

OUT

Pucker Up: How to Keep Your Lips Soft & Selfie-Ready



Photo via @coltonlhaynes

Tips from New York Dermatologist, **Dr. Kristina Goldenberg**.

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Because they're always on display (and hopefully frequently in demand), your lips need tender love and care. But using the wrong lip balm can lead to disaster—a dry, cracked mess nobody wants to kiss (or double tap). The hot, impending rays will only make matters worse.

Luckily, our expert is here to help. Below, Dr. Kristina Goldenberg, one half of Goldenberg Dermatology in New York, answers five questions on all of our lips.

OUT: I've tried all sorts of lip balms, but my lips are always dry. What's wrong with me?

In dermatology circles, lip dryness is referred to as "lip licker dermatitis," a not-so-fancy term for a very common condition. "A lot of people don't realize they have that habit of licking their lips," Goldenberg says. "Our saliva

has enzymes in it that are supposed to break down the food, and when it's constantly being smeared on the lips, it can actually cause damage to the skin." So for starters, try to keep your tongue in your mouth.

Is it better to use natural lip balms?

Absolutely not, says Goldenberg. "When patients come in and show me these all-natural lip balms, I cringe." The reason: Some of the natural ingredients in them, such as beeswax, can cause an allergic reaction. If your lips keep cracking, or become dry and itchy, ditch the natural stuff.

Can I put sunblock on my lips?

"An SPF 30 is a must for everyday use to prevent skin cancer, and you can use SPF 50 when in the sun," says Goldenberg. For your lips she recommends using a physical sunblock, such as Zinc Oxide Ointment (2 oz., \$4.29, at Walgreens and other drugstores) or titanium dioxide, which should go under your regular lip balm.

Can I go cold turkey and NOT USE lip balm at all?

"If you stop completely, your skin will take a few weeks to get better," Goldenberg says. She suggests using a healing ointment and keeping your lips moist 24/7. "Don't allow them to get dry for even a minute."

Are there natural ways to keep my lips smooth?

"I never advocate any miracle food," Goldenberg says, "but it's important to drink plenty of water, especially in the summer."

Best of the Balms:

CeraVe: This rich cream is the perfect remedy for sensitive and allergy-prone skin, and it won't leave a greasy shine on your lips (CeraVe.com)

Aquaphor Lip Repair: If your lip balm isn't cutting it, switch to the safest, most reliable, and most reasonably priced drugstore option out there. (AquaphorUS.com)

Kiehl's Lip Balm #1: Looking for something ultra-hydrating and fragrance-free? Splurge for the Kiehl's — it'll be worth it. (Kiehls.com)