincare that it was able to treat certain illnesses too. According to the article, it states “Both the ancient Greeks and Romans advocated eating snails to cure a wide variety of ailments. These included fainting, stomach pains, and coughing up blood, as well as general pain relief. The snails could either be eaten whole after boiling or crushed (shells included) into a crunchy pulp (Pitt, 2019). Interestingly, snails are usually known just because of their lack of speed and agility but little do we know they serve a wide variety of medical and physical purposes that we could utilize for our overall better health regimen. The newfound peek that rekindled people's interest in learning more and gathering scientific data about snail secretion or better yet skin mucin was a particular observation that happened on a farm. According to the article, it stated “Snail slime as a skin treatment was rekindled recently from observations made by workers farming edible snails in Chile. After their skin came into contact with the slim during handling, they reported that cuts and scars tended to heal easily and rapidly (Pitt, 2019). This “accident” propelled chemists and other skin care gurus to quickly hop on this trend of snail mucin and further revolutionize the clean beauty market by using natural products like creams, moisturizers, and health food shop shelves with this product.

Even though, snail mucin is still toyed between being a social media fad or an important natural ingredient for the beauty industry; we can't help but admit the overwhelming benefits of how it could positively impact our skin and the medicinal use of snail slime. Its properties need to be fully fleshed out for it to be deemed entirely reliable for the purposes it was discovered to have like hydrochloric acid which is typically an artificial lab-made skin care additive to skin care products like facial creams, masks, and other beauty products. There are still many secret

elements that scientists are still figuring out from history and current findings that need to be explored further. Skin mucin still has a long way to go, and I believe that this ingredient could have a long-lasting effect on the beauty industry; hence the push on clean beauty and how people are growing more and more conscious every day of what they put on their body than ever before.

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