



Health | November 17, 2017 | By Zahra Barnes

Related Condition Centers [Psoriasis](#)

9 Celebrities Who Also Deal With Annoying Skin Issues

They're human, after all.



You'd think celebrities are pretty much guaranteed perfect skin. They generally have access to the world's best dermatologists, luxurious beauty treatments, and bank accounts that make buying Sephora's entire skincare section a reality.

But celebrities are also actual humans, too, with their very own skin woes—from period-related acne to chronic conditions that can be hard to treat. While it's perfectly valid if celebrities prefer to deal with skin problems in private, when they bring them out into the open, it sends a pretty clear, reassuring message: If you're dealing with annoying skin issues, you're definitely not alone. Here, nine celebrities who have shared their tales of badly behaving skin.



1 Lena Dunham suddenly developed rosacea in her 30s.

In August, Dunham, 31, wrote in *Lenny Letter* that the chronic condition rosacea has been wreaking havoc on her previously “perfect fucking skin.” After taking steroids to treat an autoimmune condition flare-up, Dunham suddenly noticed facial redness and a swath of pimple-like blisters covering her from forehead to neck. These are two rosacea hallmarks, according to the Mayo Clinic. Other symptoms include eye issues like dry eye and irritated eyelids, and more rarely, thickened skin on the nose.

Developing rosacea after 30 is actually not surprising; the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) notes that most people who get the condition are between 30 and 50 years old. Although rosacea isn't curable, doctors can prescribe treatments like acne medication to tame breakouts, laser treatments to reduce redness, and antibiotics or eye drops for ocular issues. They can also offer advice on how to lessen the likelihood of rosacea flare-ups in the future.



2 Allison Williams battled cystic acne—and won.

Like her *Girls* co-star, Williams developed a frustrating skin condition as an adult. “I was breaking out with cystic acne a few years ago while filming *Girls* and had to go on Accutane to get it under control,” she told *Allure* in February 2017. “Luckily, Accutane took care of it really quickly.”

Cysts only present when someone has the most severe form of acne, according to the AAD. They typically crop up when pores get so clogged with debris that they block the hair follicles, leading to painful lumps that can cause scarring. Cystic acne can have many causes, from genetics to hormonal fluctuations to stress or a diet lacking in proper nutrition. Isotretinoin, which was the active ingredient in Accutane until the drug got discontinued in 2009, can work wonders when it comes to cystic acne. But this drug isn’t something most dermatologists take lightly. Isotretinoin can cause major skin irritation and even miscarriage and birth defects when taken by pregnant people.



3 Solange Knowles' skin erupted in hives during her wedding.

While this would typically sound like a disaster, Knowles was apparently able to look back on her hive-filled wedding night and laugh. In August 2017, she posted a paparazzi photo of herself sitting in the car after her November 2014 wedding, red welts blanketing her face and neck. "My favorite (and most true to myself) selfie 🌸🌸🌸 lol," she wrote in the caption of the now-deleted post. And in a deleted tweet, she reportedly wrote that she "got [the hives] from turning up x100 during our second line. I was hot, wearing a cape, & happy as hell :)" (Her mother, Tina Knowles, also said in an interview that her daughter may have had an allergic reaction to shellfish.)

It's true that hives, medically known as urticaria, are a common sign of an allergic reaction. But these itchy red welts can also arise due to physical stimuli like heat, according to the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology. Hives can either dissipate in a few hours or stick around for six weeks or even longer (this is known as chronic hives), and it often depends on the trigger. Treatment depends on the trigger as well, and can range from avoiding allergens to taking antihistamine medications to carrying around an epinephrine auto-injector, like an EpiPen, to ward off anaphylactic shock.



4 General Hospital actress Kirsten Storms took a break from work due to stress-related breakouts.

In May 2016, Storms tweeted that she was on a hiatus from work because her skin issues were becoming too tough for *General Hospital*'s makeup team to cover. "My [doctors] say my breakouts are due to stress, but shouldn't take too long to get under control," she wrote.

Don't underestimate stress' capability to unleash chaos upon your skin. "I see this all the time," New York City dermatologist Doris Day, M.D., author of the upcoming book *Beyond Beautiful*, previously told SELF. Gary Goldenberg, M.D., medical director of the Dermatology Faculty Practice at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, previously told SELF that "stress can worsen medical skin conditions, such as acne, rosacea, psoriasis, and eczema" and "it also contributes to wrinkle formation and dull skin."

According to the AAD, stress prompts your body to produce more androgen hormones, which stimulate your skin's oil glands and hair follicles. Boom: acne. (OK, it may not be *that* fast, but it certainly might feel like it when you wake up and look in the mirror.)



