

Understanding Your Skin

Home-Care Tips For Dry Skin

(NAPS)—For people with seasonal or year-round, dry skin, the colder months can be especially hard on the skin. As you spend more time indoors, your skin is exposed to low indoor humidity created by forced-air heat. Dry air can cause skin to become dry, as can excessive bathing with strong soaps and hot water.

“As we age, our skin produces less of the natural oils that help skin retain moisture,” said Peter J. Plantes, M.D. “Without good care, the skin can become red, cracked and prone to irritation and infections. The lower legs, forearms, hands and scalp are especially prone to dry skin as they are most exposed to seasonal weather.”

LaurusHealth.com, a health information Web site, offers consumers a few simple steps to help prevent or aid in alleviating dry skin and itching:

- Humidify your home, particularly the bedroom.
- Avoid strong detergents. Limit use of perfumes and perfumed products.
- Bathe every other day instead of every day. Use warm or cool water and a gentle soap (such as Basis, Dove, Oil of Olay). Use little or no soap on dry skin areas. Pat dry with a towel; don't rub skin.
- To seal in moisture, apply a moisturizer (Eucerin, Lubriderm, Keri Lotion or Vaseline Intensive Care Lotion) while the skin is



Love your skin by taking care of it year round.

damp. Petroleum jelly also is an effective and inexpensive moisturizer to try.

- For very dry hands, apply a thin layer of petroleum jelly and wear thin cotton gloves to bed. Similar treatment also may help dry feet. Severely dry skin may require several treatments.

“Untreated dry skin can be a sign of other health problems,” said Dr. Plantes. “If your body itches all over and you do not have a rash or any obvious cause for itching, contact a health professional.”

For more information on dry skin, log onto the Web site www.LaurusHealth.com. This site is an innovative health information resource, created in association with leading hospitals and physicians to help consumers make more informed choices about their health.