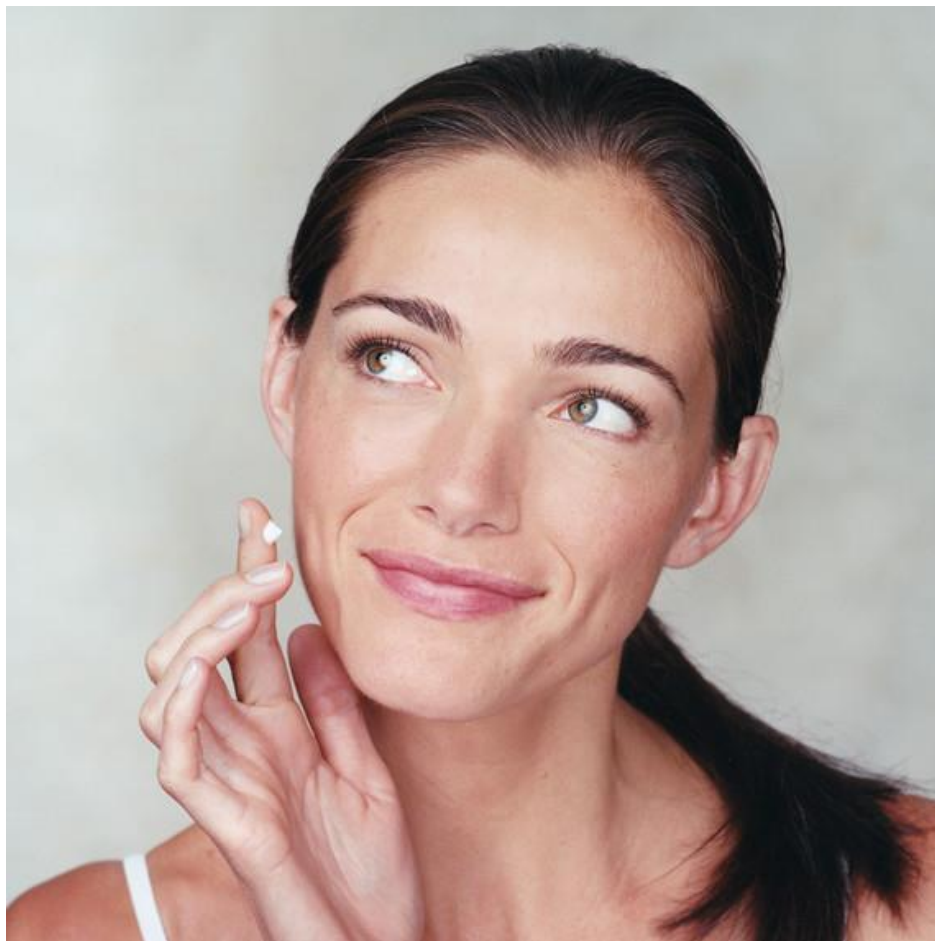


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7 Things You Should Never Do to Your Skin the Month Before Your Wedding

You don't want to damage your skin before those very important photos!

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After spending so much time pouring over photographer's portfolios, searching for the right match for your celebration, there's only one to-do left to check off before heading down that aisle: making sure your complexion is ready for your close-up. That being said, dermatologists warn that doing anything super-dramatic to your skin before the big day is a no-no. Because you risk damage that could potentially show up in those once-in-a-lifetime photos, it's important to be kind and gentle to your pores. Not sure what you should avoid? Here, dermatologists and skin care pros share the things you should never—ever!—do to your skin a month before your wedding.

Start using an anti-aging cream.

Anti-aging creams, serums, and topical oils are all great ways to keep your skin looking refreshed and youthful, it's better to wait until after your honeymoon to add these products to your daily routine. "These creams, containing ingredients such as retinol, are often initially irritating until the skin gets tolerant to their side effects. I always tell my patients that these products are a long-term investment in their skin, where they may not look their best for the first few months in order to have improved texture and tone in the future," dermatologist Arash Akhavan, M.D., FAAD, says. Instead, find a moisturizer that'll keep your skin hydrated. "This is a better bet for ensuring your skin is looking its dewey best on the day of your wedding."

Get any kind of peel.

Effective for giving your pores a true deep-cleaning and revealing a near-flawless new layer of skin, acid and laser peels are beloved by many celebrities who want to maintain a great complexion year-round. Lifestyle and beauty expert Kym Douglas says that while most peels say you'll only have 10 days of downtime, it's not a risk you want to take before the wedding. "Swelling, bruising, puffiness, and reactions to something in healing cream or ointment are all side effects you can't plan for. If you want a peel, get it at least three months before your wedding. In that time, you have full turnover cell renewal, and you stack the deck in your favor for full healing," she explains.

Change your skincare regimen.

For those with sensitive, finicky skin, dermatologist Dr. Dendy Engelman says that switching up your regimen can cause a negative reaction. "Adding new active ingredients could cause a breakout or inflammation that could takes weeks to calm down. It would best best to stick with what has been working to ensure that no new skin issues arise," she says. "Also, although tempting, make sure to stay far away from products that promise results that are too good to be true since they probably won't deliver. These products usually have ingredients that are too active and can potentially cause damage long term."

Start an acne treatment.

The added stress most brides feel before before the wedding can—sadly—cause breakouts. If you notice some bumps along your t-zone and cheekbones, dermatologist **Dr. Gary Goldenberg, M.D.**, says to resist the urge to buy everything labeled "acne" at the drugstore. "With breakouts, products usually take longer than one month for acne to improve. And even worse, sometimes patients can develop irritation or even worsening of their acne during the first four weeks of treatment," he explains. The solution? Make an appointment with your derm if you have severe, cystic bumps and they can help inject treatment that will get rid of the issue ASAP.

Go to a tanning bed.

Plenty of women want a sun-kissed glow on their wedding day. But before you book an appointment at a tanning bed salon, Dr. Goldenberg says to consider your long-term health. Is skin cancer really worth being a shade darker? We think not. "Not only has it been proven that use of tanning beds increase the risk of skin cancer including melanoma, especially in young women, tanning bed can cause a sunburn which may take weeks for complete recovery," he explains. Instead, a few months before your wedding start using a self-tanner, so your glow will be evenly-spread by the time you put on your wedding gown.

Pick at your imperfections.

You're much harder on yourself than anyone else and those random blackheads that you think are *so* noticeable are likely microscopic. While the added stress and pressure of getting married might drive you to do a deep-dive into your pores, dermatologist Dr. Tsippora Shainhouse, M.D., FAAD, says to step away from the tweezer already. "The marks from squeezing and manipulating your skin with your nails often take over a month to smooth out and fade," she explains.

Get a sunburn.

Sunscreen should be part of your daily beauty routine, and it's even more important than ever in the weeks before you get married. "While the redness and peeling from your unexpected sunburn will resolve within a couple of weeks, the leftover tan lines will not," Dr. Shainhouse says. If you're spending any amount of time outside, she recommends staying under an umbrella, wearing sun-protective clothing, sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat, and of course, slathering on a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30+ every two to three hours.