



allaboutacne

Summer-proof your skin

Summer is here! It's about longer days, trips to the beach, music festivals and generally, more fun in the sun. Your skin will be on show and needs your help to shine so take a moment to check you've got the skin care essentials for the warmer months ahead.

Protection is vital

Sun protection is vitally important for everyone, including those with acne-prone skin. All About Acne recommends you use sunscreen daily - on top of morning acne treatments. Re-apply every two hours if you're out in the sun for long periods.

Not only does Australia have a high rate of skin cancer - almost entirely preventable - but sun exposure is also the number one factor in premature skin ageing, wrinkles and sunspots.

Many acne treatments - creams and tablets - can make the skin more sensitive to the harmful effects of sunlight, especially ultraviolet (UV) A rays, so this makes sun protection even more important for people with acne.

Remember that sun protection is not just about sunscreen, says All About Acne dermatologist Dr Mei Tam. "To be sun aware, remember to slip, slop, slap, as well as slide on your sunglasses."

"You can also check out www.sunsmart.com.au or download the free app which provides a daily UV alert and let's you know exactly what time you need sun protection," she added.



Choose carefully

- Choose gel, liquid or spray sunscreens to make sure your skin isn't irritated or clogged with heavy, greasy sunscreens.
- Sunscreens with physical sun-blockers such as zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are very effective but have had a reputation for clogging your skin. With the micro/nanoparticles used in these products today, clogging should not be a problem. Just check product labels to be sure the product you're buying is non-comedogenic (i.e. won't clog the pores) and therefore is suitable for acne-prone skin.
- Choose sunscreens labelled 'broad spectrum' which provide long-lasting protection against both UVA and UVB rays.
- In case you wondered, fake tan does not protect you from the sun - but experts agree that it is a safer option than a 'real tan'.





cleansing

Be gentle with cleansing

Scrubs and scrubbing are not the way to go for acne-prone skin. You can't scrub away acne - in fact, abrasive scrubs are more likely to make your acne worse by inflaming and irritating the skin. Soap also increases the pH level of skin and presence of P.acnes bacteria which cause acne.

All About Acne recommends using a gentle, non-soap skin cleanser such as Cetaphil, or a non-abrasive scrub containing salicylic or boric acid morning and night. Pat your skin dry afterwards - don't rub!

Forget about overdoing the showers and washes in an effort to prevent breakouts. Unfortunately summer's humidity itself increases pore blockages which can lead to outbreaks. Cleanliness isn't the problem - humidity is.

"While it may be incredibly tempting, try not to squeeze whiteheads or red lumps," said Dr Tam. "Squeezing may cause further inflammation, making acne spots deeper and increasing the risk of permanent scars. A health professional may use a comedone extractor and topical antibiotics or creams to help settle down acne faster, but generally the advice is not to pick and squeeze."



moisturising

Add moisture

Moisturising is an important and sometimes overlooked step in skin treatment for those with acne. Here are some tips from the All About Acne experts:

- Look for oil-free, non-comedogenic moisturisers which have been specifically tested in acne-prone people.
- Apply a light moisturiser to acne affected areas if they are dry or irritated. You may also want to apply it to sensitive areas such as around the eyes, sides of face, the neck, next to lips and nostrils.
- For mildly irritated skin, you typically apply moisturisers over the top of acne treatments but if irritation continues, try applying the moisturiser before your acne treatment.

If you're having trouble finding moisturisers, make-up and/or sunscreens suitable for your skin, talk to your pharmacist, GP or dermatologist.

Planning a dip or a trip to the beach? One study has found salt water may be helpful for a variety of inflammatory skin conditions including acne but as they say - more research is needed. On the other hand, we do know that chlorine in swimming pools tends to dry out the skin making it more easily irritated.



make-up

Make-up tips

Wearing make-up can make you feel more confident, especially if it helps conceal acne redness and blemishes. But when the summer heat is on, going 'natural' is often a good option.

If you haven't already done some 'spring cleaning' of your make-up supplies, now is a good time.

Green based, oil-free non-comedogenic make-up will help to camouflage redness.

- With warmer weather and putting more skin on show, you might need a range of concealers in your make-up kit. A lightweight concealer with sunscreen may work for every day with a heavier concealer for problem areas.
- Check your make-up and weed out old products. While lipsticks typically have a two to three year life, foundations and concealers may need to be replaced within six months to one year.
- Don't rely on cosmetics such as mineral make-up as your sunscreen. Make-up is rarely applied as generously or as often as is needed to be sun-safe.
- Look for products that are oil-free and non-comedogenic so they won't clog pores.
- Don't be fooled by make-up or creams labelled 'organic'. The organic oils in these products often aggravate acne.



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is an independent information resource about acne. A group of health and medical professions from around Australia volunteer their time and expertise to provide the most up-to-date, practical information on acne and its management. We're here to help!

www.acne.org.au