

Sensitive Skin

1. What is sensitive skin and how does it differ from normal skin?

Sensitive skin reacts much more violently to outside aggressors like smoke, pollution and sun damage than typical “normal” skin. Topical and internal stressors can also inflame sensitive skin, including increased reactions to drinking alcohol or even eating spicy foods. For example, prolonged exposure to the sun may cause severe burning for someone with sensitive skin while someone with atypical skin may notice slight coloring. Also, those with sensitive skin will also notice alleviated redness during cold or hot weather, aerobic exercise and even spurred emotion.

2. Why does sensitive skin need special treatment?

Just like any departure from what is considered “normal”, sensitive skin needs precautionary care to ensure it’s always at it healthiest and most radiant. Sensitive skin can often be painful and uncomfortable so it’s important to always prevent flare-ups or reactions when possible. I always recommend my patients to spot-test any topical agent to the inside of their upper arm first before they apply to their face. This area mimics the skin on the face in terms of sensitivity but it can also be discreetly hidden if there is some sort of a visible reaction. I also recommend spot-testing behind the ears as it can be concealed, as well.

3. I have a sensitive skin with Rosecea and from time to time I notice itchy bumps on my face. What should I do to combat the itching?

I am sorry to hear you are suffering from Rosacea; you’re not alone -- millions of people suffer from Rosacea, the chronic skin condition characterized by redness of the cheeks, nose, chin, forehead, or eyelids as well as dryness and tightness of the skin. And many of those sufferers do not even realize they have Rosacea, which can lead to misdiagnosis and improper treatment. The good news is, your symptoms *can* be treated! It’s important to understand that regardless of the degree of severity of Rosacea symptoms you suffer from, the problem remains the same: inflammation. Because of this, Rosacea patients should be very cautious of their diet and stress levels, as well as the ingredients in the topical products they use.

Whether you suffer from rosacea, wrinkles, redness or acne, your external beauty is a direct reflection of overall health. The truth is there *is* a fundamental relationship between what goes into your body, your lifestyle and your outward appearance. Most people understand that applying the right topical products is essential to achieve a radiant and glowing complexion, but they don’t realize that what they are eating has a profound effect on their overall appearance. This is why I always recommend an Inclusive Health approach to treating Rosacea, as well as all skin conditions. Inclusive Health is made up of three facets of healthcare including Looking Better through targeted, high-quality topical skincare products; Living Better through proper diet and nutrition, focusing on water-rich foods and those high in anti-oxidants, amino acids and essential fatty acids; and Feeling Better through Emotional Self-Care, high values of self-worth and extra mind to stress management. When you begin to treat your Rosacea from this perspective, you will see your symptoms dissipate and your comfort level increase.

I recommend a diet full of raw fruits and veggies that hydrate your skin without the trips to the bathroom you often experience when drinking glass after glass of water. Certain foods and drinks, such as cheese, citrusy foods and alcohol, may irritate the condition; so identify the foods that affect you by tracking what you eat and evaluating how your skin reacts during the few hours after consumption. Lower the spice level in your diet. Spicy foods can trigger inflammation. Also, look for less active seasonings like thyme, ginger and turmeric to add extra flavor to your meals. Avoid “hot” spices such as white and black pepper, paprika, red pepper and cayenne, which may increase symptoms.

Foods containing amino acids like pumpkin seeds that help promote healthy collagen production, good fats like walnuts and olive oil to help rebuild cell membranes and reduce dry, flaky skin, as well as anti-oxidants and anti-

inflammatories; are all great for minimizing the effects of Rosacea. Carrots, sweet potatoes and broccoli are packed with anti-oxidants that help protect against free radical damage and will also help to hydrate the skin internally and protect cells from environmental damage which can further irritate rosacea prone skin.

Topically, I recommend looking for products containing hyaluronic acid, Azelaic Acid and Vitamin K that all seek to soothe and calm red, irritated skin as well as Peppermint Leaf Extract which will reduce stinging and discomfort. It's also critical that you take protect your skin with a sunscreen that has at least a 20 SPF.

