

Relieve Dry Skin with These High-Performing Moisturizers

Smooth, supple skin is just a dab away.



By [Korin Miller](#) Jul 27, 2022



At some point, you'll likely deal with dry skin and all the itchiness and flakiness that comes with it. Cue you, googling "best moisturizer for dry skin" to try to get relief ASAP.

But dry skin is complicated, and you'll want to fix the root issue as well as hunt down a moisturizer that will remedy your dry skin issues and prevent them from coming back.







But what causes dry skin, exactly, and what's the best moisturizer to fix it? Here's what you need to know.





What causes dry skin?

Dry skin is "caused by an ineffective skin barrier that allows water to evaporate off of the surface of the skin," says [Joshua Zeichner](#), MD, director of cosmetic and clinical research in dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Your skin uses water and naturally producing oils to stay hydrated, soft, and elastic, explains board-certified dermatologist Ife J. Rodney, MD, founding director of [Eternal Dermatology + Aesthetics](#). "The water comes from the skin's ability to acquire it from the environment's moisture and the body's hydration levels," she says.

Your body also supplies moisture to your dermis, the inner layer of your skin, which then goes to the epidermis (the outer layer) and out to the atmosphere, Rodney says. Oils your body produces help protect your skin and retain moisture, she continues, and your body's production relies on hormones and other factors.

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| 1 |  | BEST THICK MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN | CeraVe Moisturizing Cream | \$18 AT AMAZON |
| | | | CeraVe | |
| | | | Read More | |
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| 2 |  | BEST MOISTURIZER FOR VERY DRY SKIN | Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream | \$14 AT AMAZON |
| | | | Cetaphil | |
| | | | Read More | |
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| 3 |  | BEST PUMP-FRIENDLY MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN | La Roche-Posay Lipikar Balm AP+ Intense Repair Body Lotion | \$20 AT AMAZON |
| | | | La Roche-Posay | |
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| 4 |  | BEST ECZEMA-FRIENDLY MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN | Aveeno Eczema Therapy Daily Moisturizing Cream | \$12 AT AMAZON |
| | | | Aveeno | |
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| 5 |  | BEST REPAIRING MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN | Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream Face Moisturizer | \$19 AT AMAZON |
| | | | Olay | |
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| 6 |  | BEST INEXPENSIVE MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN | Vaseline Intensive Care Advanced Repair Body Lotion | \$6 AT AMAZON |
| | | | Vaseline | |
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| <p>7</p>  | <p>BEST CREAM MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN</p> <p>Lano Everywhere Multi-Cream Lano Read More</p> | <p>\$17 AT ULTA BEAUTY</p> |
| <p>8</p>  | <p>BEST FACE MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN</p> <p>Vanicream Daily Facial Moisturizer Vanicream Read More</p> | <p>\$14 AT AMAZON</p> |
| <p>9</p>  | <p>BEST TINTED MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN</p> <p>First Aid Beauty Ultra Repair Tinted Moisturizer First Aid Beauty Read More</p> | <p>\$28 AT AMAZON</p> |
| <p>10</p>  | <p>BEST HIGH-END MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN</p> <p>EltaMD Moisturizer EltaMD Read More</p> | <p>\$19 AT DERMSTORE</p> |

Rodney says these are the most common causes of dry skin:

- **Dehydration.** Meaning, you're not taking in enough water and liquids. (FYI: The U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine recommends that men take in 15.5 cups of fluids a day and that women aim to have 11.5 cups.)
- **Underlying medical issues.** Thyroid problems, liver issues, kidney issues, and diabetes can all lead to dry skin. "Psoriasis and eczema also lead to severely dry skin," Rodney says.
- **Environmental issues.** Extremely cold weather, harsh soaps, and skincare products, along with smoking and alcohol use can cause dry skin.
- **Medication.** Some medications, like diuretics, antihistamines, and statins, can cause dryness.
- **Poor skincare habits.** "People who do not use moisturizers or other skincare products are likely to acquire dry skin, especially with age," Rodney says.

Fixing the root cause of your dry skin, along with moisturizing it regularly, can help, Rodney says.

How moisturizers help dry skin

Using a good moisturizer can help combat dry skin and keep it from forming again. There are three major ways moisturizers can help your dry skin, Zeichner says.

- They form of protective seal over the skin that blocks water loss.
- They pull in hydration to the other skin layer.
- They soften rough cells on the skin's surface.

What to look for in a moisturizer for dry skin

There are a few different things you can look for when it comes to a moisturizer for dry skin. "I usually recommend a fragrance-free product with ceramides that can help repair the skin barrier function," says board-certified dermatologist **Gary Goldenberg, MD**, founder of Goldenberg Dermatology. "In some instances, lactic or salicylic acid can help get rid of the scaling and help dry skin."

Moisturizers usually come in water-based or oil-based formulas, Rodney says. "Lighter, more hydrating lotions and gels are often water-based, while thicker creams and ointments are oil-based," she says. The right moisturizer for you "really depends on what's causing your dry skin, and you may need one over the other—or both," Rodney says.

