

9 Skin Care Mistakes Dermatologists Wish You Would Stop Doing

BY LINDSAY TIGAR · FEBRUARY 21, 2017



Your primary physician warns you against skipping your annual physical exam. Your dentist reminds you (again) to floss more often. Though you might try your best to live the healthiest, happiest life you can (go you!), the experts often wish we'd all make better choices for our longevity. Dermatologists are no different, and in fact, often forgotten about when you think about your medical team, especially if you've been blessed with clear skin. But dermatologists have studied and mastered the largest organ of our body: our skin. Being mindful and considerate of your skin care routine, the products you buy and how you're protecting yourself from environmental and sun damage should be top of mind, especially as you age.

As you head into spring, make it a point to stop doing these things that dermatologist say are simply the worst:

1. Using Products Not Designed for Your Skin Type



Founder and owner of The Miami Dermatology and Laser Institute, Dr. Jill S. Waibel says too often, she sees patients buying products they shouldn't time and time again. "Opting for a heavy moisturizer when you have oily skin can clog up your pores and cause breakouts," she says. "Or using super-fragrant or fruity products when you know you have easily irritated skin or prone to rosacea, allergic contact dermatitis or eczema."

Instead, make it a point to read your products' labels to make sure you're using the right product for you. If you have oily skin, look for terms like "non-comedogenic" or "mattifying" as these products won't clog your pores and

keep shine and excess oil at bay. As for sensitive skin, reach for fragrance-free skin care products that feature calming ingredients like aloe, calendula and chamomile.

2. Over-Exfoliating



After a long, hard workout or a day when you were surrounded by chemicals or out in the sun, there's nothing that feels quite as great as scrubbing your face. While using cleansing brushes and exfoliating devices are generally good for your skin, Dr. Waibel warns against opening up those pores too often. "A common mistake for patients is they exfoliate as a daily skin care routine. This strips your skin of essential moisture and makes your skin more susceptible to infections, clogged pores and free radicals that can lead to unwanted wrinkles in the future."

So what's a girl to do? "It is recommended for a patient to exfoliate only 2 to 3 times a week, no more than that. And this changes in the winter time to only 1 to 2 times a week," she advises.

3. Popping Your Zit



Ever had a major green, bumpy zit pop up on your chin and you just know how good it would feel to squeeze and get rid of it? As tempting (and sometimes, gratifying) as it is to do a quick fix, Dr. Waibel says to resist the urge. "It is human nature to want to pop a pimple when you see one. Don't! Most of the time, the lesion you are trying to pop is underneath the skin, and poking around and doing home extractions of the lesion can lead to unnecessary scarring," she explains.



4. Only Wearing Sunscreen in the Summer

Heavy jacket, scarf, gloves, hat and... sunscreen? Yes, says Dr. Visha Patel, MD, FAAD, FASDS, FACMS, a board certified dermatologist. Even if the sun is nowhere to be found, it's below zero outside and you know you won't get sunburned, wearing sunscreen is still essential to your routine. "Stop thinking because it is not sunny outside that you do not need to wear sunscreen with an SPF of 30. UV radiation penetrates through clouds and can still cause damage to the skin," she explains. "To protect your skin, always apply a thin layer of SPF after you moisturize and before you put on makeup."



5. Wearing Makeup When You Work Out

It's easy to forget to wipe off the mascara and foundation you rocked at work all day, but that simple 2-minute decision could cause you to break out way more than you normally would, according to Dr. Patel. "This will clog your pores and cause acne. Give your face a chance to breathe while you sweat out any impurities and strengthen your body," she says.

Not enough time to do a thorough wash? Stash a pack of makeup remover wipes in your gym bag.



6. Poor Sleep Habits

After a full workday, a workout and keeping up with your iMessages, there's nothing you want to do more than turn on your Netflix and pass out, ASAP. But even if you don't wear makeup (lucky you!), washing your face before you visit Mr. Sandman is important to your skin health. "Going to bed with makeup on will leave you with clogged pores and dull skin," explains Debra Jaliman M.D., board-certified dermatologist, author and Assistant Professor of Dermatology and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Another habit Dr. Jailman says to maintain? Getting fulfilling shut-eye. "Not sleeping enough will make your skin look dull. There's something to be said about beauty sleep. Try to sleep 7 to 8 hours per night. Skin rejuvenates and repairs itself while you sleep. That's what give skin its glow," she explains.

Having trouble staying asleep? These sleep-inducing beauty products can help!

7. Eating Unhealthy Food



What you put into your body doesn't only result in excess fat around your belly or indigestion post-binge eating, but it reveals itself in the health of your skin and your hair. In fact, certain foods can cause acne, while others can help rid of imperfections. And sometimes an unbalanced diet can make you age prematurely, too. That's why Dr. Jailman says to keep your skin in mind when you order takeout or grocery shop. "If if you don't eat properly and you have poor nutrition then your skin will be more likely to wrinkle. I have patients that are always dieting and they don't eat enough protein or people who don't eat enough fruits and vegetables so they don't have a high enough intake of antioxidants so they will have poor skin composition," she explains. "Vitamin C is important for building collagen. Eating too much sugar glycates our collagen and elastic

tissue which stiffens it and also causes wrinkles."

A little unsure if you're getting enough nutrients? Consider adding supplements, like HUM Nutrition Collagen Love, to your healthy diet.



8. Wearing Your Hair Too Tightly

You might not consider your scalp part of your skin—but it totally is. And how you treat your hair affects the texture and longevity of the skin that's underneath it. If you're not careful of how you're styling, you could cause hair and scalp damage and potentially permanent hair loss. "With the popularity of tight hairstyles such as braids, buns and weaves, there has been an increase in women coming in with hairloss. Scalp trauma from the tension causes alopecia, as well as inflammation in the scalp," explains Dina D. Strachan, M.D., board certified dermatologist. "Sometimes this causes permanent, also known as scarring, hair loss, that persists and progresses even after the hairstyle is changed."

9. Washing Acne-Prone Skin Too Often

Contrary to popular belief, washing your face dry won't solve your acne woes. "You don't get acne because your face is dirty or you aren't washing your face enough. Acne develops from a combination of four factors, including clogged pores from shedding keratin/skin cells, sebum, bacteria and inflammation," she explains. "You can have a genetic predisposition to the type of inflammation response that your body makes against the other three factors. Hormones also play a significant role, especially in adult women. Instead, use a gentle cleanser suited to acne-prone skin—that's it!"

