

## How To Care For Oily Skin

Whether you are a teenager or an adult, oily skin has been the bane of many people just like you. No one likes that greasy feeling and the dirt that accumulates on your face, not to mention the shine that makes you cringe at the idea of flash photography. But there is a solution to this problem and one that is simpler and surprisingly gentler than what you may previously have thought.

First of all, you need to know what causes oily skin. Overactive oil glands that produce the substance, sebum (a natural skin lubricant and moisturizer) are the main culprits. As too much sebum accumulates, it becomes thick and heavy in texture making it feel greasy. Left unattended, oily skin becomes the basis of excessive shine, pimples and blemishes.

But while there is a down side to this condition, there exists a good one as well. Skin with active oil glands tends to be less likely to show wrinkles and other signs of aging compared to other skin types. This is because the oil keeps more moisture in the skin making it more supple and elastic, therefore there is less wrinkling.

For now, there is no quick-fix solution to successfully treat oily skin. Patience is your best tool since you are addressing not a surface problem but one that is inside your body. Success may take a while to achieve and in some cases may actually need professional medical attention. And in most cases, the condition is simply put under control and never totally resolved. Even then, the skin will improve its condition and the objective to not have greasy shiny skin will be closer than ever.

First thing to do in treating oily skin is to get rid of the excess sebum on your face, without total drying out your skin. Too much washing and "degreasing" can actually make things worse since stripping your skin of oil will cause your oil glands to work overtime in producing more sebum.

The correct and balanced method is to clean the skin with a very mild detergent or surfactant. It should not contain oils or other "fatty" substances that can increase the oily condition you already have. This kind of product removes the greasy feel of too much sebum and cleans away the surface grime that has built up because of the oil.

Some products contain small amounts of AHA (alpha hydroxy acids) that gently remove dead cells from the surface exposing a fresher layer of skin. Use this on a regular basis to get the intended results. Follow this up with a light (no creams and oils, preferably a water-based) moisturizer just so that the drying effects of the cleanser can be compensated for.

Use a mild astringent or toner everyday to clear off excess oils on your face. Avoid the stronger alcohol-based products. Even if you feel that it gets rid of more oil from your face, just like with the cleansers, you are actually encouraging more production of sebum if you dry your face out completely.

To prevent clogging, cleanse at least two times a day but do not scrub hard, as you will hurt your skin more than helping it. A slight pressure from your fingers is friction enough to slough off the dull, dead skin.

With oily skin, moisturizing need not be done everyday. But on the occasion you face feels tight due to cleanser and toner use, apply a light, oil-free moisturizer. Avoid products that contain substances as mineral oils and cocoa butter as they are too emollient for your skin condition.

For your makeup, choose oil-free products, especially for your foundation and blush. Go for water-based and non-comedogenic products that will not clog your pores. Some foundation products are designed to absorb oil, which can control the shiny look during the day.

As it is with any skin type, do not forget to apply sunscreen (NON-oil based, of course). There are alternative forms of sunscreen out there, and gel is becoming a popular choice since it is less greasy than conventional sun block lotions. To be effective, your sunscreen should be at least SPF 15.

If you have severe breakouts of acne, use cleansers that contain a mild amount of salicylic acid that clears your skin. Moisturizer containing the same substance is also a good follow-up.

Finally, try to watch your diet as well. Refined starches, sugar, and processed foods may aggravate your naturally oily skin. Choose food that is low in fat and eat more fresh fruits, vegetables, and grains. Drinking lots of fluids (6-8 glasses a day) of water, juice or teas maintains good skin tone. Keep your vitamin and mineral intake up especially with vitamins A, C and B complex.

It will take time for your skin to get into shape as far as being less greasy. But the effort and discipline you put in will pay off. And as mentioned before,

as you care for your greasy skin now, the benefits of less wrinkled, dry skin will follow you years later.

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#### About the Author

Gregg Hall is a business consultant and author for many online and offline businesses and lives in Navarre Florida with his 16 year old son. For a large selection of skin care products go to <http://www.shop4skincareplus.com>