For example, if you have dry skin and live in a hot environment, a thicker cream can help with water loss, Rodney says. "Thicker creams contain occlusives, which create a barrier to prevent water loss," she explains. "Oily skin is crying out for more hydration and needs a moisturizer with emollients, which penetrate the skin with hydration, or humectants, which draw moisture from the environment."

But some newer formulations of moisturizers allow for lighter delivery systems like lotions and gels to give you plenty of moisture, Zeichner says. With that in mind, these are the best moisturizers for dry skin:



1

BEST THICK MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

CeraVe Moisturizing Cream

CeraVe

\$18 AT AMAZON

\$16 AT WALMART

CeraVe's moisturizing cream is a favorite of dermatologists, who give it high marks for its ability to moisturize and protect the skin barrier. The lotion goes on thick and contains three essential ceramides to keep fluid in the skin. While this cream is thick, it's not so dense that you can't use it every day.



2

BEST MOISTURIZER FOR VERY DRY SKIN

Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream

Cetaphil

Now 17% off

\$14 AT AMAZON

\$16 AT WALMART

Got a leathery skin situation going on? Reach for this cream. It's specially designed for those times when your skin is super dry. Once you slather it on, it works to replenish and soothe dry, irritated skin for up to 48 hours. It can even restore your skin's moisture barrier in a week.



AMAZON

3

BEST PUMP-FRIENDLY MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

La Roche-Posay Lipikar Balm AP+ Intense Repair Body Lotion

La Roche-Posay

\$20 AT AMAZON

\$21 AT WALMART

\$20 AT DERMSTORE

This cream has been clinically shown to reduce dry skin while giving you 48-hour hydration. While it costs a little more per ounce than other creams, it's packed with special dryness-fighting ingredients like prebiotic thermal water, ceramide-3, shea butter, glycerin, and niacinamide to help get your skin back up to speed. Just pump it out, spread it on, and go about your day.



4

BEST ECZEMA-FRIENDLY MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

Aveeno Eczema Therapy Daily Moisturizing Cream

Aveeno

\$12 AT AMAZON

\$13 AT WALMART

\$13 AT BED BATH AND BEYOND

Having eczema can both raise your risk of dry skin and make it more likely that you'll be irritated by certain lotions that don't jibe with your skin. Aveeno's cream is specially designed for people with eczema and contains colloidal oatmeal for extra moisture. It's also steroid-free and fragrance-free, so you don't have to stress about having a reaction.



AMAZON

5

BEST REPAIRING MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream Face Moisturizer

Olay

Now 59% off

\$19 AT AMAZON

\$37 AT WALMART

In a perfect world, you wouldn't just fix your dry skin—you'd repair it, too. Olay Regenerist contains hyaluronic acid, peptides, and niacinamide to hydrate your skin and repair damage. It also helps with skin turnover and corrects the look of wrinkles.



6

BEST INEXPENSIVE MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

Vaseline Intensive Care Advanced Repair Body Lotion

Vaseline

Now 47% off

\$6 AT AMAZON

\$17 AT WALMART

This lotion goes on easy, making it comfortable enough for everyday use. It also contains triple-purified petrolatum to protect your skin. The overall effect? A moisturizer that feels light, never heavy or greasy.



7

BEST CREAM MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

Lano Everywhere Multi-Cream

Lano

\$17 AT ULTA BEAUTY

Considered more of a spot treatment than an everyday cream, Lano Everywhere delivers some serious moisture where you need it most. It contains lanolin, a natural fat that protects and hydrates your skin and tends to be a good option for people who prefer a rich, creamy moisturizer.

8

BEST FACE MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

Vanicream Daily Facial Moisturizer

Vanicream

\$14 AT AMAZON

\$16 AT WALMART



When your face gets dried out, you want a special cream that will deliver moisture without irritating that sensitive skin. Vanicream does just that. This facial moisturizer is lightweight and formulated with five ceramides, hyaluronic acid, squalane, and glycerin. It also won't clog your pores and cause breakouts.

9

BEST TINTED MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

First Aid Beauty Ultra Repair Tinted Moisturizer

First Aid Beauty

Now 29% off

\$28 AT AMAZON



This is a great option for those looking to add extra moisture while evening out skin tone. First Aid Beauty Ultra Repair's tinted moisturizer contains colloidal oatmeal and hyaluronic acid for moisture repair, along with SPF 30 to prevent future damage. It also helps reduce fine lines and wrinkles.

10

BEST HIGH-END MOISTURIZER FOR DRY SKIN

EltaMD Moisturizer



DERMSTORE

EltaMD

\$19 AT DERMSTORE

\$19 AT SKINSTORE

When you need some serious repair, you reach for EltaMD's moisturizer. This cream helps combat dry, peeling, and flaking skin. It also helps with skin conditions like eczema and sunburn and is a good option to reach for after skin treatments like chemical peels and laser treatments. Slather it on at night for long-lasting moisture.