5 Julianna Margulies got chickenpox as an adult (yup, it's possible).

In May 2016, actress Julianna Margulies had to cancel an appearance due to chickenpox, which can indeed affect adults as well as children. Chickenpox, caused by the varicella-zoster virus, is highly contagious, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The illness, which typically lasts for five to seven days, can present as a full-body rash of between 250 and 500 irritating, fluid-filled blisters, in addition to causing issues like fatigue and fever. It's most common in people under 15, according to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, but if you haven't gotten the vaccine or never got the virus as a child, you're still at risk of getting it when you're older. Along with babies, pregnant people, and people with weakened immune systems due to illness or medication, adults are one of the groups at risk for chickenpox complications like bacterial infections, dehydration, and pneumonia, according to the CDC.

Of course, that doesn't mean things will absolutely get dire if you contract chickenpox as an adult. But if you have a rash that develops into those telltale blisters, call your doctor. They may prescribe you the antiviral medication Acyclovir to help speed up your body's healing process, but it works best when taken in the first 24 hours after the rash rears its head, says the CDC. Beyond that, you can relieve some of the irritating symptoms at home with methods like oatmeal baths and calamine lotion to soothe irritation.

Also, FYI, once you've had chickenpox, you can't get it again. But since the varicella-zoster virus stays in your system, you can get shingles. This condition also shows up as a painful rash, typically a strip of blisters on either side of your body. If you suspect you have shingles, call your doctor, who can prescribe an antiviral medication and figure out the best treatment for the pain—since shingles can last for two to four weeks, you'll probably need it.



6 Chrissy Teigen's period makes her skin break out.

As if getting a period weren't bad enough, symptoms like acne often come along for the ride. On the bright side, if this happens to you, you have something in common with Chrissy Teigen. The supermodel, cookbook author, and prolific tweeter recently took to social media to show how menstruation was affecting her skin. "Period skin. So mad," she wrote in the caption of the post, which shows her turning her head this way and that to give viewers a look at her red, inflamed skin.

"Hormonal acne often manifests in a cyclical pattern, much like women's menstrual cycles," S. Manjula Jegasothy, M.D., board-certified dermatologist and founder of Miami Skin Institute, previously told SELF. "This is true even in postmenopausal women, because these women still experience monthly fluctuations in their estrogen and progesterone levels, albeit lower than pre-menopausal women."

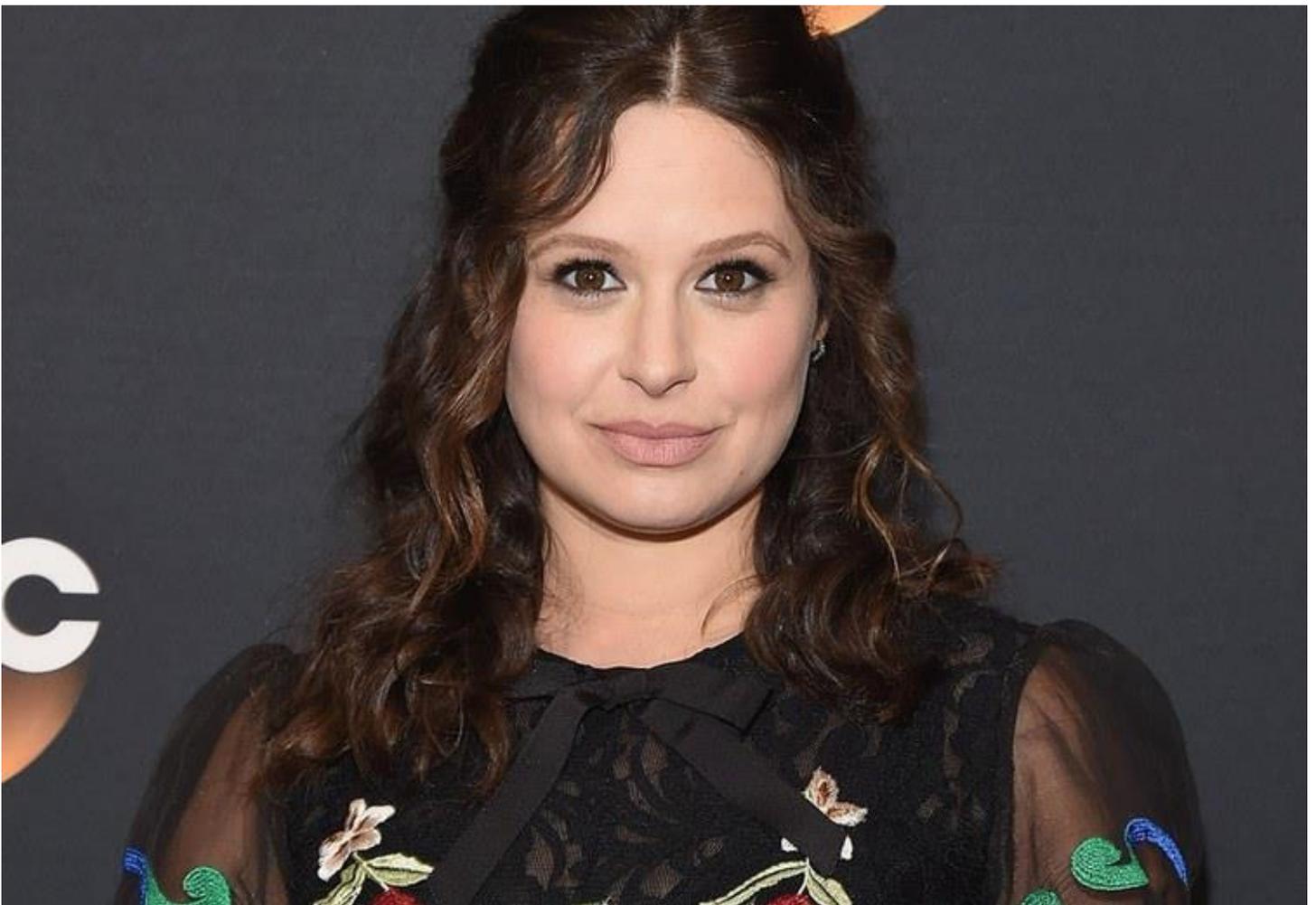
Luckily, there are plenty of treatments for period skin. Exfoliating cleansers with salicylic or glycolic acid can help. So can topical retinoids that prevent clogged pores and birth control to keep your hormones on more of an even keel.



