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LIFESTYLES

Winter tuneup begins with skin, hair and lip care

BY SAMANTHA CRITCHELL

Attention winter sports enthusiasts: Time to begin your conditioning. You might have started your cardio and thigh-strengthening exercises already, but what about your outdoor skin-saving routine? Remember, your hair and skin are the front line against the elements when you're out skiing, sledding or skating.

That's why sunscreen is still a must every day, says Dr. Kathy Fields, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at University of California-San Francisco.

"The sun is up and shining, even on a snowy day. If you see light there are UVA rays; they can cause cancer and will cause wrinkles," she says. "Sunscreen should be a habit, like brushing your teeth."

Fields, a co-founder of the skin care line Rodan & Fields, encourages use of sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor of 30 or above, and one with a base of either zinc oxide, mexoryl or avobenzone, as opposed to titanium dioxide formulas, which she says are weaker — though those are recommended for babies or adults with sensitive skin. Reapply sunscreen every two hours.

Skin

Cold weather outside and dry heat inside is a recipe for dry, cracked skin as it loses moisture and, with it, its barrier layer, Fields says. It's why people become susceptible to eczema and rough, itchy skin in the winter.

Preventive measures include using only gentle cleaners, exfoliating less (but not stopping completely). Use nourishing moisturizers with either hyaluronic acid, ceramides, oatmeal or chamomile as ingredients, says Fields. Those tend to be rich moisturizers without being greasy. It also helps to have a humidifier running in the house.

Lips

For the lips, go for heavier petroleum-jelly-based moisturizers, which are most effective after the lips have been polished gently with a pumice.

Aside from keeping your lips healthy, a layer of lip gloss does wonders for your otherwise limited makeup routine, says Troy Surratt, global consulting makeup artist for Maybelline New York. He says skiers should use a long-lasting lip

stain to give a hint of color with the balm on top to keep the lips hydrated.

Otherwise, Surratt says, color cosmetics should be kept to a minimum — a little frosted eye shadow, perhaps in a pastel color, and waterproof mascara. There's no need for blush since you'll likely already have the rosy glow you use blush to mimic.

Hair

Hair gets dry in cold and wind, and can break. However, don a hat and you're stuck with hat hair.

"Don't let your hair hang out when you're skiing," says Andrew Bartfield, vice president of education at L'Oreal Professionnel. "People love the look of it hanging out the bottom of the hat, but wind and cold are ripping through it and that's worse than sun and salt every day in the summer."

Avoid leave-in conditioner, says Bartfield, because your hair never really dries, and damp hair will make you feel colder. He recommends a professional strengthening treatment at a salon. Fringe Salon, 1437 N. Milwaukee, offers a "European Spa Treatment" to keep moisture and shine in hair for weeks; \$25 for 30-minute treatment or \$65 for a 60-minute treatment with blow dry; (773) 862-1000.

For maintenance in between, Bartfield suggests ceramide-based styling products to revive the hair's weakened barrier layer.

Hat hair can't be "cured," but it can be minimized by wearing a low-slung ponytail, says Brian Magallones, stylist for Garnier Fructis. Women with short hair can work a little water-based wax through the hair to give a modern, textured look instantly, he says.

As for static: "Anything that adds moisture helps with static. Put it in before you blow dry. Pick creamy products, not sticky products. Think of things that nourish your hair."

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