

Serving Size: How Much Product Should You Really Be Using?



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It just may be the human condition to assume that we can't have too much of a good thing. The truth is, we can—and beauty products are no exception. Too much of the most amazing hair serum can make it look like we need to wash our hair, and too much of even the best scrub can irritate our skin. There's a happy balance to all products we use, and much like when dining out, serving size really does matter!

Facial exfoliator/scrub:

You don't want to overdo it with this type of product. Many feel that the harder and more that they exfoliate, the clearer their skin will be. For many, this is not the case, says dermatologist Rebecca Kazin, MD, FAAD. Excessive scrubbing can irritate the skin and cause acne breakouts, as well as broken capillaries. "I generally recommend 1/2 teaspoon for the face and perhaps a full teaspoon for chest and back if using in the shower," Kazin says.

Facial moisturizer + SPF:

To use your moisturizer as an SPF, you need to be sure that you apply enough to get that SPF posted on the bottle. You also need to apply it like sunscreen, which means applying it all the way to the hair line, jawline and to the front of the ears. Depending on the size of the person, 1/2 -3/4 of teaspoon should be sufficient, says Kazin. Remember to reapply your sunscreen throughout the day.

Eye cream:

A little bit goes a long way with eye cream. The eyelids are the thinnest skin on the face and therefore the most reactive. Kazin says that 1/8-1/4 teaspoon total for both eyes should be sufficient. Be sure to lightly tap the product on the lids (ideally with your fourth finger, which is your weakest) to avoid extra trauma to this sensitive area.

Anti-aging serum:

Generally, if this is applied in the morning, you want to apply enough for efficacy but not too much, as you still want your makeup to go on smoothly. Kazin recommends 1/4-1/2 teaspoon.

Hair products:

The amount of hair product you use should be tailored according to your hair type, length, and texture. “For instance, fine strands will require smaller-sized portions, focusing more on the ends to ensure hair is not weighed down at the roots. On the other hand, very thick or long stands will require a bit more product to get the job done,” says Fernando Salas, creator of White Sands Hair Care. Styling products like mousse generally need a golf ball-sized amount, while a quarter-sized amount is perfect for your shampoo and any type of conditioner from deep to daily formulas. “Love your leave-in treatments or oils? Dispense two pea-sized portions in your hand and then apply evenly by combing through.”