7 Daisy Ridley deals with PCOS-related pimples.

In June 2016, the *Star Wars* actress, who was previously diagnosed with endometriosis, shared her journey toward pinpointing the cause behind her skin problems. “I’ve tried everything: products, antibiotics, more products, more antibiotics, and all that did was left my body in a bit of a mess,” she wrote in a now-deleted Instagram post. “Finally found out I have polycystic ovaries and that’s why it’s bad. I can safely say feeling so self-conscious has left my confidence in tatters. I hate wearing [makeup] but I currently don’t want to leave the house without it on.”

Polycystic ovary syndrome happens due to a hormonal imbalance that can lead to symptoms like enlarged ovaries covered in cysts, irregular periods, and elevated levels of androgen hormones that can cause acne, according to the Mayo Clinic. If you’re wondering whether you have PCOS, it’s time to see a doctor, who can help determine the best course of treatment for your symptoms. Hormonal birth control may help do the trick; it often helps stabilize periods and reduce PCOS-related acne.



8 Katie Lowes of *Scandal* fame had to work to accept her psoriasis.

The actress knows the psoriasis struggle all too well. In March 2017, Lowes said that the chronic skin condition had done everything from thwart her engagement photo shoot to undermine her confidence on set. "It brought out a lot of embarrassed and ashamed feelings. There's such a pressure in Hollywood to feel perfect and feel like nothing's wrong, and that was definitely not my case," Lowes told SELF.

Psoriasis, which affects around 7.5 million people in the United States, happens when skin cells' life cycle progresses too quickly, according to the Mayo Clinic. This can lead to a buildup on the surface of the skin. While there are many different forms of the condition, this process most often manifests as plaque psoriasis, when cell buildup causes dry, itchy, potentially painful scales and red patches.

Psoriasis isn't curable, but it is treatable. Doctors may prescribe drugs like topical corticosteroids or retinoids to reduce inflammation and relieve itching, or synthetic forms of vitamin D to slow skin growth, according to the Mayo Clinic. They may also discuss with you light treatment that's meant to prolong your skin cells' life cycle, or, if you have severe psoriasis, injectable drugs to treat the issue from the inside out.



9 And Mindy Kaling has optimized her skin regimen for oily skin, whiteheads, and other common, annoying skin issues.

In May 2016, the *Mindy Show* actress shared some seriously relatable information: She has oily skin, along with many of the joys it can cause. “I have oily skin. People keep telling me that will help me age but eh I feel like I look my age so when does that kick in, huh?” she wrote on the website Li.st when discussing her skin-care regimen. When detailing her skin care regimen, which includes a blue light device to target acne-causing bacteria, Kaling added, “I still get zits. Nothing like a good old whitehead on dark brown skin.” In her roundup, she also included products to address acne scars and hyperpigmentation.

There you have it: nine celebrities who might know what it's like to wish your skin could understand English just so you could curse at it. Underneath all the 24-karat gold face masks and highest-quality foundation, maybe stars really *are* just like us.