

8 Things Your Dermatologist Wants You to Stop Doing



by ADRIANNA BARRIONUEVO

Unless you're a certified dermatologist, chances are you don't know it *all* when it comes to taking proper care of your skin. That's why we have the pros, who know the ins and outs of everything from acne to anti-aging and beyond. We had a handful of board-certified dermatologists break down the biggest mistakes they see patients making and how to remedy the situation. While this guide won't save you a trip to the doctor's office, it will help you navigate the skincare aisle a bit easier. With any treatment, it's always best to check in with your derm, but we've gathered the top mistakes you could inadvertently be making and why you should stop them.

Keep scrolling to read about the common skincare mistakes doctors see and how to prevent them.

1. Overly Aggressive Acne Treatments



We've all dealt with our fair share of adult acne, and Dr. Rebecca Kazin of the Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery and the Johns Hopkins Department of Dermatology reminds us to calm down when skin acts up. "Mature skin tends to be drier, so you need to be mindful that you aren't blasting skin with harsh products that will further dehydrate it."

Although it's common for adults to deal with hormonal breakouts (even if you were acne-free as a teen), Dr. Kazin advises taking a less-is-more approach. "You don't need to wash with an antibacterial soap, as it can severely dry skin and result in itching and redness. Instead, use a gentle cleanser (try one with salicylic acid). Washing your face any more than twice a day can cause drying of the skin, which can cause the skin to produce more oil to overcompensate. Most of the prescription medications are very irritating and drying and, therefore, can't be tolerated by adults because their skin is not as oily."

"I recommend retinoids and chemical peels, as they effectively address acne and aging at the same time," says Dr. Kazin. "Neutrogena Rapid Clear Treatment Pads (\$8) are super easy to swipe on and are efficient and nonirritating for sensitive skin." Among the ingredients to avoid? "The adult-unfriendly ingredients: benzoyl peroxide and tretinoin," she says.

2. Sunburned Scalps



Lack of Color Spencer Wide Brim Boater (\$78)

Dr. Kazin also sees patients who neglect their scalps. "When applying SPF, we often forget about this key spot. It's the closest part of the body to the sun, and most vulnerable!" she says. "It's also one of the sneakiest places for skin cancer to present,

thanks to hair coverage and a limited visibility factor. Another often overlooked area are the tops of the ears for the same reason."

While she notices this mistake mostly among men, women with shorter hair or thin hair are just as prone to damage. "Skin cancer can occur on the scalp and can spread to other parts of the body. See your dermatologist annually for a full body check—including the scalp, ears, back, and soles of your feet and other areas that are harder to check on your own," she advises.

As for an immediate solution to protection, a hat is a way to go. "The best way to keep your scalp (and hair) safe is by wearing a hat—floppy brims offer good coverage for the face too." Another trick is to switch things up on your part, "Make sure you cover your part when you're out in the sun and try to alternate the way your part hair from day to day to avoid one area soaking up all the sun exposure," she says.

3. DIY Cocktailing



Board-certified dermatologist Dr. Craig Kraffert sees skin care mixing gone wrong among his patients. "Doing this with your anti-aging ingredients can actually backfire. For example, if you're using a glycolic acid cream and/or a vitamin C serum along with a retinoid product, the acid, and vitamin C may cause the retinoid to break down, becoming volatile and unstable," he explains. "This causes irritation and compromises the effectiveness of all of the ingredients. It's best to drop the glycolic and simply stick with a moisturizer that uses both retinol and antioxidants."

He recommends using Amarte Aqua Cream (\$93) one to two times a day to hydrate and brighten skin while getting the benefits of a retinol. "Most of today's retinoid products are much more sophisticated and stable than five or 10 years ago, and technologies like Amarte's nano-encapsulation provide increased efficacy and tolerability," he says.

