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SKIN CARE TIPS FOR GYM RATS



With Memorial Day fast approaching, many are even more focused than usual on their bodies and getting them into tip-top shape at the gym. While exercise has multiple benefits, very often workouts and great looking skin don't go together. **We turned to Dr. Michael Horn, a Board-Certified Chicago plastic surgeon and anti-aging expert, to give tips on how you can get the six-pack and still have glowing, acne free skin.**

Sweat Itself Does Not Cause Acne

First, "It is important to know that sweat itself does not cause acne," says Dr. Horn. He explains, "Professional sportsmen are predisposed to accumulating dirt and bacteria in their pores during and after workout periods. If left without proper cleansing this can cause worsening in skin conditions like acne and dermatitis."

Avoid Makeup

These days a gym visit almost doesn't seem to "count" unless one posts it on Instagram. This often leads women to wear makeup to the gym. Just don't. **Dr. Horn says, "Most makeup will clog pores by not allowing the skin to breathe naturally during workouts. A better option is a tinted moisturizer if you are self-conscious about your skin tone."**

SPF

If you're going to be outdoors, apply a light moisturizer with SPF to keep your skin protected from UV rays. Make sure to choose a lightweight product as not to clog up your pores. Look for words like "non-comedogenic" or "oil-free" to know that your sunblock won't cause acne.

Don't Touch Your Face at the Gym!

Cardio machines, weight machines, free weights, these all breed bacteria. Touching them and then wiping beads of sweat off your face is a sure way to spread bacteria that can create new breakouts. Make sure to bring a towel for this instead of using your hands.

A Flowing Mane of Hair is Not Your Friend During a Workout

When you are working out it is a good idea to keep hair out of your face by styling it into a bun or rocking a dry and clean sweatband. Sweat and dirt can get transferred from your hair onto your face. If you haven't washed your hair and you use hairspray or other hair products, these can also splash onto your pores along with perspiration. This can cause irritations and breakouts.

How to Choose the Right Gym Towel

An old rag won't be effective at absorbing sweat. However, you don't want a gym towel that is as absorbent as a bath towel you would use to dry off your body after a shower at home. **Dr. Horn says that "The gym towel should be a**

happy medium — absorbent enough to keep your face dry during a workout, but not so thick it clings to bacteria even after a wash.”

Wear Loose and Comfortable Gym Clothes

“Spandex is tight clothing that can lead to skin infections from bacteria and fungi,” warns Dr. Horn. “Wear loose attire that will also help wick away the sweat preventing it from being absorbed by your skin.” Just google “sweat-wicking workout clothes.”

Reduce the Redness

Calm down a flushed face with your redness control remedy made up of a little bit of iced green tea and a spray bottle. “You’ll cool down your skin and add in a few extra anti-oxidants in the process,” says Dr. Horn.

After your workout

Dr. Horn stresses, “Wash your face immediately after your workout. You don’t want a mixture of dirt, oil, and bacteria clinging to your skin, affecting its pH, and clogging your pores. If you are exercising in a park where there is no sink, bring cleansing facial wipes with you.”

Moisturize Post Workout

No matter your type of skin, after cleansing you must moisturize. Dr. Horn says that “Skipping this essential step can unknowingly dehydrate your skin causing your oil-producing glands to overcompensate by producing an oversupply of oil. Use a moisturizer that’s been produced for your specific skin type and condition immediately after cleansing for the best results.”

Skip the Hot Shower

Sure, your muscles are sore, and you’re in the mood for a hot shower after a workout. Dr. Horn points out that, “Hot water strips skin of vital oils, leaving you with dry, itchy, dull skin.” Exfoliate more often to avoid “Bacne.” Breakouts on your back or chest are particularly common for “gym rats.” To avoid this, use a gentle body scrub three times a week. Dr. Horn says, “This will keep pores clear and skin functioning well.”

Save Your “Superhero” Products for Night

Save serious treatment products for bedtime. Dr. Horn points out that, “Even seemingly normal skin can experience much more sensitivity right after a workout. You may want to wait until redness decreases by bedtime to use your super-active acne or anti-aging treatment products.”

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