

14 Beauty Secrets Dermatologists Swear By



Ever marveled at your derm's clear, dewy complexion and wondered how it stays that way year after year? If you ask, they'll credit their flawless face to always doing two things: [washing at night](#) and [wearing sunscreen during the day](#). But don't be fooled—they have lots of little tricks up their sleeves to ward off acne, tighten pores, smooth [wrinkles](#), erase sun spots, and bring on the radiance. We got 12 [dermatologists](#) to reveal the one skin care step that gets top billing in their daily routine. (Want to pick up some healthier habits? Sign up to [get natural beauty tips and more](#) delivered straight to your inbox!)

They circumvent dirt magnets.

"I change my face towel daily. A bathroom towel contains the perfect storm to cultivate bacteria and breakouts—warmth, moisture, and plenty of dead skin."

—Mark H. Schwartz, MD, NYC plastic surgeon and clinical assistant professor of plastic surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College

"When I wash my face at night I always put my [hair](#) back. People often miss cleansing the area right next to the hairline. And I keep my hair off my face when I sleep, because hair

acts like a magnet for dirt and pollution. The last thing I want is to roll over in my sleep and have dirt and pollution all over my face."

–Diane Madfes, MD, board certified dermatologist with Madfes Aesthetic Medical Center in NYC

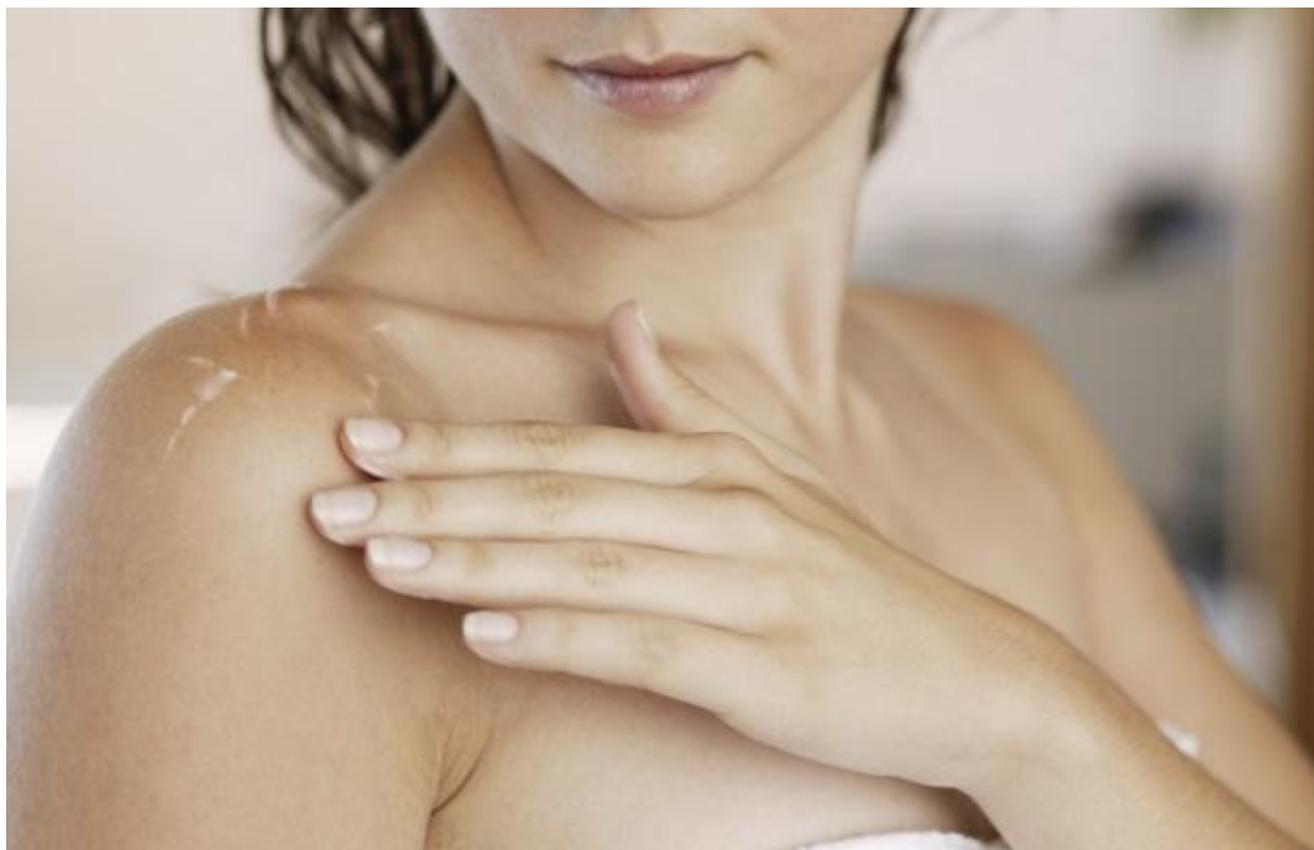
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They swear by retinoids.

"I have been using prescription topical [retinoids](#) at night for more than a decade. [These vitamin A relatives](#) stimulate collagen production, keeping the skin strong and supple and more resistant to wrinkling. Using the prescription just a few times per week has a significant impact over time. I recommend starting out with an OTC version and adjusting to a prescription once your skin has acclimated."

