

# Do You Have 'Iso Skin'? Why Your Face Is Freaking Out And How To Fix It



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If you thought self isolation was going to give you gloriously fresh skin, you wouldn't be the only one.

And why wouldn't you? Surely weeks and weeks without makeup would mean our skin would see the benefits of working from home. But as we enter week three of self isolation, turns out it's actually quite the opposite.

Many women are seeing an increase in skin related troubles, from breakouts, to dryness and irritation dubbed 'iso skin'. Like we don't have enough things to worry about during the coronavirus pandemic, now we have skin woes to add to our ever-growing list. But why?

According to [Dr Vasek Eranki](#), a leading Australian cosmetic surgeon and head of Australian Cosmetic, spending time indoors is linked to vitamin D deficiency as well as increased exposure to artificial and dry air. And it's these two factors combined that are causing our skin to throw a bit of a tantrum.

"Skin is the body's largest organ and vitamin D deficiency accelerates its ageing. Not getting enough sun also lowers immunity and increases flare ups of autoimmune conditions such as eczema, psoriasis and atopic dermatitis," Dr Eranki told 10 daily.



Are you suffering from 'iso skin'? Image: Getty

The artificial air that comes from our air conditioners and heaters further removes the moisture from our skin, causing it to dry out.

"Skin has to maintain its moisture levels to look good, but also to heal. Dry skin increases the risk of flare ups of eczema and other skin conditions and makes your skin more susceptible to infections," Dr Eranki added.

Other factors including stress, poor diet and lack of exercise while we spend more time at home can further exacerbate these skin issues. Here's what you can do to get your skin back to normal:

## Don't overdo your skincare routine just because you're at home

You might be tempted to up your usual skincare routine while you're at home, especially if your skin is currently freaking out. We're talking about applying a face mask everyday and a plethora of serums.

Dr Eranki said this is a big no-no and likely causing your skin to spin out of control even further, the exact opposite of what you're trying to achieve.



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"When patients overdo their skin care regime, it inhibits the protective features of your skin. This has an opposite effect and causes flare ups of acne and eczema," he said.

So remember in primary school when your teacher used to tell you slow and steady wins the race? Turns out it's the same when it comes to skincare: sticking to a basic routine is usually best.

## Be careful of beauty DIYs not recommended by a professional

While you might want to give yourself a DIY facial or treatment, Dr Eranki advised being careful about what you try without clinical advice while beauty based businesses are closed due to restrictions.

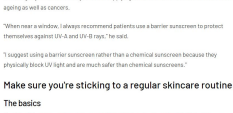
"Some patients might be prescribed beauty treatments such as peels and dermal rollers for home use. This is patient-specific and may only apply for certain problem areas for that patient for a length of time," he said.

"Using these treatments without direction from a professional could be detrimental to your skin."

## Look after your diet and try to exercise regularly

Being in isolation might lead you to eat more takeaway than you regularly do. While it's okay to have a treat every now and then, Dr Eranki said a healthy diet is important in maintaining good skin.

"While in isolation, reacquaint yourself with cooking healthy and hearty meals with lots of vegetables," he suggested.



Dr Vasek Eranki, Image: Supplied

Exercise can also help to manage the stress you might be feeling during this time, which aside from impacting our mental health, can also be bad for our skin.

"Aim to exercise for 30 minutes a day and clear your mind by dealing with things that you have been avoiding because you have 'no time' and it will help you mentally de-clutter."

## Keep applying sunscreen, even when you're inside

While you might think you can skip your usual sunscreen because you are inside, Dr Eranki encourages you to make sure you are still applying a suitable amount of SPF to avoid skin aging as well as cancers.

"When near a window, I always recommend patients use a barrier sunscreen to protect themselves against UV-A and UV-B rays," he said.

"I suggest using a barrier sunscreen rather than a chemical sunscreen because they physically block UV light and are much safer than chemical sunscreens."

## Make sure you're sticking to a regular skincare routine

### The basics

The best thing you can do to help your skin get back to its normal condition is to have a good skincare routine, with the first step being investing in a good soap and moisturiser.

"Use a good soap that doesn't completely strip away your natural oils on your skin and then make sure the moisturiser is emollient based and fragrance free," Dr Eranki said.



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You should moisturise both morning and night and match your products to the time you use them.

"For patients with naturally oily skin, a serum works well to hydrate and protect and for those with more dry complexions, they would benefit from a lotion or cream."

### Exfoliants

Once the basics are covered, it's time to turn your attention to a good exfoliant that will remove dead skin layers and build up of grime. It will also help your skincare to penetrate more deeply, providing better nourishment to your skin cells.

"Frequency of exfoliating is very important. If your skin is currently inflamed or sensitive, do not exfoliate until it has healed. Once it has healed, gently exfoliate once a week," Dr Eranki said.

"For normal or dry skin, I recommend exfoliating one to two times per week. For oily skin, I suggest you exfoliate two to three times per week."

When it comes to looking for a good exfoliant, Dr Eranki suggests opting for one with organic plant-based ingredients such as fruit enzymes, rhassoul clay, finely ground oats and non-abrasive walnut shell.

"These work in harmony with the natural physiology of your skin, encouraging the skin's natural renewal process."

### Vitamin A

Vitamin A is a natural essential nutrient that supports skin and immune system that stimulates the production of new skin cells and is readily absorbed into the skin when you apply it topically.

If you don't have enough Vitamin A, your skin can become dry or a deficiency can cause 'follicular hyperkeratosis' – a condition marked by too much keratin in the hair follicles.



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According to Dr Eranki, this can cause raised papules to form on your skin.

That's why aside from including Vitamin A in your skincare routine, it's important to eat diet rich in the vitamin when you're in self isolation to help your skin along.

"Foods rich in Vitamin A include salmon, beef liver, dairy products, eggs, fish, cod liver oil and shrimp," Dr Eranki said, adding that Vitamin A is a godsend for those suffering from acne.

**“ Vitamin A's anti-inflammatory properties also help to regulate the sloughing off of skin cells and reduces the occurrence of clogged pores. ”**

appearance of fine lines and wrinkles and it can also help to even out skin tone by fading age spots.

### Vitamin C

Vitamin C is an anti-oxidant that triggers the skin to heal itself when applied topically, which accelerates the production of collagen and elastin.

"Collagen and elastin are both naturally occurring protein fibers that help keep skin plump and firm. So in helping to promote collagen production, topical vitamin C can help prevent premature aging of the skin," Dr Eranki said.

Another benefit of Vitamin C is it inhibits your skin's melanin production, which would otherwise lead to skin discoloration, dark spots and hyperpigmentation.

**“ When used regularly, Vitamin C can help prevent dark spots from forming in the first place. ”**

As Vitamin C is not stored in your body, eating foods rich in it, such as oranges, is important and will also assist with immunity.