

Tidings of comfort and joy for your skin this winter

The change in the weather that comes with the winter months brings with it several factors that can all have an impact on skin health. Find out what they are and what to do to stay skin healthy.

Cold weather...

A drop in temperature, exposure to cold winds and a lack of humidity are all factors that can make it more difficult than usual for the skin to retain moisture.

One or all of the above can have a drying effect on the skin, leading to dryness, itching, redness, and cracking.

...and central heating

When inside, the use of central heating or a roaring fire can also contribute to feelings of dryness and redness of the skin.

Although these effects are noticeable on exposed areas such as the hands and face, they can affect the skin overall. People with lower limb conditions already

have an increased risk of the skin in the affected area becoming fragile and prone to breakdown, so in the winter months skin care is even more important than usual.

Get out of hot water

When it is cold outside or in, it's tempting to crank up the heat in the bath or shower. This can add to

dryness, so a warm shower is best for your skin.

Moisturise

The obvious solution is to moisturise to replace moisture to help the skin to return to health.

Depending on the extent of the irritation, a richer moisturiser than usual may be needed. Apply after a shower or bath when the skin is slightly damp to help trap moisture beneath the product itself.

Emollients and fire hazard

If applying an emollient to the skin, it is important to remember to be fire aware. Some emollients are petroleum

based and can ignite easily so a close proximity to a fire should be avoided.

Leave to absorb

If moisturising before dressing or applying compression, leave the moisturiser to soak into the skin to get the maximum benefit. With compression garments, this also has the added bonus of preventing damage than can be caused to the elastic fibres by some moisturisers.

Softer clothing

If you do have irritated skin, consider wearing softer cotton-based fabrics to avoid further irritation.

Sleep well

Sleep is the time when skin recovery takes place, without the stresses and strains of everyday life. A good night's sleep is therefore essential to get your skin back on the road to recovery. 🏡

Sources: American Academy of Dermatology Association. Cold weather and your skin. <https://www.aad.org/news/cold-weather-and-your-skin>