



This is what causes red skin, and here's how to fix it

By JOLINE BUSCEMI. February 28, 2019



There is only one place I want my face to be red, and that's my cheeks, where I painstakingly paint on blush for a youthful glow. See also: naturally rich red lips. But mostly, the redness on my face radiates from my nose like I have a perpetual cold. Or it presents itself as an overall ruddy appearance when I lapse in my skin routine or diet. I can cover it with makeup, but I'd rather not.

Instead, I want to get rid of the source of the problem. Why does skin get so red, and how can I make it go away?

The underlying cause for many cases comes down to heat. Increased blood flow, aka hyperemia, happens when the body is overheating. That blood flow is sent to the surface of the skin so you can cool off and "the face being exposed to the elements makes it the perfect site for that flow," shares Dr. Bobby Buka, a leading dermatologist in New York City and contributing Founder and Chief Science Officer of the First Aid Beauty skin care line.

"Outside of excess body heat, a condition called rosacea is the most common source of facial redness for most of my patients," Dr. Buka tells HelloGiggles. "It's caused by microscopic mites on the skin surface, and flares up from certain triggers such as alcohol, exercise, and others."

Dr. Anna Guanche, board-certified dermatologist and celebrity beauty expert, says that those who have rosacea or a tendency towards it may notice more redness as they age. "Usually, these are individuals who blush easily and stay redder longer after exercise. They can then develop telangiectasia, or dilated small vessels on the surface of the skin. This leads to a chronically red appearance to the skin," Dr. Guanche tells HelloGiggles.



Redness can be caused by irritation, too, says Dr. Buka, often because of wind exposure. “When the face is continually pummeled by the wind, blood flow to the area increases while simultaneously moisture is being sapped from the skin,” he says.

And then there is the facial redness that comes from something you can’t change—your parents. “Some are simply born with rosy cheeks—also known as keratosis pilaris rubra—or the Prince Harry cheeks,” shares Dr. Guanche.

Facial redness can even be caused by viral infections, or it could just be allergies, eczema, or sunburn. Whatever the issue is, there is a way to return your skin to the unruddied color.

“Minimizing facial redness is done by addressing the cause. Irritation from ‘windburn’ can be fixed with facial moisturizers containing ceramides, which keep skin supple. If rosacea is the culprit, anti-mite therapies will correct the condition and get facial complexion back to normal,” Dr. Buka notes.

Dr. Guanche suggests an emollient cream with silymarin (milk thistle) or Glycyrrhiza inflata root (licorice root). “Cool compresses with a 15-minute relaxation period to reduce blood pressure and calm everything are helpful.”

If skin care products aren’t working, it might be time to head to your dermatologist. “Prescription products such as Avar are our go-to, and for flushing, Rhofade is an effective prescription vasoconstricting cream that takes out the red for hours when applied,” Dr. Guanche says.

Treating the cause should always be a priority, but when facial redness persists, coverage can be the answer. “As far as daytime products, a bit of green tint neutralizes the red appearance, so makeup or treatment creams that are (pale mint) green can help,” Dr. Guanche suggests.

Some of the products below do both at the same time, and the other cleansers, serums, creams, and masks are top rated products to calm irritated skin and reduce redness.

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