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8 Terrible Things People Often Do To Their Skin That They Mistakenly Think Are Good For It

By Carina Wolff
May 24, 2017

We've all received skincare tips from our friends, the internet, or even our doctors, and we likely follow them without doing much research or looking into their advice. However, there a number of bad things you're doing to your skin that you mistakenly think are good for it, when it reality, it actually might be causing your complexion some harm. Some habits are outdated, while others are just the result of viral misinformation, but either way, you'll want to start making some changes to ensure you have the best skin possible.

"Skincare mistakes are common for several reasons," says dermatologist Kally Papantoniou, MD FAAD over email. "We often inherit ideas on how to care for our skin, and these recommendations are often not the best advice. It can also be very confusing to make the best care plan for your skin with so many options and tips abound."

Everyone's skin is different and has different needs, but there are a number of mistakes that are destructive for pretty much everyone. To make sure you're not harming your skin, you'll want to avoid these eight worst things you're doing to your skin that you mistakenly think are good for it.

1. Washing Your Face Too Much



"It may seem intuitive to want to dry out your skin if you are prone to break outs and oily skin, but the reality is, if you strip away all the oils, your skin overcompensates by producing more oil and worsening your baseline," says cosmetic dermatologist Dr. Shereene Idriss over email. You might be surprised to find that if wash less frequently, or spare the areas that don't need washing, your skin will have less breakouts.

2. Exfoliating Too Hard



It's okay to exfoliate lightly, but scrubbing too hard or exfoliating daily can cause damage to your skin. "I frequently see people with red raw skin because they have scraped so hard that they have interfered with the barrier function of the skin," says dermatologist **Dr. Ava Shamban** over email. "Then their normal skin care regimen becomes irritating."

3. Using Makeup As Sunscreen



"It is highly unlikely that the amount of make-up women apply will be effective as a sunscreen, and they usually miss many areas where make-up is not even applied," says Papantoniou. Instead, Papantoniou recommends first applying your sunscreen evenly all over, and then applying the make-up after. "If the product has an SPF value, this is just an added benefit, but it should not be used as a substitute for sunscreen."

4. Getting A "Base Tan"



"Many women have the notion that they need to go tanning, or have a 'base tan' prior to going on vacation or going to the beach," says Papantoniou. "It is false, and it is a terrible idea to go to tanning beds under any circumstances, as this will greatly increase

the risk of skin cancers such as melanoma." Instead, consider getting a spray tan or use self tanner.

5. Applying Too Much Acne Medicine



At the first site of a pimple, many of us can get carried away and try too many acne remedies. "In this case, too much of a good thing can dry out and irritate the skin, leading to peeling, redness and difficulty covering the area with make-up," says Papantoniou. "It is best to use medications and over the counter acne treatments as recommended, and understand that applying more does not mean that the blemish will go away any sooner." In fact, irritating a lesion often delays the healing time.

6. Applying Too Many Anti-Aging Creams



There are so many anti-aging options available, so it's not hard to end up using five serums four creams all at once — but this is a bad idea. "Chances are, if you put too many products on, you will irritate your skin," says Papantoniou. "It is better to alternate products if you have several that you wish to incorporate into your routine. But it is also important to be consistent, as sporadic use is less likely to show any benefit." Try narrowing down your products, and see a dermatologist for guidance if needed.

7. Using Lemon As A Blackhead Treatment



Just because it's natural doesn't mean it's always good for you. "You'll want to steer clear of this popular at-home blemish remedy," says dermatologist Dr. Marina Peredo over email. "Lemon is highly acidic and can lead to irritation if applied directly to the skin."

8. Popping Pimples



"We're all guilty of that pesky tendency to want to have our skin feel smooth by popping those pimples away, but we are causing ourselves more harm than good by inciting trauma to our faces," says Idriss. This can lead to inflammation and scarring, so if you see a pimple, you'll want to just let it be.

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