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With SEX!**



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What can I do to perk up my dull, dry skin?

This time of year, funny things happen to one's skin. Well, maybe "funny" is not the right word: "bland," "flaky," and "lifeless" are the adjectives I hear most from patients. And usually they're right. Here's what happens and what you can do to bring back the glow.

Summer and autumn are outdoor times, and despite religious use of sunscreen, everyone has some superficial photo damage. As winter begins and the humidity level is lower, the damaged, dry cells of the epidermis accumulate on the skin surface. Irregular areas of pigment become visible. Your skin produces less moisture-sealing oil, resulting in dryness, blotchiness, and, often, fine lines and wrinkles. You've got the winter-skin blahs.

Michele Sabino, the lead aesthetician at my clinic, has a system that works wonders for our patients. It's based on a series of superficial skin peels using a balanced application of TCA (trichloroacetic acid) and lactic acid. This

preparation is chosen for both safety and efficacy. Using a dilute TCA supplemented by lactic acid (an alpha-hydroxy acid) helps remove the top layer of damaged skin cells, encourages the production of healthy skin cells, evens texture and color, and generally produces a happy face.

This combination peel is safe for most skin types, though extremely sensitive or darkly pigmented skin should have the solution tested on a small area before a full-face application. Post-peel redness lasts an hour or so in most cases, and flaking of dead cells results over the next few days. The combo peel is gentle but effective and should be repeated three times (four to six weeks apart) for the best results.

Of course, there are also lots of things you can do at home to get over the winter-skin blahs: Skincare products containing alpha- and beta-hydroxy acids are excellent exfoliants; vitamin C serums

help even skin tone by shedding off dead skin cells, reversing sun damage and wrinkles, and encouraging collagen growth, which tightens your skin.

Once your skin is revitalized, the routine is moisturize, moisturize, moisturize. The purpose of face creams is simply to keep natural oils within the superficial keratinized layer of the skin, which makes it look plump. The effectiveness of any cream or lotion varies with skin type,

product, and climate. A bitter, dry, Northern winter is obviously more drying than the milder, more humid South. So apply moisturizer to clean, damp skin as often as your skin needs it.

Gerald Imber, M.D., is a renowned plastic surgeon to the stars, an author, and a teacher. He heads a private clinic in New York City and is affiliated with the Weill-Cornell Medical College. Imber is cited by Castle Connolly and U.S. News as among the top 1 percent of plastic surgeons in the country. His philosophy, "The Youth Corridor," is defined as the period of life when you look your healthy, youthful best. His book, The Youth Corridor, can be purchased at amazon.com and is also available at Books for iPad including instructional videos.

Have a question for Dr. Imber?
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