



7 Solutions for Winter Skin Issues



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The harsh winter elements can take a toll on sensitive skin. Dr. Mitchell Chasin, Medical Director at Reflections, Center for Skin has answered some of the most popular questions asked about skin during the coldest months of the year.

1. **My skin gets red every time I step outside, how can I help reduce that and what causes it?** Cover up. The cold constricts the blood vessels while outside and there's a rebound effect when the skin warms back up and the vessels dilate, creating excessive redness.
2. **My skin gets very blotchy in the winter, how can I help reduce that and what causes it?** Very often dry skin is the cause of blotchiness. Avoiding hot showers can help, as can frequent use of moisturizer and using non-soak cleansers. Running a humidifier in the bedroom while sleeping is also a great way to replenish the moisture in your skin. Another cause of wintertime redness can be Rosacea. If you have broken blood vessels, bumps, and recurring flare-ups in the same area, you should consult your doctor, as you may be suffering from Rosacea.
3. **What ingredients should I look out for/avoid when buying skincare products in the winter?** Avoid anything containing agents that strip the skin of its natural moisture. In the winter we typically decrease the strength of the retinoids we give to patients.
4. **My skin gets very dry and itchy in the winter, why and what can I do to treat and prevent that?** See blotchy above...
5. **My acne get worse in winter/why and what can I do?** It's not that acne is worse in the winter, it's that it improves in the summer due to sunlight on the skin. The bacteria that cause acne flourish in the winter in the absence of UV light. UV and other light-based therapies can help keep acne-causing bacteria in check. Also, many people go off their acne medication in the summer. It's important to get back on it in the fall before the winter hits and acne regains the upper hand.
6. **Are there certain foods I should be eating in the winter to help reduce dull skin and minimize acne/foods to avoid?** Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean meats, nuts and seeds will help combat acne and make your skin look terrific. Of course drinking plenty of water is also critical for healthy skin. When acne is bad,
7. **My feet, hands and cuticles are very dry, what do you recommend I use?** Frequent hand washing, especially in winter, can lead to excessive dryness. Avoid hot water and stringent soap, and try to moisturize hands right after washing, before they are fully dried. For the feet, applying moisturizer right after getting out of the shower should help lock the moisture in. Also, rubberized shoes that don't breathe well can make feet sweat, which leads to skin irritation, which leads to dryness. Avoid shoes that are sealed and make your feet sweat and wear thicker, absorbent socks that wick moisture away from your feet.