

Beauty rituals to follow during monsoon

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New Delhi, June 14 (IANS) During monsoon, do not stop taking care of your skin thinking that the blazing sun would not harm your skin anymore. Use a soap-free cleanser, exfoliate regularly and do not skip the toner, say experts.

Shankar Prasad, founder at Plum; Chytra V Anand, Cosmetic Dermatologist and founder of Kosmoderma Skin and Hair Clinic, and Cyril Feuillebois, director of Kronokare, have listed the must-follow steps for the rainy season:

- * Limit washing your face 2-3 times a day with a soap-free cleanser. This will help maintain a clean, healthy skin without stripping your skin off its essential oil.
- * Exfoliating the skin is necessary to get rid of the dead layers on your skin. Get a regular skin exfoliation treatment like microdermabrasion or mild chemical peel to reduce the risk of falling prey to infection.
- * Always go for a minimal make-up and products from the organic front. Let your pores breathe. Apply a lip balm that can moisturize the lips, keep one handy so that you can use it anytime.
- * Don't skip the toner. In summer, we tend to sweat a lot and this can cause our skin pores to open up. Use a toner after cleansing to help shrink these pores. Invest in an alcohol-free toner with antioxidant ingredients like green tea and glycolic acid that help tighten enlarged pores, to control blemishes and acne, while removing dead cells.
- * Choosing the right sunscreen for the right complexion and skin type is extremely important. Use nothing below SPF 30. Put where your skin gets exposed to the sun for a long period of time, apply evenly and generously on the face before sun exposure.

Re-apply frequently, especially after swimming or drying yourself with a towel. Apply every 2-3 hours for optimum protection.

* Seal the moisture with a mask. Control oiliness in the skin caused by humidity, with a once-a-week clay mask that naturally absorbs oil. Look for one with tea tree or green tea extracts and gentle exfoliation to prevent breakouts by removing dead cells and impurities from the pores.

* Contrary to what most people believe, moisturising is as important in summer as it is in winter. Exposure to the sun and pollution strips off the natural oils of your skin, causing it to tan and age early. So you need a light, non-greasy day cream that has a minimum of SPF30, and mild natural ingredients such as grape seed and sea buckthorn that aid cell repair and regeneration.

* Take extra care of sensitive areas: The skin on our lips and around our eyes is thinner than that on the rest of the face, so they need extra attention during the summer. The heat can make the eyes burn and lips, chapped. Make sure you splash your eyes regularly, and keep your lips protected with lip balm.

* If you can't do without kajal, invest in an ophthalmologically approved, waterproof kajal pencil, free from parabens, mineral oil or paraffin. Also, remove all make-up before retiring for the night, and soothe your eyes with rosewater-dipped cotton balls.

* Take Vitamin C to boost your immune system as that can help fight infections.

* Dust yourself with antifungal powder on clean dry skin to stay away from unwanted infections.

* Use gentle products and maintain a good, simple routine using sunscreen regularly and incorporating chemical peels or exfoliants, so your skin will transition smoothly.