

Tips to help your skin thrive this winter

January 22 2024, by Carole Tanzer Miller



Winter isn't kind to your skin. Dry, cold weather causes dryness, and you might even develop "winter rash"—dry, irritated skin that's red, bumpy, flaky and burns. That's why it's prime time to step up your skincare routine.

Dr. Oyetewa Oyerinde, assistant professor of dermatology at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, shared some tips to keep your skin glowing.

"During the [winter](#), our skin typically dries out because the air tends to be less humid, and we also use the heater indoors, which leads to even more dryness," she said in a Baylor news release. "Dry skin is more likely to develop many types of rashes."

That's why she recommends changing up your usual routine of daily cleansing, moisturizing and sun protection.

If you usually use lotion, consider using a thicker cream-like moisturizer. If you usually use cream-like moisturizers, consider switching to an ointment-type moisturizer, Oyerinde suggested.

If you enjoy outdoor activities or snow sports, don't forget your sunscreen.

Following a good skin care regimen will help prevent a winter rash, she said. Your lips and skin around the eyes is especially vulnerable not only to the cold but also to rubbing caused by allergies, colds or flu, she pointed out.

Soothing irritated skin is easy. Just grab a jar of [petroleum jelly](#) and slather it on affected areas. Petroleum jelly creates a thick moisture seal that will keep wind and cold from doing more damage.

Have dry, cracked lips? Petroleum jelly or lip balms containing hydrocortisone may help.

Oyerinde noted that [dry weather](#) can also cause harsher symptoms for people who have eczema, psoriasis or other rashes.

Allergy flare-ups can sometimes lead to hives or other skin rashes. Kids are especially likely to have eczema flare-ups during winter, while older adults may experience skin irritation more often because their skin is dryer to start with.

Oyerinde, director of Baylor's Skin of Color Clinic, noted that people with darker skin tones are more likely to develop dark spots after having rashes. Wearing sunscreen can help prevent it.

There is one plus to winter, she said: If you're considering a skin procedure, this may be a good time to schedule it.

"Laser procedures, such as laser hair removal, are often best done in the winter," Oyerinde said. "For most laser procedures, the skin must be completely free of a tan and people tend to spend less time outside due to the cold weather."

Other procedures, like Botox or fillers, are often performed in winter so the changes will be evident by summertime. That, Oyerinde said, is "when patients really want all their cosmetic treatments to shine."

More information: The American Academy of Dermatology has more about [winter skin care](#).

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