

is my skin dry or dehydrated?



story highlights

Dry and dehydrated skin may feel the same, but their causes are different: dehydrated skin lacks water, while dry skin lacks lipids

There's a big difference between dry and dehydrated skin, yet both tend to feel the same - just plain dry. Find out the characteristics of each to determine which you might have!

When your skin feels dry, you may naturally assume that it is dry. But it might just be dehydrated and in need of water. What does that really mean? We'll explain.

What is the difference between dry and dehydrated skin?

Dry skin is a skin type and dehydrated skin is a skin condition. Your skin type is what you're naturally born with, such as oily skin or dry skin. Your skin condition, however, is what happens to your skin, such as dehydration, acne and irritation. Skin conditions can happen to anyone, temporarily or longer, and in some instances, a skin condition can stay for good.

What is dry skin?

If you have a dry skin type, it means you're lacking oil. You were born this way, and you're dry everywhere else on your body including hands, scalp, legs, etc. When you put on moisturizers and lotions, chances are they soak up fairly quickly. You may also regularly experience regular flaking, cracking, sensitivity or issues like eczema.

What is dehydrated skin?

If you have a dehydrated skin condition, your skin is lacking water. This can be caused by lots of factors such as makeup, diet, incorrect product use, weather; it goes on. But here's where it gets tricky: When skin is dehydrated, it creates more oil to make up for the missing water. This can cause breakouts, irritation and dry patches. Skin can even feel oily and dry at the same time.

How to treat dry and dehydrated skin

If a dry skin type sounds like you, be sure to use a [dry skin regimen](#) that contains oil- or cream-based products daily. You may also want to keep a [hand treatment for dry skin](#) with you at all times.

If you think your skin is dehydrated, try to identify what's dehydrating you and correct it. It could be your lifestyle or your environment. Use water-rich products like [Skin Hydrating Booster](#) and [Skin Hydrating Masque](#), which contain water-loving Hyaluronic Acid to help balance your skin as needed. Look for a product that targets the signals of dehydration before you may even notice them yourself, like **Smart Response Serum**. This serum is a great choice for skin that's constantly changing, since its **SmartResponse Technology** reaches even the smallest cracks in the moisture barrier and responds where it detects dehydration. And keep a water-based, hydrating toner handy to hydrate your skin throughout the day.

Pro Tip: It is entirely possible for your skin to be dry and dehydrated at the same time. If this is the case, use a regimen that contains oil and water. If you need help finding the right products, chat with one of our skin therapists!

Does drinking water hydrate skin?

While we're on the topic of water, it helps to know that skin is the last organ to receive the nutrients we consume, which means it's the last to get the water you sip. It isn't quite enough though; making topical products a must for skin that feels comfortably hydrated.

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