

Skin moisturizing for outdoorswomen

Moisturizers line store shelves and fill television and magazines, claiming to deliver soft, supple skin and reduce those dreaded signs of aging—wrinkles and dark spots.

Today, American women are bombarded with information on the benefits of healthy skin and proper skin care, including the need for moisturizers. Yes, daily moisturizing helps keep skin soft and smooth. Yes, it may reduce aging signs and soften wrinkles. And, yes, moisture can heal, according to the plastic surgeon that

treated my second-degree sunburn.

Moisturizers form a protective seal against environmental elements—indoors and outdoors. They help skin retain its natural moisture by preventing water from escaping. Moisturizers can replenish water into skin.

In the mix

Using an appropriate moisturizer may be even more important for women who spend a significant amount of time outdoors. Moisturizers contain a multitude

of ingredients but some basics can be found in all of them:

Humectants, such as glycerin, absorb water from the air and hold moisture to the skin.

Emollients, such as lanolin or mineral oil, fill the space between skin cells.

Preservatives, such as parabens, prevent bacteria growth after the container is opened.

Under FDA regulations, moisturizers are considered cosmetics and don't undergo the same strenuous scrutiny as medicinal drugs. As such, not all manufacturers' claims may hold true because of the different safety and effectiveness standards for



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cosmetics compared to drugs.

In the great debate between natural versus manmade ingredients, it's important to remember each individual's skin is unique. Sensitive skin reacts differently to ingredients, regardless if they're natural or chemically derived.

Sun protection

Many women who spend more time indoors than outdoors use a daily moisturizer containing

sunscreen, says Dr. Amy Derick, member of the American Academy of Dermatologists. But a moisturizer that includes sunscreen does not necessarily offer enough protection for an entire day outdoors.

"You need to reapply sunscreen every few hours while outside. People usually don't reapply their daily moisturizer that often," said Dr. Derick.

A solution for women who spend a lot of time outdoors is a powder sunscreen applied over regular moisturizer, Dr. Derick says. "It is not sticky and [people] like the portability. You can throw it in your backpack and brush your exposed skin with it pretty easily."

Regardless of the type of moisturizer and sunscreen, most dermatologists recommend



Applying moisturizer to damp skin locks in moisture and makes the product more effective.

using a SPF (sun protection factor) of 30 or greater. Daily facial moisturizers typically have an SPF of 15. They're fine for women who spend most of their time indoors, but outdoorswomen need more from their moisturizer, says Dr. Derick.

The array of moisturizers available in today's market is almost dizzying,

and deciphering ingredients may seem daunting. Moisturizers with sunscreen should protect from UVA and UVB rays. When purchasing a moisturizer-sunscreen combination look for these ingredients:

- ▶ Zinc oxide—a sun block that lies on the skin and isn't absorbed
- ▶ Titanium dioxide—a sunscreen and naturally occurring mineral
- ▶ Helioplex or Mexoryl—Helioplex, trademarked by Neutrogena, is a combination of Avobenzone and Oxybenzone, which retains UVB and UVA protection in sunlight. The FDA approved Mexoryl, which was trademarked by L'Oreal in 2006.

Head to toe

Proper moisturizing means more than taking care of just one's face. Take a few extra minutes and apply moisturizer to arms, neck and legs, as well. Aching feet benefit from moisturizing rubdowns, too.

It might be easy to skip morning moisturizing when getting up at 5 for a fall waterfowl hunt or heading to the hiking trail at sunrise. But take the time to stick to a daily moisturizing routine, toss sunscreen in a pack—regardless of the season or temperature—and reapply at intervals throughout the day afield.

Properly moisturized skin will have a glowing outdoors look—bright, fresh and healthy. 🍃

Moisturizing 411

- ▶ Apply moisturizers to damp skin.
- ▶ Moisturizers should match your skin type and make your skin feel good. Trial-and-error testing of several brands with various ingredients will reveal a heavenly match.
- ▶ Stop using a product if skin irritation occurs. Don't allow time for skin to "get used to it."
- ▶ Cost doesn't always equal effectiveness.