

Love Your Lips - Tips for Healthy Beautiful Lips

Our lips are sometimes neglected in favor of the rest of our face and body, but soft, smooth lips are a real beauty enhancer and healthy-looking lips can also be a sign of good health. If yours have seen better days, here are a few tips to keep them looking – and feeling – in great shape.

Lips Love Water – Keep Them Hydrated

Make sure that you're always well hydrated and your lips will thank you. Not only is water good for your internal and overall health, drinking enough fluids is a sure-fire step to better skin - and lip - health.

Stop Licking Your Lips

Yes, we now it's a habit but constantly licking and moistening your lips can dry them out by wearing their natural protective barrier down. If you're tempted to moisten your lips with your tongue, stop and apply a hydrating lip balm instead. Opt for a good quality product that contains soothing ingredients like shea butter, beeswax, and vitamin E, or you could even use petroleum jelly (Vaseline).

SPF Is for Lips Too

You wouldn't go out in the sun without slapping sunscreen on your face and body (would you?) so why would you leave your lips out of the equation? Lips are just as susceptible to sunburn as the rest of your body. In fact, because they don't produce melanin, the pigment that helps protect your skin from the sun, they are more likely to burn if unprotected. Remember to regularly apply a sun-protective lip balm, lipstick with SPF or other lip protecting product daily.

Shed the Dead Skin

Just like the rest of your skin, lips love a good exfoliation. You can buy lip exfoliators with fruit-acid-based alpha or beta hydroxy acids that rejuvenate lips by sloughing away the dead skin. These aren't recommended if you have sensitive skin, or your lips are very chapped though. As with any type of facial and body exfoliation, you really only need to exfoliate your lips once every week.

Hold Off on the Matte Lipstick

Matte lipsticks stay in place for so long simply because they are very drying, which isn't great for the condition of your lips. Don't use matte lipstick when your lips are chapped or sore as you'll almost certainly make them worse. Try a more hydrating lipstick or if you absolutely

can't part with your matte, you can also try adding a moisturizing lip balm underneath.

How to Fix Common Lip Problems

Splits in the Corners of the Mouth

This can be down to lack of hydration, so if it's a common problem, keep your lips well hydrated with a moisturizing lip balm and apply a very tiny amount of over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream to the cracked corners. If the problem persists, see a medical professional for advice.

Peeling Lips

Often caused by an allergic reaction, your lips might be making a point about a new lipstick, toothpaste, food, or medication you're taking (for example, if you've recently started using Accutane, you might find that it really dries out your lips).

See a dermatologist for a mild topical hydrocortisone cream to help decrease the irritation and stop using the product or eating the food that caused the reaction. See your doctor about any continued reactions to medication.