Managing your stress effectively is the last, but equally important aspect of caring for your Rosacea. Stress often causes Rosacea to flare up and may even be worse than other flare-ups. It's important to proactively and consciously manage stress levels in your life; plan for deadlines and important projects ahead of time, take time out of your hectic schedule for a day at the spa, the park or simply take a few minutes every morning to meditate. I always tell my patients, give yourself permission to be happy!

4. How can I care for my sensitive skin?

To topically treat your sensitive skin, I recommend using a product line that works in conjunction with a very mild cleanser. Murad's Redness Therapy line is targeted for sensitive skin that suffers from Rosacea-like symptoms and contains many calming agents like Goji Berry Extract, Azelaic Acid and Peppermint Leaf Extract. Correcting Moisturizer Broad Spectrum SPF 15 | PA ++ is even tinted green to offset redness. Increased hydration will be a key solution in resolving problems associated with your sensitive skin.

I also recommend incorporating lots of omegas into your diet to improve and better your skin's hydration overall. Omegas are prevalent in foods like coldwater fish, almonds, walnuts and avocados and can improve skin's glow and firmness as well. A nutritionally robust diet full of water-rich foods like cucumbers and watermelon will hydrate the body from within without the trips to the bathroom that is common from chugging water. This is because the water found in raw fruits and veggies is formed in the structure of the food, so the hydration is slowly released over time.

Lastly, I strongly recommend you destress and take time out of each day to for yourself. Stress can wreak havoc on your body and only contribute to ailments in the body. Taking time out of the day to cultivate your Emotional Care to work out, read or even meditate for a few short minutes can do wonders for your emotional and physical health, resulting in beautiful, clear skin.

5. I have red, dry and sensitive skin with visible capillaries. How should I treat this?

First off, it's important to understand the cause of visible capillaries. Capillaries are part of the extensive vein network that transports blood to the face. When the walls of these tiny blood vessels narrow and widen too quickly, blood can seep out causing the visible thread-like appearance. People with dehydrated, dry and sensitive skin often have thinner tissue and thus may be more likely to get visible capillaries. While heredity plays a part (and fair, thin-skinned people are most prone), visible capillaries are most often caused by environmental factors such as lifestyle and diet.

Topically, IPL or other laser therapies have proven to have the most immediate success in effectively minimizing the appearance of capillaries. Some laser therapies may also be helpful to minimize redness and inflammation associated with capillaries.

If you prefer a gentler treatment, you can treat the redness and inflammation by using a topical skincare system with skin soothers and hydrators like Murad's Redness Therapy line. Specially formulated to target excessive skin redness and Rosacea-like symptoms, Murad's Redness Therapy calms and soothes sensitivity, flushing, heat and

overall tightness. Superfruit Goji Berry Extract is a featured ingredient in Redness Therapy for its power to provide exceptional nourishment to dry, flaky skin while reducing inflammation. Pomegranate Extract acts as a powerful antioxidant that helps to protect skin from free radical damage. Azelaic Acid and Peppermint Leaf Extract help to reduce stinging and discomfort in order to soothe and calm red skin. As with all Murad products, this comprehensive skincare line contains the Murad Recipe of hydrators, anti-inflammatory agents and antioxidants to help strengthen skin's barrier function and protect against free radical damage.

Inflammation can also be prevented by staying out of the sun and boosting your internal sunscreen by eating foods rich in carotenoids, isothiocyanates, and other antioxidants. Vitamins A, C and E, when combined with antioxidants, are also proven to significantly increase the efficacy of sunscreen. These skin-protecting nutrients are found in produce including oranges, goji berries, apricots and pomegranate; which contain polyphenols like ellagic acid and can aid in the prevention of visible capillaries in the future. Prevention can also be strong when following the comprehensive philosophy of care I founded called Inclusive Health. Inclusive Health dictates your skin and your complexion is a barometer of the overall health and wellness of your entire body and when assessed through three foundations of care, skin will be glowing and healthy. Looking Better through the topical use of high-performance products that cleanse, hydrate and protect; Living Better with a diet full of amino acids, antioxidants and water-rich foods that hydrate from within; and Feeling Better through strong Emotional Care and a management of stress levels will allow your body to flourish and reveal a youthful, healthy complexion.

