

Dry Skin Relief



Overview

Also known as xerosis or xeroderma, dry skin is a commonly occurring skin condition that happens when the skin lacks the necessary moisture and oil to keep it soft and smooth.

Dry skin results in itchy and flaky skin that can get red and inflamed. This condition worsens during the winter months due to the cold and lack of humidity in the air. Dry skin can also occur due to the use of certain medications, chronic diseases like diabetes, and taking showers or baths that are too hot.

How is Dry Skin Treated?

Your dermatologist can accurately diagnose the symptoms and severity of your dry skin and create a treatment plan that's right for you. During your appointment, your dermatologist will look at:

- Your medical history as well as your family history
- Perform a physical exam and evaluate your skin
- Review your medication list
- Review lifestyle factors such as frequency of bathing and types of soaps and products used

The Best Tips for Dry Skin Relief

Dry skin, if left untreated, can cause itchiness, flaky skin, redness, and inflammation. Here are some dermatologist tips and recommendations that can help improve the symptoms of your dry skin:

1. **Limit the number of showers or baths you take.** In general, dermatologists recommend limiting showers and baths to once daily. Decreasing the amount of time spent in the shower along with the temperature of the water (warm instead of hot) can help reduce moisture loss.
2. **Switch to mild or gentle cleansers which are fragrance-free.** Many of the popular soaps can be harsh on the skin and strip the skin of its natural oils. Dermatologists recommend applying cleanser only to areas of need and rinsing away all soaps and cleansers prior to drying off.
3. **Apply a moisturizer right after your shower or bath to seal in the moisture.** Your dermatologist will recommend certain moisturizers which contain

ingredients that help reduce loss of water and keep the skin soft and hydrated. In general, creams or ointments are preferred over lotions.

4. **Avoid fragrance in products such as your soaps, laundry detergent, fabric softeners, and dryer sheets.** Fragrances can be irritants or allergens for people with sensitive skin. In general, always select products that are labeled as “fragrance-free”.
5. **Don't scratch.** This can worsen your condition and lead to infection.
6. **Use a humidifier.** Adding moisture to the air, especially during dry winter months, can help reduce your skin from drying out.
7. **Wear gloves.** You can protect your hands by wearing gloves whenever you are doing wet work or household chores such as washing dishes. Exposure to chemicals and cleaning agents can irritate and dry out your skin.
8. **Don't forget your lips.** Your lips can also become dry and chapped. Applying lip balm such as petroleum jelly to the lips can help keep them hydrated and soft.