–Joshua Zeichner, MD, director of cosmetic & clinical research, assistant professor of dermatology, The Mount Sinai Hospital

They don't dry off.



Photograph by Fuse/Getty Images

"I like to apply my products to very slightly damp skin, so after washing and cleansing, I leave a residual film of water on my face and then apply the products. The packages may say 'dry skin,' but I think that extra little bit of moisture allows the products to better glide onto the skin."

—*Seemal R. Desai, MD, FAAD, founder and medical director, Innovative Dermatology PA, Plano, TX*

They hydrate like crazy.

"The skin needs moisture to look plump, smooth and vibrant. Moisturizers that contain hyaluronic acid are 'super-hydrators'—the ingredient can carry up to 10 times its weight in water. Also, I [drink 8 to 10 glasses of water a day](#) to keep my skin hydrated from the inside out."

—*Felipe Jimenez, PhD, chief scientific officer of ClarityMD*

They prioritize oil.

"My assistant's 89-year-old mother used an olive oil water mixture for cleansing and moisturizing every day and didn't have a wrinkle or spot on her face. I've tried my own mix of olive oil and water, [argan oil](#), and lately I'm on a [sea buckthorn oil](#) kick. Oil is a great [moisturizer](#) and cleanser; it also takes off mascara in seconds without removing lashes."

—*Valerie Goldburt, MD, dermatologist with Advanced Dermatology, P.C., Center for Laser and Cosmetic Surgery in NYC, clinical assistant professor at NYU Langone Medical Center*

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They're addicted to serums.



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"After washing, serums are the first product to touch my face. In the a.m., I use one loaded with antioxidants, like [Skinceuticals Serum 15 AOX+](#), which contains vitamin C to fight free radicals. In the p.m. I use one that contains growth factors or stem cell derivatives, the building blocks of skin that stimulate collagen and elastin formation as well as skin turnover. Then I'm ready to moisturize and apply [sunscreen](#)."

—Chris G. Adigun, MD, board certified dermatologist based in Chapel Hill, NC

They keep a lip product on their nightstand.



Photograph by Ian Hooton/Getty Images

"I literally *have to* put [Aquaphor](#) on my lips every morning when I get out of bed. I tend to have very dry lips and also like really matte lipstick, so the Aquaphor provides a hydrating base and prevents dryness and flaking." (Here's how to [prevent chapped lips](#).)

—*Rebecca Kazin, MD, FAAD, associate director of the Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery and faculty at Johns Hopkins department of dermatology*

They pay special attention to their eyes.

"The eyes are the first place to show signs of aging and need delicate care, so it's worth the splurge to have a separate eye cream. I use [IS Clinical Eye Complex](#) in the morning because it contains caffeine which helps with depuffing, and [ReGenica Overnight Repair](#) in the p.m. because it has growth factors that are restorative overnight."

—*Elizabeth Tanzi, MD, founder and director of Capital Laser & Skin Care, and assistant clinical professor, department of dermatology at the George Washington University Medical Center*

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They carefully calibrate their shower temp.

"I take warm showers. If the temperature is too hot, it strips the skin of its natural oils, leaving it itchy and dry. And I always moisturize within three minutes of hopping out of the shower, using a pH balanced moisturizer, like [Sebamed Moisturizing Body Lotion](#)."

—Marnie B. Nussbaum, MD, FAAD, clinical instructor of dermatology at Weill Cornell Medical Center

They don't wait until bedtime to wash up.

"I wash the day off as soon I get home, even if it's mid-afternoon. And if I have makeup on when I work out (generally a no-no, but sometimes it happens), then I wash it off as soon as I finish—while the sweat is still wet, before my pores get clogged."

—Chris G. Adigun, MD

They strategically remove makeup.

"My golden rule: Do not rub your eyes! Eyelid skin is the thinnest on the body and most prone to aging, even from aggressive rubbing. To remove eye makeup, I pat [Vaseline](#) or [Aquaphor](#) onto the whole eye area, let it 'melt' my eye makeup for 5 minutes, then gently wipe it off with a cotton pad or soft tissue. You can do this even if you have oily or [acne-prone skin](#) because the eye area has no hair follicles or pores to produce oil and become clogged."

—S. Manjula Jegasothy MD, founder, Miami Skin Institute, clinical associate professor of dermatology, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

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They don't just focus on their face.

"Since stopping an oral contraceptive, I've been dealing with adult acne on my back and I've been finding salicylic acid and Aczone, a prescription acne gel, to be most helpful. They don't irritate my skin or bleach my shirts. I use a salicylic acid wash (I like [Neutrogena's Oil-Free Acne Wash Pink Grapefruit Cleanser](#) or [Biore's Acne Clearing Scrub](#)) every time I shower, and rub on Aczone every morning and night."

—Hadley King, MD, dermatologist at SKINNEY Medspa in NYC

"Many people show their age on their neck, because they've neglected it for so many years. I apply the same serums, moisturizers, and sunscreens that I use on my face to my neck as well."

—Chris G. Adigun, MD