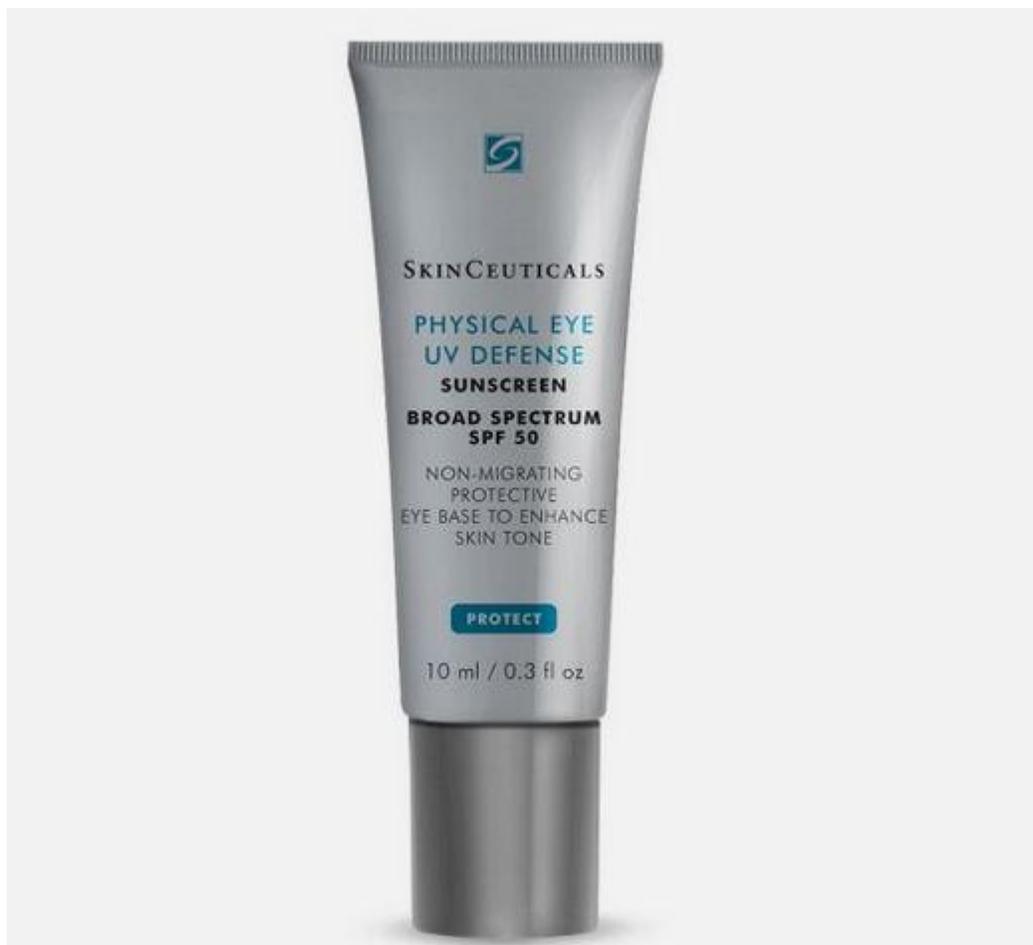
4. Picking at Acne



Okay, we'll admit it: We're ALL guilty of making this no-brainer of a mistake. But, hey, it happens! Dr. Kraffert especially advises against popping those pimples right before a dermatologist visit. "One of the key things I always tell clients NOT to do before

visiting the dermatologist is pick and squeeze the acne. While acne surgery expertly provided by a dermatologist can be very beneficial, attempting cystic acne intervention at home often does more harm than good to one's overall complexion and acne condition. Picking acne also significantly increases scarring risk," he reminds us.

5. Forgetting About Your Eyes



SkinCeuticals Physical Eye UV Defense SPF 50 (\$30)

Most of us know by now how delicate the eye area is, and yet we're so focused on perfect skin we sometimes neglect dabbing on a little something to help that thin skin. Dr. Julie Russak says, "An emollient eye cream is an essential step in your a.m. and p.m. regimen that I find many clients overlook. The delicate skin around the eyes is 10 times thinner than the skin on the face, and commonly the first area to show signs of aging," she explains. "As we age, skin loses its elasticity and becomes even thinner due to a breakdown of collagen. Caring for this area is crucial in maintaining a youthful appearance, and I am a fan of the SkinCeuticals Physical Eye UV Defense cream."

6. Using Harsh Scrubs Post-Workout



Everyone loves a steamy shower and a grainy exfoliating body wash after a long workout. And while it leaves us feeling fresh and clean, Dr. Joyce I. Imahiyerobo-Ip says it's not necessary, and it can damage skin in the long run.

"The number one mistake that people make is being overly aggressive with their skin post-workout. After sweating for an hour, many people feel the best thing they can do for their skin is scrub it from head to toe. This is a mistake. Aggressive scrubs can dehydrate the skin, leading to annoying skin conditions like eczema and even acne," she explains. She advises gym-goers to opt for a gentle cleanser like one from Cetaphil to avoid clogged pores that lead to breakouts, and to look for a less abrasive body wash. "I recommend using HydroPeptide Invigorating Body Wash (\$48) for the rest of your skin, as it contains lactic acid, which is a gentle exfoliant."

7. Misdiagnosing Your Skin Type



Skincare is very personal, so it's common for us to think we know it all, but let's remember we're not professionals, and it's always best to consult a dermatologist before giving any treatment a go. "I see here young women wanting to slather their faces with super-rich, heavy anti-aging products," says Dr. Kazin. "Women in their late teens and early 20s can still be battling acne, so these creams might not be right for their skin, and can clog pores and result in breakouts. I also see some people

overexfoliating, which can also lead to breakouts, especially if they have sensitive skin," she says. "Visit your dermatologist and ask for the right product recommendations for your skin type," she advises.

8. Layering Your SPF Incorrectly



Shiseido Shiseido Urban Environment Oil-Free SPF 42 (\$32)

Be honest: Did you know there was a *wrong* way to wear SPF? Either way, Dr. Craig Kraffert breaks it down. "Many layer their SPF incorrectly under their moisturizer. Apply SPF on top of your moisturizer, because by nature, SPF products sit on the skin. SPF will block any anti-aging cream placed over it from absorbing into the skin, compromising its benefits."