

3 sensitive skin symptoms you shouldn't ignore

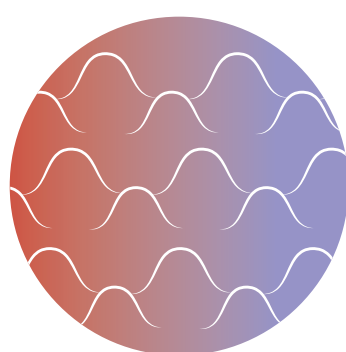
Our in-house expert weighs in on what it looks (and feels) like, why it happens and what you can do about it.



Many of us are all too familiar with sensitive skin's three major symptoms: redness, irritation and dehydration. But we wanted to know more about what's happening beneath the surface. Jess Anderson, a Dermalogica Expert skin therapist, broke down the science of sensitive skin – and gave us some pro tips on how to stop sensitivity at its source.



Once you figure out what triggers redness for you, there are steps you can take to prevent it.

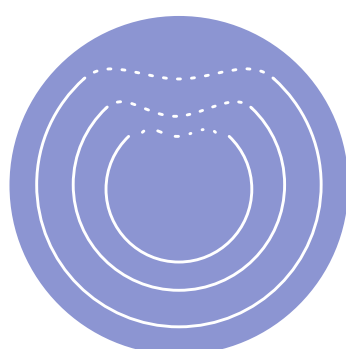


redness

Redness is a primary sign of skin sensitivity for many people, regardless of whether their skin is sensitive or sensitized. It can appear as small bumps, redness on certain areas of your face or even all-over flushing.

Causes vary, too: flare-ups can be brought on by overexfoliation, sun exposure, allergies, irritating cosmetic ingredients like artificial fragrances, or even dietary triggers such as spicy food.

You don't have to just learn to live with it, though! Once you figure out what triggers redness for you, there are steps you can take to prevent it. I always suggest that clients use gentle cleansers and moisturizers, stay away from rough exfoliants, and wear sunscreen when they head outside. And, when flare-ups do happen, look for treatment products that specifically target redness while also hydrating and strengthening skin.



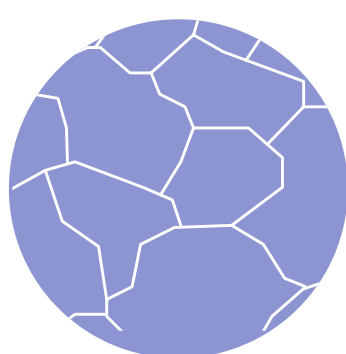
irritation

Sensitive skin can hurt! When you're in the midst of a flare-up, it's not uncommon to experience uncomfortable sensory symptoms like itching, stinging, burning – or sometimes even all three at once.

As with redness, causes can vary from person to person – but one of the big ones is a compromised lipid barrier. When it's healthy, the lipid barrier protects your skin by holding water in and keeping irritants out. But certain triggers can compromise the barrier, resulting in irritation. Some potential culprits are skin care products that contain harsh ingredients

like SD alcohol or artificial fragrances, overprocessing caused by excess exfoliation, or pollution and airborne allergens.

There are a couple things you can do to treat irritation and avoid flare-ups. First, look for skin care products that help to maintain the integrity of your skin's protective barrier – and use them regularly so that you don't get caught off-guard. Also, don't wash your face with hot water; it strips skin of its natural protective oils, so use lukewarm water instead.



dehydration

Tightness, fine lines, flaking, peeling, scaling, roughness: Dry skin can present in a lot of different ways, but the root cause is always dehydration. When skin's protective barrier is compromised, it doesn't just let irritants in: It also makes it difficult for your skin to hold on to moisture.

So, in addition to maintaining and restoring your skin's protective moisture barrier, it's important to replace the hydration your skin is losing using a moisturizer – ideally one formulated especially for sensitive skin, without artificial fragrances or SD alcohol. You'll also want to avoid washing with anything that makes your skin feel tight, as that generally means your cleanser is stripping even more moisture from the skin.

Adding an alcohol-free toner to your skin care routine can also help dehydrated skin bounce back. **But here's my #1 dry skin tip that most people don't even think of: drink more water!**

To add even more moisture, spritz your face with a gentle toner before you moisturize! And don't forget to drink a lot of water.

Thanks, Jess Anderson!

Want to learn more about what might cause your sensitive skin – and how to treat it? Visit [skinsensitivityrisk.com](https://www.dermalogica.com/skinsensitivityrisk) for a personalized skin sensitivity risk assessment, and browse Dermalogica's UltraCalming™ line to find real solutions for sensitive skin.