

Q + A

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SKIN IRRITANTS IN THE WINTER—AND WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO COUNTER THEIR EFFECTS AND KEEP SKIN SOFT AND SMOOTH?

CULPRIT #1

► **WOOL CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES**

"Even the softest wool can be itchy or irritating," says Holly Sherrard, education manager at Dermalogica Canada. If you can't skip it altogether (wool hats are the warmest), there are some ingredients that can help shield skin from irritation. "Look for things like chamomile, red hogweed and ginger, which calm redness and heal the skin," says Sherrard. If you don't wear wool and still find your skin irritated, be aware: The detergent or fabric softener you're using could be at fault. Switch to a detergent free of fragrance and dyes.

EDITOR'S PICKS: Dermalogica Ultra Calming Barrier Repair, \$56; Tide Pods Free & Gentle (72 count), \$20 (not shown)

CULPRIT #2

► **FREEZING, SUB-ZERO TEMPERATURES**

Colder temperatures mean that skin can become more prone to dehydration, redness, irritation and chapping. "It's best to treat your skin before going outdoors with products containing peptides, like acetyl tetrapeptide-15, which make the skin less reactive, and shea butter and vitamin E to help shield the skin from the elements," says Sherrard.

EDITOR'S PICKS: Fresh Crème Ancienne Soft Cream, \$328 (100 mL); Dr. Roebuck's Pure, \$55

CULPRIT #3

► **HOT SHOWERS**

"The lipids that make up a large portion of skin soften in hot water, which causes gaps between skin cells, allowing for moisture loss," says Sherrard. After a shower is the best time to lock in moisture. "Applying treatment oils like apricot-kernel oil while skin is still wet helps restore lost lipids and seal in moisture." After oil, use a deep-moisturizing body cream with ingredients such as panthenol, hyaluronic acid and shea butter.

EDITOR'S PICKS: Avène XeraCalm A.D. Lipid-Replenishing Cream, \$27; La Roche-Posay Lipikar Baume AP+ (400-mL pump bottle), \$33 (not shown)

CULPRIT #4

► **UVA AND UVB RAYS**

Even though the air may be frosty, the rays of sun you soak up in the thick of winter are just as damaging to your skin as they are in the summer. These rays cause premature skin aging and can lead to skin cancer. The sun's rays are intensified by the reflection caused by snow or ice, so slather on a liberal amount of broad-spectrum protection in a cream formula with a minimum of SPF 30.

EDITOR'S PICK: Aveeno Protect & Hydrate Sunscreen Lotion SPF 30, \$16

CULPRIT #5

► **DRY INDOOR AIR**

"Decreased humidity indoors causes the skin to lose water—it's known as trans-epidermal water loss," says Sherrard. "This can lead to sensitization, dehydration and fine lines." She recommends layering emollient products, such as a hydrating toner, a serum or booster, and moisturizer. Look for cross-linked hyaluronic acid, which holds on to water in the skin; salicornia extract, which reinforces the skin's barrier; and tomato-seed oil, to help restore the skin's protective barrier lipids.

EDITOR'S PICKS: Vichy Aqualia Thermal Dynamic Hydration Power Serum, \$42; Consonant HydrExtreme, \$149 (30 mL)



Photography: Paul Weeks