

## The Face of Winter

### How to Protect Your Skin in the Dry, Cold Months

Barbara Hey

Winter can be tough on skin, but there's much you can do to defend against the assaults of the season. The skin's primary role -- to protect the body -- is ever more important in extreme weather, and in most locations, that means extreme cold outside and dry, over-heated air inside during the winter. Your epidermis must "weather" these drastic fluctuations in temperature, and often the result is chapped, scaly, flaky skin.

#### Facing the Frost

The biggest wintertime concern is dehydration. In colder climates, you definitely need to increase the protection quotient. "You must

months. And this is especially important for the face. And if much time is spent outdoors skiing, snowboarding, or walking, for example, your complexion needs heavy-duty protection from brisk wind and winter sun as well.

"People often forget about sunscreen in the winter," says Schumann-Ortega. For regular outdoor time -- a few hours a day -- a sunscreen with an SPF of 20 should be sufficient. But if a winter trip on the slopes or shore is part of the plan, sunscreen with a higher protective factor is needed, even if your time is spent beneath an umbrella. "Both snow and sand reflect the sun," she says, so don't be caught unprepared. Double your efforts to protect the parts of the

*We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.*

-Aristotle



Protect your skin from winter's harsh elements for a healthy complexion year round

over-treat skin to keep it hydrated," says Barbara Schumann-Ortega, vice president of Wilma Schumann Skin Care in Coral Gables, Florida. That means a shift from lighter skin care products used during warmer months to winter-weight products, such as thicker, cream-based cleansers and moisturizers. These will provide stronger barriers against the harsh environment of winter

face particularly prone to display the effects of dryness: The lips and the area around the eyes need a continual shield against the elements. Ask your skin care professional which products are appropriate for your skin type and effective, seasonal moisturizers and sunscreens.

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"When it's cold, you lose blood flow to the skin," says Schumann-Ortega. The result is a dry, dull tone. Facial treatments can increase circulation and rejuvenate a healthy glow. But, Schumann-Ortega cautions, be careful with peels and resurfacing treatments during the winter, as they can do more damage than good with skin that's already taxed from the harsh environmental conditions.

## Winterizing the Body

It's not just the face that suffers in the winter. Skin everywhere dries out, and gets that flaky look and uncomfortable winter itch. Hot baths -- a delightful antidote to the chill -- can further exacerbate dry skin. The solution? Add 10 drops of an aromatic essential oil to the bath to moisturize as you soak. (Lavender is particularly soothing to dry skin.) Then apply an emollient moisturizer -- a product that feels particularly thick and creamy to the touch, like a body butter -- geared for extra dry, rough, chapped, or cracked skin. Apply it immediately after drying off, when the skin can most readily absorb the lotion and restore its barrier. If dryness is still bothersome, indulge in a salt rub and full-body conditioning wrap to re-moisturize.

And don't forget feet and hands. The feet, hidden by socks and boots all winter long, often go neglected this time of year and need attention, but the most obvious casualties of winter are the hands. Exposed to the elements and the subject of frequent hand-washing during the cold and flu season, hands can turn to rawhide just as holiday parties go into full swing -- not an elegant look for holding onto a champagne flute.

This is the season to slather hands with heavy, oil-rich cream at night and cover them with gloves. And don't forget feet: they also require the same special care. Consider a moisturizer for them in the evenings and sleep with socks on. In the morning, your feet and hands will feel soft and moisturized. Your skin care professional can recommend appropriate gloves, socks, and a home-care routine for this process. In addition, treat hands and feet to regular spa treatments to exfoliate dead skin cells, and paraffin treatments to replenish and moisturize.

## Relax and Enjoy It

In winter, and all seasons, stress can disrupt even the best skin. "We always ask clients what's going on in life, since adrenaline, holiday pressures, and even joy can have an effect on body chemistry," says Schumann-Ortega. The skin reflects it all. "Some clients may come in after four weeks and they look like a train wreck," she says. So do your best to minimize the effects of stress with exercise, meditation, and proper diet. And don't skimp on the self-care. Schedule time for pampering, relaxing treatments.

Some final tips:

- Drink water. Even when there's a chill in the air and thirst isn't overwhelming, water consumption needs to be high to combat the dry air.

- Avoid products with a high percentage of synthetic ingredients (propylene glycol, petroleum), chemical detergents

(sodium laurel sulfates), and artificial colors and fragrances.

- Employ quality skin care products suited to your skin type.

