

Hot Showers and Your Skin: What Experts Really Say

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On a chilly morning, stepping into a steamy hot shower can feel like pure comfort. But according to experts cited in a recent article in Lifestyle Asia, it may also signal trouble for your skin. The piece highlights how frequent or long hot showers can strip away your skin's protective oils and weaken its barrier function.

How Hot Showers Impact the Skin Barrier

Dermatologists explain that the skin's outermost layer—the barrier—plays a vital role in locking in moisture and keeping out irritants and allergens. But hot water accelerates the removal of sebum (the natural oils) and lipids that help preserve this barrier. As a result:

- Moisture escapes more easily, leading to dryness and tightness.
- The skin becomes more vulnerable to redness, itching or flares, especially for sensitive types.
- Even hair and scalp health can be compromised, as hot water can strip oils from the scalp too.

When a Hot Shower Is Okay — But Not the Norm

The article emphasises that indulging in a hot shower occasionally is fine—but making it the daily default is less ideal. Key expert recommendations:

- Choose **lukewarm** rather than high-temperature water.
- Keep the duration short; prolonged exposure exacerbates damage.
- Follow with a gentle, pH-balanced cleanser and immediately apply a moisturiser to restore the barrier.

Practical Tips You Can Follow Today

To extend these insights into your routine:

- Monitor your shower thermostat: if the steam is heavy and the mirror fogs up, the water is likely too hot.
- Limit showers to 5-10 minutes if the temperature is warm to hot.
- After drying off, pat skin gently (rather than rubbing vigorously) and apply a moisturiser within a few minutes.

- For hair and scalp care: use warm—not hot—water, and consider a cooler rinse at the end to help lock in moisture.
- On cold mornings when hot showers feel irresistible: perhaps keep the water warmer only in the final minute and keep most of the shower at a milder temperature.

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