



LIFE

# How to save your own skin from winter

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By Maryanne Kocis MacLeod, Macomb Daily Staff Writer

"California dreamin" may ignite a few sluggish brain endorphins but it won't restore summer's glow to chapped or wind-whipped skin.



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"As soon as you turn the heat on indoors, the skin starts to dry out," said Dr. Steven Grekin, D.O., a dermatologist with the Grekin Skin Institute in Warren and Southfield. "It doesn't matter if you use gas, wood or electricity to heat your home. The skin gets dry."

Consider these tips for boosting moisture and keeping skin supple and healthy during the long, parched winter:

1. Sun-drenched or otherwise, every season's No. 1 skin care strategy should be to apply sunscreen, stresses Ali Moiin, M.D., a dermatologist at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak.

"Winter sun — combined with snow glare — can still damage your skin," Moiin said. "Try applying a broad-spectrum sunscreen to face and hands — if exposed — about 30 minutes before going outside." Reapply frequently if spending any length of time outdoors shoveling snow, sledding, skiing or skating.

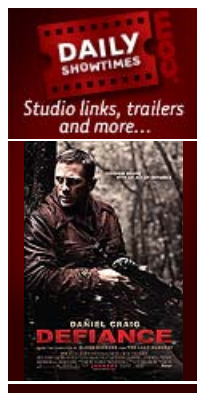
2. Dial down the temperature in your shower or bath and spend as little time as possible exposing your skin to hot water. Hot water leaches moisture from the skin and promotes drying. "Nobody wants to hear it, but short, lukewarm showers are the way to go," Grekin said. "If your bathroom gets steamed up, the water is too hot."

3. Moisturize with a lubricant such as Aveno or Cetaphil while skin is still wet, Grekin recommends; then pat skin dry. Beware of lotions that contain alcohol — very drying — or promote "no more tears," which includes lye; also drying.

4. Check the humidifier on your furnace to make sure it's working, Grekin said, and consider investing in a small humidifier for the bedroom.

5. Slather on a facial moisturizer that includes glycolic acid as part of your morning routine, urges Charles Mok, D.O., of Allure Medical Spa in Washington Township. "It promotes shedding of the upper, dead and flaking layers of the skin and provides a moisture barrier to keep lower layers moist and excessive heat and cold out. It's the No. 1 anti-aging topical in the world," Mok said.

6. Hydrate for health, not skin benefit. Drinking water to promote soft, moist skin is a long-held myth, Moiin said, but still an important tenet for healthy living. That said, if you didn't get one of those colorful and affordably priced stainless steel or aluminum water carriers in your stocking this Christmas, pick one up at Target for about \$12.99.



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Fill with environmentally friendly filtered tap water five to eight times a day and you're good to go, Grekin said.

7. Hydrate face daily with a topical Vitamin C treatment. "Winter air exposes us to all kinds of environmental inflammatory: the sun, smoke, toxins,"

Mok said. "Skin ages as the result of environmental factors — not years. One application protects the skin from ultraviolet rays for a day and a half." Tubs of topical Vitamin C are available at retail outlets and some physicians' offices for between \$40 and \$60, lasting two to three months.

8. Mok recommends a second, similarly priced topical application for your night time routine: Vitamin A normalizes cell turnover, reduces pore size and wrinkles and even corrects acne, Mok said. The classic variety, Retinol, is too strong for the average person; instead Mok recommend Retin A. "Keep in mind: Using these moisturizers is cheaper than a facelift," Mok said.

9. As sun tans fade, brown spots rise to the surface and become more predominant in the winter, Mok said. Between three and five spa treatments with intense pulse light therapy will permanently remove annoying discolorations caused by sun damage, Mok said. But if you're prone, others will likely surface to take their place. The good news is that once key problem spots are eliminated, one or two maintenance treatments per year should keep irregularities at bay.

10. Want to do something today to improve your look this weekend? Consider a 10-minute Botox injection to fade the crow's-feet around your eyes or eliminate the furrows in your brow.

"You get an immediate 'Wow' effect," Mok said, adding that Botox is approved by the Food and Drug Administration. "There's no downtime, it looks natural, no scarring, it's a quick pick-me-up. While the demand for facelifts is down 20 percent nationally, at our practice Botox is up 50 percent."

For more information, visit [www.alluremedicalspsa.com](http://www.alluremedicalspsa.com) or call (800) 577-2570; [grekinskininstitute.com](http://grekinskininstitute.com) or (586) 759-5525; and Dr. Moiri can be reached at (248) 643-7677.

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