

Feelings For The Homie? Here's What To Do About It

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beauty

The 411 on the Biggest Beauty Lies Ever Told

Some beauty myths are harmless. For instance, there's no scientific evidence suggesting that shaving your legs or bikini area makes the hair grow back thicker, darker, and faster. Other myths, such as Black people not needing sunblock (because melanin) and that Preparation

H gets rid of puffy eyes, come with serious risks. Dr. Yolanda C. Holmes, board-certified dermatologist and owner/medical director of Washington DC Dermatology, is comin' through with the real, as we separate fact from fiction.

By Princess Gabbara

MYTH #1:

Eating junk food causes acne.

THE REAL: Chocolate, soda, pizza, french fries, potato chips, and other junk foods aren't necessarily acne triggers, but they don't prevent it either. "A low-glycemic diet, which includes low carbs and more fruits and vegetables, is a better diet for acne ... it keeps blood sugar and insulin levels low," says Dr. Holmes. If your insulin and blood sugar levels get too high, that can increase inflammation within the body and lead to twice as many breakouts. Oftentimes, acne is brought on by other factors, such as stress, clogged pores, and hormones (e.g. your menstrual cycle). But everyone is different, so pay close attention to how certain foods affect your skin, specifically. If you notice your acne flares up after indulging in sweets or fatty meals, then steer clear of those foods.

MYTH #2:

Melanin is a natural sunscreen, so you can skip the SPF.

THE REAL: Yes, darker skin has a natural SPF of around 15, but that's not enough to block harmful UV rays and prevent sunburn, especially during prolonged periods of postin' up on the beach or kickin' it with your crew poolside. Dr. Holmes suggests using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher because it will take 30 times longer for a sunburn to develop than it would sans the 'screen. "It's more important that you reapply it every couple hours if you're going to be out in the sun [sweating] or if you're in and out of the water," she adds. Failure to do so could be detrimental to your health in the long

run. According to the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, African Americans have the lowest diagnoses of melanoma (the deadliest form of skin cancer) but are more likely to die of it after being diagnosed. Why? By the time it's detected, it's often too late. The melanoma "commonly occurs on the palms and soles, which are not sun-exposed areas, [so it] may not be thought to be a skin cancer," Dr. Holmes explains. The myth that Black people can't get skin cancer also keeps people from hitting up their doc. "Education and early detection is important," Dr. Holmes says.

MYTH #3:

All detoxifying cleansers and masks are created equal.

THE REAL: You probably have hella items stashed in your beauty arsenal that promise to pull out all the free radicals from that gorgeous skin of yours. (Free radicals come from sunlight, air pollution, dust, secondhand smoke, and other unavoidable factors, and can speed up the aging process, as well as bring on brown spots and sagging skin.) "Toxins influence the activity of our skin ... [they're] always present [and they] may make our skin more scaly, more oily, or contribute to acne formation," explains Dr. Holmes. But there may be a glimmer of hope: Antioxidants, which create a skin barrier that blocks free radicals, are often found in green and white tea, broccoli, apples, pomegranate, berries, and dark chocolate. And while there are plenty of cleansers, creams, masks, and serums claiming to contain antioxidants, too, your best bet is to enjoy foods packed with them, rather than slathering them all over your face.

MYTH #4:

Sleeping in your makeup is NBD.

THE REAL: What really happens when you fall asleep with a beat face? You may end up rolling out the welcome mat to dull skin, more breakouts, chapped lips, styes, and eye infections. The "oils and chemicals from makeup can cause [irritation] and encourage an environment where bacteria associated with acne can thrive," Dr. Holmes says. Always keep a pack of makeup remover wipes on your nightstand for those times you're too exhausted to do anything else. Your pores will thank you later.

MYTH #5:

Oily skin doesn't require moisturizer.

THE REAL: "You have oil-producing glands all over your skin. If your skin is dry and taut, then it will react by producing more oil," explains Dr. Holmes. "So [when] some people who have oily skin wash their skin throughout the day, I'm like, 'No, you're stimulating yourself to produce more oil.'" Develop an effective skincare routine that works for and not against your skin type. Prone to breakouts? Use an oil-control foaming wash twice daily, and follow it up with an astringent to remove dirt and excess oil. Finish with a moisturizer from a dermatologist-approved brand, such as Cetaphil, Aveeno, Neutrogena, or CeraVe. Dr. Holmes also suggests purchasing skincare products with salicylic and glycolic acids, since they penetrate deep into the pores.

MYTH #6:

Developing a good skincare regimen costs a fortune.

THE REAL: Spending all your coins on a high-end face mask or night cream? Girl, bye. "[People believe] the more you spend, the better the product, but that's not necessarily true," Dr. Holmes says. Tbh, there are plenty of drugstore finds people swear by because they work and are relatively cheap.

MYTH #7:

You can permanently shrink your pores.

THE REAL: Pores opening and closing? Reducing in actual size? Yeah, that's not how any of this works. Skin is a bit more complicated than that — you can create the illusion of smaller pores, but minimizing them for real, for real? Nah, fam. "Sometimes, [pores are] clogged with oil [and dirt], so things like chemical peels ... might make your skin look smoother and clearer, but [your pores are] always there," says Dr. Holmes. Warm water loosens up oil and dirt, which can make pores appear smaller. "But shrinking them and opening and closing ... that's not true."



MYTH ... OR NAH?

Wearing makeup causes acne.

DR. HOLMES SAYS: Myth. “Most of the makeup now is noncomedogenic, which means [it doesn’t] produce pimples.”

People with oily skin experience more breakouts.

DR. HOLMES SAYS: “They tend to have larger pimples, and it may be a bit more difficult to control sometimes.”

Natural ingredients are good for sensitive skin.

DR. HOLMES SAYS: “We see just as many allergic reactions to natural products compared to other products ... Just because it’s natural doesn’t necessarily mean it’s better. It’s different for different people. You have to find what works for you.”

Using more of a product guarantees better results.

DR. HOLMES SAYS: “All you need is a pea-sized amount of the product because it should last you for a while. Putting more on isn’t going to make the product work faster.”