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3 Ways Winter Ruined Your Skin



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With spring in sight, do you feel like your face is winter-worn? If you study yourself in the mirror and notice your skin feels parched and looks papery, there are reasons to blame it on the season. Here are three big problems cold-weather months cause for our skin.

Winter in the northern part of the country brings cold weather and air

gusts, as well as indoor blasts from dry-heating systems like radiators and electric baseboards central air cranked up. The weather outside, in combination with our overheated homes inside, creates very dry skin.

Too much soap and lotion + too little cream

People forget that when they wash, even with a mild soap, it strips the natural oils from the skin which need to be replenished with moisturizer. Lotions are great, but they are the weakest moisturizers. If your regular pumper-bottle lotion isn't working and your skin is still dry and flaky, use a cream or an ointment. Creams are thicker, and often come in tubes or jars, while ointments have a greasy texture. On a cold winter night, it's great to take a warm shower, load up on cream or ointment and throw on long pajamas to let the moisture sink in. You will

wake up with soft skin in the morning. If you have a few rough patches (like elbows, knees or feet), I recommend that you use Vaseline or Aquaphor overnight on those areas.

Winter also brings often sunny vacations to escape the cold. That's when people may develop PMLE, or polymorphous light eruption, a common type of allergy to the sun. One in ten Americans suffer from PMLE, and women are more likely to get it than men. Symptoms often present when people are exposed to a level of sunlight they are not used to. Many people notice a bad rash develop on the skin from 30 minutes to a few hours after sun exposure, and assume it is an allergy to sunscreen. Symptoms can also include fatigue, chills, nausea and headache. By the time some affected travelers get home and to the doctor, the rash is nearly gone. Seek medical attention if you notice these symptoms. Your doctor may treat you with antihistamines before and during the trip, and suggest a great sunblock, clothes to protect from the sun and steroid creams prescribed by a dermatologist, if needed.