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- IN THE PRESS -

LOVE YOUR LOOKS | Jump-Start Great Skin

LIKE THE SUPER BOWL OR POST-holiday sales, itchy, tight, flaky skin has become an annual rite of winter. The problem? Low humidity outside and cranked-up heat inside combine to strip away the natural oils that hydrate skin and help form a protective barrier, says Audrey Kunin, MD, a dermatologist in Kansas City, Mo., and founder of the skin-care brand DermaDoctor. "This leads to a chain reaction: dehydration, redness, itching and sensitivity," she adds. Once skin has been damaged, it's even less able to shield you from wintry weather. And your hair isn't spared, either. Luckily, there are easy ways to fix the fallout, from the top of your staticky head to the bottom of those dry, cracked soles. Let the healing begin.

SOFTEN UP IN THE SHOWER

While it may be tempting to linger in a hot shower, resist the urge. "The moisture barrier gets hammered," Dr. Graf says. Adds Dr. Bank: "You can actually come out more dehydrated than you went in."

BEAT THE HEAT

If you can stand slightly cooler water, lower the temperature. Can't quit your steamy showers? Keep them short (no longer than five minutes).

DO WITH BODY WASH

And while you're at it, switch to a low-sudsing formula. You don't need lots of lather to get an average day's dirt off your skin, Dr. Bank says, and milder formulas won't zap the skin's protective natural oils. Try Kiehl's Creme de Corps Nurturing Body Washing cream ($22; kiehls.com), which has moisturizing jojoba oil and shea butter.

1 TACKLE TOUGH FEET

Neglected in boots, feet can end up in rough shape. Solution, from New York City dermatologist Jeannette Graf, MD: Once a week, soak feet for 10 minutes in warm water and Epsom salts, then massage in a scrub and rinse. Next, slather on a thick moisturizer, ideally containing shea butter. "It's one of the most continually moisturizing ingredients," says Dr. Graf. We like L'Occitane Shea Butter foot cream ($28; usa.loccitane.com). Put on a pair of cotton socks and wake up to baby-soft feet by alarm time.

2 GIVE KNEES AND ELBOWS EXTRA TLC

You guessed it—dry skin is especially noticeable here. To keep cell turnover up to speed and allow the moisturizers in your lotions to penetrate, Dr. Kunin suggests using a gentle scrub once a week. For extra moisture, try this skin-saving balm: Clean George Skin Stick ($9; at select Whole Foods). It's packed with antioxidant-rich shea butter and vitamin C.

3 WATCH THE EYES

"The skin around the eyes dries out fast because there are fewer oil glands," says Ruthie Harper, MD, a dermatologist in Austin, Texas. Fix the issue with a weekly moisturizing mask. Look for one with hyaluronic acid, adds Dr. Harper, who is also founder of the skin-care line Skinshift: "It's a moisture trap." Clarins HydraQuench cream mask ($35; clarins.com) is gentle enough to soothe and repair the eye area.

4 SWAP OUT YOUR LOTION

The outer layer of skin, the stratum corneum, "helps fend off external stressors, like dry heat and wind," says David Bank, MD, a dermatologist in Mount Kisco, N.Y. In winter those effects are especially damaging (with less moisture in the air, the stratum corneum is extra taxed). To help, "use a thicker body cream to lock in moisture," he says. Curél Intensive Healing cream ($13; at mass retailers) contains glycerin to help skin hang on to hydration.

chapped cheeks? Soothe windburn with a swipe-on balm. Bonus: instantly glowier skin!

5 LICK YOUR LIP PROBLEM

To heal parched lips, skip the standard balm. "Once lips are chapped, you need something more viscous and emollient," says Dr. Kunin. "Waxes won't provide enough moisture to heal under the skin's surface." Try a product with petroleum jelly or hyaluronic acid, like Maybelline New York Baby Lips Repairing lip balm ($4; at mass retailers), which boasts both.

6 DITCH THE ITCH

Your red, itchy skin could be a sign of eczema (it's often exacerbated by the cold). Seeing thick, scaly patches? Visit your derm. In the meantime, whether you have eczema or just a case of winter skin, try Avène XeraCalm A.D. Lipid-Replenishing balm ($32; aveneusa.com), which has itch-fighting and anti-inflammatory ingredients.

7 GET HEALTHY, HYDRATED, NONSTATICKY HAIR

The good news: Winter's drier air means less frizz. The bad news: Static and brittle strands are the tradeoff. To fight back, switch to a deep-moisturizing conditioner or leave-on mask and use it after every shampoo. Try Nevo Intense Therapy leave-in treatment by Pravana ($17; pravana.com for locations). Pay extra attention to the ends.

8 BLOCK THE SUN

The sun never stops shining—even on cloudy days. So sunscreen is still a must. Choose a daily moisturizer with SPF 30 or higher, and look for a formula with collagen-boosting peptides and ceramides, a lipid (fat) found in the skin. Try Elizabeth Arden Ceramide Lift and Firm day cream broad-spectrum sunscreen SPF 30 ($72; elizabetharden.com).

9 UPGRADE YOUR CLEANSER

Chapped skin calls for a gentle formula. But you still need something that will remove your makeup. The fix: a hydrating balm like The Body Shop Camomile Sumptuous cleansing butter ($15; thebodyshop-usa.com). The solid, lather-free wash relies on soothing chamomile essential oil, olive oil and shea butter to melt off makeup and grime, leaving skin hydrated but not greasy.

THREE STEPS TO SKIP

DO **TAKING BUBBLE BATHS** "Foaming bath additives are very rich in detergents. That's what makes them bubble," says Dr. Kunin. "Detergents are alkaline and quickly remove skin's protective moisture barrier." Use a bath oil for luxurious hydration.

DO **OVERUSING HAND SANITIZERS** Wash with soap and water whenever possible, because "alcohol-based hand sanitizers can dry skin," says Dr. Harper. Can't get to a sink, or just love the convenience of sanitizers? Slather on hand cream after each use.

DO **FLATIRONING EVERY MORNING** "The environment is already zapping moisture from your hair without over-styling adding to the problem," says Dr. Graf. Opt for a cut that works with your texture and requires less heat styling.

DON'T FORGET!

You're careful not to get dehydrated under the blazing summer sun. But staying quenched is just as key this time of year, especially for your skin. "It's always easier to hydrate from the inside out than the outside in," says Dr. Harper. Drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day to help with everything from dullness to lines. As Dr. Bank puts it: "If you're not drinking enough, you won't have glowing skin."

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