



Protecting Your Skin From Winter Woes

by Albert Lefkovits, MD
Photography by Philippe Reynaud

The balmy days of summer are a distant memory and we are approaching the busy social whirl of the holiday season. In order to keep our skin looking its radiant and beautiful best, we need to take steps to combat the effects of winter weather on our skin.

Although sun exposure becomes greatly reduced at this time of year, outdoor sports such as skiing or even jogging on sunny days continue to make sunscreen application a top priority. Do yourself a favor and apply it every day, rain or shine, until it becomes a part of your daily routine. This simple step is vital in keeping your skin youthful and smooth and lowers your risk of skin cancer.

Winter weather presents a particular challenge in keeping skin healthy and glowing, especially for those suffering from rosacea. At this time of year, certain rosacea triggers are much more prevalent. These include extremes of hot and cold temperatures, heavily spiced foods, red wine and other alcoholic

beverages, as well as emotional distress. When coming in from the cold to an overheated room, rosacea can often flare. Try to keep your face covered with a non-irritating silk or cashmere scarf and remove it promptly once indoors. A spritz from an atomizer of mineral water followed immediately by moisturizing cream will soothe skin that is parched from overheated interiors. A cozy fireplace is one of the pleasures of winter, but keep some distance from the flames so as not to damage your skin. Minimize your spicy food intake and limit alcohol consumption as much as possible. If you are offered a platter of fresh, raw vegetables at a party, enjoy as much as you like. To keep yourself on an even emotional keel, consider meditation and deep breathing techniques. Above all, try to live in the moment and enjoy the small pleasures in life.

A few tips for winter skin maintenance for everyone, especially those with rosacea:

- Take short baths or showers with warm, not hot, water

- Use a gentle, unscented moisturizing soap or body wash
- Apply moisturizing cream or lotion all over after bathing
- Use a non-pore-clogging facial moisturizer with sunscreen
- Coat your lips with balm containing petrolatum or beeswax
- Apply hand cream or ointment after each hand washing
- Try products with ammonium lactate to reduce roughness
- Wear protective clothing, hats and gloves when outdoors
- Use a vaporizer or humidifier throughout the season

Some simple, common sense rules go a long way to keep our skin and bodies healthy and beautiful. Consuming a well-balanced diet, staying hydrated and getting enough sleep are fundamental requirements for good health, which is reflected in our skin.