

What are the best products to prevent, relieve chapped lips?

February 12 2024, by Erin Kayata



Northeastern associate professor of chemistry and chemical biology Leila Deravi says less is more when it comes to picking a product to prevent chapped lips. Credit: Alyssa Stone/Northeastern University

When the cold temperatures hit your lips and dry them out this winter, you might turn to some sort of lip product for a solution. But with a

plethora of options to choose from, which will work best?

When finding a product for your chapped lips, going with something simple is best, says Leila Deravi, an associate professor of chemistry and [chemical biology](#) at Northeastern University.

"Less is more, especially for the lips, which are so sensitive," Deravi says. "There's products that have menthols ... you're lucky if you don't get irritated by that stuff. I'd say the majority of people get irritated with those types of additives because it's messing with the equilibrium of your [skin](#) barrier. ... You start adding things, it's going to irritate you."

All skin is sensitive to the [winter](#) air and the parts of it that are constantly exposed like your hands and face are getting the brunt of the damage. (Hence why many turn to a good moisturizer when the weather is cold.) But the skin on your lips is extra sensitive because the upper layer is so thin, Deravi says.

Most lip products have three basic ingredients, Deravi says. There's a wax that gives the product its shape, oil that creates a barrier to lock in moisture, and usually a pigment to give the product some color. Some lip care products also contain a humectant that brings moisture from the air into your skin.

What does this mean you should look for in drugstore aisles? Deravi recommends seeking out products with lanolin, a type of wax secreted by wool-bearing animals like sheep. It may sound gross, but this product naturally traps the moisture in your lips. Products heavy on oils like this are better, Deravi adds. And the shorter the ingredients list, the better.

"At the end of the day, if you're looking just to keep moisturizing your lips and not have your lips cracked all, all you really need is an oil," says Deravi, who co-founded Seaspire Skincare.

The most foolproof strategy is layering up moisturizing products or a humectant with something "occlusive" like Aquaphor or Vaseline that Deravi says will trap in the moisture.

"The humectant literally pulls hydration and then you've got that occlusive layer keeping it all in," Deravi says.

However, Deravi's advice is ultimately to follow what works for you. Deravi says some people find the menthols helpful and not irritating. Others prefer products that are heavier on the wax, like Burt's Bees.

There's also natural ways to help your lips this winter. Staying hydrated and making sure you have enough water will help with keeping your lips smooth.

"It's really susceptible to your environment ... even the humidity of a room you're in," Deravi says. "External things like if you're a smoker or if you are working construction. ... All these factors really make a huge impact on your skin."

This story is republished courtesy of Northeastern Global News
news.northeastern.edu.

Provided by Northeastern University

Citation: What are the best products to prevent, relieve chapped lips? (2024, February 12)
retrieved 27 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-02-products-relieve-chapped-lips.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--