

How to Properly Wash Your Face

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### How to Properly Cleanse Your Face

The how and why of many daily tasks seem obvious. For example, most individuals over the age of 7 do not need to be told how to pour a bowl of cereal and milk for breakfast.

However, other seemingly simple tasks actually require some technique and precision to be done in the most effective manner. The act of facial cleansing is one of latter tasks, slightly more

complex than it first appears. This daily process is important because the skin is a delicate



organ, easily damaged and rather challenging to repair. A number of cleansing steps, some

required and some optional, can help care for skin. These steps are removing makeup, cleansing,



treating, moisturizing, and protecting with SPF.

The first step in effective facial cleansing is to remove any makeup. This step can be done with a pre-moistened wipe, a liquid remover, or a natural oil, such as jojoba. To loosen eye makeup, gently hold the wipe or a cotton ball saturated in the preferred agent on the eye area for up to a minute. Then, remove the makeup by wiping in short downward motions. The eye area is very delicate, so it is important to be gentle.

Next, lay a wash cloth soaked in warm water over the face for one to three minutes. This



action opens the pores and makes the subsequent steps more effective. Alternately, steam from a

warm shower will do the same job. After the pores are open, splash the face with warm water

rather than hot, as hot water can damage the skin cells and capillaries. Apply a dime-sized

dollop of skin-type-specific cleanser to the forehead, nose, chin, neck, and chest. Some products

require emulsification prior to being applied to the face. For about three minutes, blend the



cleanser into the skin with a combination of gentle circular motions and light pressure. Finally,



rinse the cleanser off with warm water.

The next step, exfoliation, is an optional step, and many individuals choose to do it once or twice a week with either a chemical exfoliant, such as AHA or glycolic acid, or microbeads. Some aestheticians warn against using an exfoliant with irregular granules, such as apricot kernels, as they may cause micro-abrasions on the face. In the event that the exfoliant of choice is built into a cleanser, simply swap it for the regular cleanser several days a week. Otherwise, apply the exfoliating product to the face after cleanser, gently massage it in, and then rinse it off. Follow cleansing or exfoliating with a splash of cool water to calm the skin and close the pores back up. Pat any excess moisture off the face with a soft towel.

The treating and moisturizing steps that follow cleansing are just as important to the skin as the actual application of cleanser. After towel-drying, apply any skin-specific serums or ointments. This step is another extra, but it can be useful for treating specific conditions, such as oiliness, acne, dryness, or age-related concerns. Some examples are salicylic acid for acne, a toner for oily skin, retinol for wrinkles, or antioxidants for overall skin health. Allow the skin to absorb the serum or ointment for one to three minutes, and then apply dime-sized dots of moisturizer, whichever variety is best for the individual skin type (oil-free, extra moisture, etc.), to the forehead, nose, chin, neck, and chest. Rub in the moisturizer. For daytime, follow the moisturizer with sunscreen on the face, ears, neck, and chest. Sunscreen is an important step all year round, as damage to the skin can occur in a small amount of time with relatively little sun exposure. Allow the moisturizer and sunscreen to absorb for at least three minutes. Finally, blot the face to absorb any residual product or oil before leaving the house or applying makeup.

The steps we take to care for our skin can make a difference for an important part of our bodies. Following these steps leaves the skin properly cleansed, conditioned, and protected. Healthy skin is one key aspect in our overall health.