

what to expect.

Hilary Duff Shares "Busy Mom" Beauty Routine, Including Favorite Melasma Treatment



by **Korin Miller**

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In a new video, the mom of two reveals the dark spot toner she swears by.

Hilary Duff, who is mom to Luca, 7, and Banks, 1, recently shared her “busy mom makeup routine” with *Vogue* — including the product she uses to treat her pregnancy melasma.

“I’m a busy mom,” the actress says in the video. “I don’t have a ton of time to do my makeup, but this version today is on a day when I have my kids but also have a couple of meetings and I want to look like I put some effort in.”

Duff starts off her routine by washing her hands or using hand sanitizer. She then reaches for her toner.

“One really ‘cool’ thing that happened to me when I had babies is I got melasma,” she shared, pointing to a dark spot near the top of her forehead.

“Every day, I say a little prayer that it’s taking care of that dark spot right there,” she says, rubbing on Ole Henriksen’s Glow2OH Dark Spot Toner (\$29; [sephora.com](https://www.sephora.com)).

Other products in Duff's kit include REN Clean Skincare Keep Young and Beautiful Anti-Aging Eye Cream (\$44; sephora.com) and Perricone MD No Makeup Foundation Broad Spectrum SPF 20 (\$60; ulta.com).

What is melasma, exactly?

Melasma is a common skin condition that causes brown to gray-brown patches to develop, usually on the face. Also referred to as the mask of pregnancy, melasma appears when a sharp rise in estrogen and progesterone levels stimulates excess melanin production, also known as hyperpigmentation. As a result, your freckles and moles may look darker.

Melasma is especially common in darker-skinned women, or those of Asian and African descent, who have more pigment in their skin than fair-skinned people. Exposure to sunlight can make melasma worse.

The discoloration from melasma is temporary, though, and it usually disappears after you give birth or, for some women, after you stop breastfeeding.

How do you treat melasma?

Again, melasma tends to fade with time.

“The problem with melasma is that there aren’t any permanent solutions,” says **Gary Goldenberg, M.D.**, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City. Still, he says “many treatments help.”

Topical products that contain kojic acid or lactic acid are helpful, Dr. Goldenberg says. In a previous interview with *What to Expect*, dermatologist Jessica Wu, M.D., also recommended topicals with azelaic acid and vitamin C to help brighten your complexion.

As for the toner Duff likes, Dr. Goldenberg says it contains the following ingredients that may help with melasma:

- **High-potency glycolic and lactic acids:** “Both have been shown to improve pigmentation by gently removing superficial layer of the skin and normalizing pigment production,” Dr. Goldenberg says.
- **Witch hazel:** It has anti-inflammatory properties, Dr. Goldenberg says.

Also important? Applying SPF 30 to 50 daily. If you have melasma, Dr. Goldenberg also recommends doing your best to limit your UV exposure.

“The minute your skin is exposed to UV, it can re-pigment again,” he explains. “This isn’t just sun you get at the beach. This is also sun you get through a window or windshield.”

Just remember that not all skin care ingredients are considered safe for pregnant or breastfeeding women. If you have questions about a product that you’re considering to treat dark spots, show it to your OB-GYN first.

If your melasma persists after you have your baby and it bothers you, speak to your dermatologist. They may be able to offer up individualized treatment that can help.