

## The Big Chill

**Is the winter weather taking a toll on your skin? Here's how to bounce back!**

Winter can wreak havoc on our looks. Chilly temperatures, low humidity and windy days all zap the natural moisture in our skin that gives us a healthy glow. Moisturizer is the answer, but picking the right one for your skin type can be daunting with all the lotions, potions and specialty creams on the market these days.

"Walk into any department store, and there's a dizzying array of stuff out there," says Stephen Mandy, M.D., a board-certified dermatologist and member of the American Academy of Dermatology. "More than anything else, you're paying for the marketing and packaging."

### Why Is Winter So Damaging?

Ever wonder why winter is referred to as "old man"? It's probably because the season has taken such a toll on his face.

Environmental factors like blustery winter weather-along with genetics play a role in whether your skin is dry, oily, sensitive or resistant, says Leslie Baumann, M.D., Dermatologist and author of *The Skin Type Solution* (Bantam Dell, 2006). "Cold can make you drier because cold air has less humidity," she says. "Wind makes you



dry, too, by increasing friction and evaporation. Wind-because of friction-also can make your skin more sensitive (tender or more prone to acne)."

### Tips for Your Skin Type

So, how should you winter-proof your skin? Follow these expert tips on how to moisturize, based on the four basic skin types:

1. Oily and sensitive skin may look shiny. It's also prone to reactions, from acne and breakouts to redness, itching and flaking. "Oily skin often doesn't need a moisturizer," says Baumann, who recommends anti-inflammatory gels instead, such as Paula's Choice Skin Balancing Moisture Gel.
2. Oily and resistant skin isn't prone to reactions. "An oil-control product or a light moisturizer like Purpose Dual Treatment Moisture Lotion works well," Baumann says.
3. Dry and sensitive skin actually feels dry to the touch-perhaps even rough-and has a dull color.

Signs of sensitivity include flaking skin and eczema that sting when skin-care products are applied. "Stick to moisturizers that have as few additives as possible," says Mandy, who recommends an over-the-counter lotion called LactiCare for this skin type.

4. Dry and resistant skin benefits from moisturizers with glycolic acid, Baumann says. "M.D. Forte III Facial Cream is what I recommend."

### The Skin Game

To get the most out of your moisturizer, you need to get one with the right ingredients for your skin type:



For dry skin, look for ingredients like mineral oil, petrolatum, glycerin and cyclomethicone, which are thick and prevent water loss from the skin.

For oily skin, look for a product that is very light, with dimethicone as the active ingredient.

For skin that is neither too dry nor too oily, moisturizers with silicone-derived ingredients such as dimethicone, cyclomethicone and lightweight oils such as cetyl alcohol are right for you.

*Source: American Academy of Dermatology*



## Don't Let Anxiety Get the Best of Your Health

With holidays around the corner, days becoming shorter and to-do lists growing longer, it's likely if you're feeling frazzled. Making it worse, stress has a way of making you, well, more stressed! It creeps into your life, saps your energy, and makes you bad-tempered. Did you know that it also harms your health?

When we feel stress, we're experiencing physical and emotional reactions passed down from our ancestors—who were dealing with hazards more life threatening than the decision to host the family Thanksgiving dinner. In general, though, the threats they faced were occasional. Today, stress is nearly constant, which wears on our health.

Anxiety causes a cocktail of chemicals to spill into your blood stream. If the source of stress goes away, chemical levels subside. But if your body is constantly reacting to stress, the cumulative effects of the chemical reaction cause fatigue, irritability and an increased susceptibility to illness or disease.

Studies have linked stress to both cancer and heart attacks. It can also cause other health problems, including headaches, gastrointestinal distress, depression, anger and violence.

### Take Control

If tension is getting to you, talk to your doctor. He or she can suggest lifestyle changes or prescribe medication to help you manage your stress. Learn to relax. Your health insurance plan as well as a local gym or community center may offer classes in meditation, anger management techniques and stress-reducing exercises such as yoga.

The National Mental Health Association suggests these other strategies to help reduce negative responses to stress:

- Take care of yourself. Get enough sleep, eat a healthful diet and exercise regularly.
- Walk away from it all. Take breaks throughout your day. Go for a stroll during your lunch break. Escape with a book before you start preparing dinner. Just 10 to 20 minutes of quiet time relieves chronic stress.
- Do what you enjoy. Listen to music, enjoy a hobby or visit with friends.
- Share your feelings. Turn to friends and loved ones for support and guidance.
- Practice and prepare. Imagine ways to handle a stressful situation. "Visual rehearsal" can help you picture a situation and defuse it before it happens.
- Find perspective. Even complicated problems become more manageable when they are broken down into smaller parts. Focus on one small task. Then move on to the next. Steady progress can reduce your anxiety.

## Healthy Family Activities

Be sure to check out this month's healthy family activities in your community at: <http://search.active.com/?tab=events>

Festival Turkey Trot: <http://www.festivalturkeytrot.com/>



## Makin' Berry Muffins



Whether for breakfast or an afternoon treat, these pumpkin cranberry muffins capture the flavors of the season.

- 1 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 c. whole-wheat flour
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. walnuts or pecans, very finely chopped
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 15-ounce can 100 percent pure pumpkin
- ½ c. canola oil
- ¼ c. low-fat milk
- 1 c. dried cranberries

*Directions:* Preheat the oven to 350 F. •Coat 12 large or 18 medium muffin cups with vegetable oil spray. •Whisk together the flour, whole-wheat flour, sugar, walnuts or pecans, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda and salt in a large bowl. •In a separate bowl, combine the eggs, pumpkin, canola oil and milk. •Add the wet mixture to the dry mixture along with the dried cranberries and stir to combine. •Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin cups. •Bake for about 25 minutes (large) or 20 minutes (medium) or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. •Makes 12 or 18 muffins. •Serving size: 1 medium muffin.

*Serving stats:* calories, 240 •fat, 12 g •saturated fat, 1.5 g •cholesterol, 45 mg •sodium, 160 mg •carbohydrates, 30 g •dietary fiber, 3 g •protein, 4 g.

*Recipe courtesy of John Wiley & Sons. From American Dietetic Association Cooking Healthy Across America by the American Dietetic Association and Food and Culinary Professionals.*