- Check your medications. Illness and ongoing pharmaceuticals can upset pH balance.

- Incorporate nutritional supplements into your skin health regimen, such as essential fatty acids, zinc, magnesium, vitamin A, and B vitamins.

Winter doesn't have to take its long, hard toll on your skin. Ask your skin care professional about hydrating products and circulation-enhancing treatments to ease the long, dry months of winter. After all, spring is just around the corner.



When you're outside in harsh conditions, cover up with gloves, scarves, and sunscreen.

# Healthy Energy Boosters

## Tips to Staying Energized and Alert

Rebecca Jones

Here are some tips for keeping your energy levels up.

### Snack Smart

Strategic snacking can be a good way to smooth out dips in your energy level and avoid hunger cravings that can lead you to overeat. Go ahead and snack---just be as choosy in your snack selection as you are in meal planning.

### Grab an Energy Bar

Don't fall for the fiction that all so-called "energy bars" are unpalatable but good for you. A lot of energy bars are filled with chemicals and with sugar, so read labels, and look for high fiber, high protein, and limited carbs.

### Pick-Me-Up Snacks

Nuts such as almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, and hazelnuts are among the best choices for healthy, pick-me-up snacks, nutritionists say.

### Stay Hydrated

Even slight dehydration can leave you

tired and lethargic. The answer is, of course, to drink plenty of water. If the taste of plain water doesn't excite you, consider some of the flavored varieties, keeping in mind that loads of extra sugar should be avoided.

### Get Your Beauty Sleep

The number one myth about sleep is that you can get by on six hours a night, but the further away you deviate from getting eight hours sleep a night---and some people get too much, not too little---the greater the risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, obesity, and a host of other maladies.

### Avoid Caffeine, Get to Sleep

Caffeine is a great pick-me-up first thing in the morning, but it has a six- to seven-hour "half-life," meaning that half the caffeine in that cup of coffee you consumed to ward off the 3:00 p.m. doldrums will still be lingering in your bloodstream after the 10:00 p.m. news.

Rebecca Jones is a Denver-based freelance writer.



Stay hydrated to keep energy up.

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# Boost Your Immune System

## Lymphatic Drainage Therapy Fights Infection

Does your immune system work overtime? If so, you might want to give it a boost by seeing a massage therapist or bodyworker trained in lymphatic drainage therapy. This technique can boost your immunity by increasing the production of antibodies, stimulating circulation, moving congestion out of the body, and reducing swelling, especially after surgery.

The lymphatic system supports our body's immune function and involves several organs, glands, and tissues, hundreds of lymph nodes, and a network of vessels. A clear lymph fluid flows through these vessels and carries the metabolic waste (bacteria, dead cells, fats, fluids, proteins, and viruses) to the lymph nodes, where it is filtered. These nodes often swell when we are sick.

The lymphatic drainage techniques used by massage therapists and bodyworkers gently stimulate lymph nodes, help correct swelling and stagnation in those nodes, reduce local fluid retention, boost the overall immune system, and provide relaxation. As an essential tool in the treatment of lymphedema (excess lymphatic fluid), this therapy is often applied postoperatively and can be especially beneficial for breast cancer patients.

Administering this treatment requires advanced training and is performed with gentle, massage-like strokes. There should be no discomfort involved; in fact, you may feel you are hardly being worked on at all.

### Aftercare

After your lymphatic drainage

treatment, it's possible you could feel some mild, flu-like symptoms, depending on how much strain your body has been under prior to treatment. This strain may be due to environmental pollutants, medication, and diet. Most people leave a session simply feeling relaxed, but if you don't feel at the top of your game, drink plenty of water, limit your salt intake, and stay physically active.

Lymphatic drainage is one way to give your wellness a boost in a busy world that makes many demands on your immune system.

*Most of the shadows of this life are caused by our standing in our own sunshine.*

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Now that we're on this side of the Holidays and the New Year's resolution to be healthier gets more challenging as it quickly comes under attack from our schedule and the business of life, don't forget to invest in your health this winter season and book a massage to help improve your own wellness. It has long been documented that massage is not just a luxury item, but has tremendous benefits for day to day living. Please contact the office or book your appointment online now on the Hours and Scheduling tab of our website: <http://motusmassagetherapy.com>, or book on our [facebook page](#) at [www.facebook.com/motusmassagetherapy](http://www.facebook.com/motusmassagetherapy). Like our page while you're there and get \$10 off your next session. Thanks in advance and make this a great day because they don't happen by accident!

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