

# The Ultimate Skin Cleanse

Of all the cleanses out there—the ones that promise to detoxify your liver, reboot your energy, or enlighten your consciousness—the one we can really get behind is the one that lets us lounge around in a charcoal mask watching Bravo. Purifying your skin and ridding it of pollution, oil, makeup, and grime is as easy as it is rewarding. A smart routine will get your skin glowing as if you've been at an ashram for a month. —HANNAH MORRILL

## Antipollution Laws

If you're reading this from the International Space Station, you're all good. Everyone else:

**1** Studies show that pollution can damage skin, much as the sun does, by creating free radicals. Serums and creams with antioxidants mitigate the effects. Try **Olay Regenerist Regenerating Serum** with niacinamide or **Prevage City Smart SPF 50** with idebenone.

**2** "Pollutants can penetrate skin, and dry skin is most vulnerable because its barrier is compromised," says Whitney Bowe, a dermatologist in New York City. So she likes a powerful moisturizer (try **Cetaphil Daily Facial Moisturizer**, which contains glycerin).

**3** Since pollution collects on your skin during the day, "I'd never touch up my foundation without wiping off my skin first—you're pressing pollution in," says Zoe Diana Draelos, a consulting professor of dermatology at Duke University. It's also a good case for washing your face every night (more on that in a second).

## Detox Masks

They make for great selfies, and better yet, they defend against dirt and oil. So use a face mask with one (or more) of these ingredients weekly.

**Clay.** It's an insanely absorbent material that yanks dirt out of your pores as it dries, says Jeannette Graf, a dermatologist in New York City. Plus, clays contain naturally occurring minerals that soothe redness. **First Aid Beauty Skin Rescue Purifying Mask With Red Clay** dries quickly, rinses easily, and leaves our skin feeling soft.

**Charcoal.** This acts like a magnet, pulling grime and gunk off your skin. You'll see it in cleansers, konjac sponges, and even toothbrushes, but because charcoal needs a little bit of time to do its best work, look for it in a face mask. We like **Origins Clear Improvement Active Charcoal Mask to Clear Pores**.

**Acids.** They're really good at removing dead skin cells and—along with them—pollution and dirt. Look for masks or peels with glycolic, lactic, or salicylic acids. We like **Bliss Multi-face-eted All-in-One Anti-Aging Clay Mask** with glycolic acid in a clay base (double whammy).

## Coming Clean

Soap is way less complex than, say, quantum mechanics. But there's still a science to washing your face.

**Double up.** Creamy cleansers are less drying than foaming soaps, but they don't remove nanoparticles of pollution. To get the best of both worlds, use a creamy formula right after an oil cleanser (like **Burt's Bees Cleansing Oil**) or along with a cleansing brush (like the **Michael Todd SoniClear Elite**).

**Clear out.** If you have oily skin, "salicylic acid is one of the best ingredients in cleansers for getting oil out of pores," says Joshua Zeichner, a dermatologist in New York City. "If you break out around your period, use a salicylic acid face wash the week before for clearer skin." Try **La Roche-Posay Effaclar Medicated Gel Cleanser**.

**Wipe away.** Regular cleansing wipes remove dirt and makeup—but not pollution. You need stronger wipes with exfoliating acids for that (try **Garnier SkinActive Purifying Cleansing Towelettes**). To avoid irritation, use them no more than once a week.

## Face Facts

Clearing up the myths about clearing up your skin.

**Myth:** Juice cleanses and detox diets can solve all your skin problems.

**Truth:** Our bodies are designed to eliminate toxins; eating extra kale isn't going to clear up acne, says Gina Sam, a gastroenterologist in New York City. But studies suggest that eating antioxidant-rich foods can help mitigate UV damage to the skin.

**Myth:** Drinking your weight in water will flush out toxins and improve your complexion.

**Truth:** A 2010 study found no scientific proof that drinking water made skin more hydrated, less wrinkled, or healthier. But it will quench your thirst!

**Myth:** You can sweat out pollution and booze.

**Truth:** Sweat doesn't eliminate toxins from your body. Perspiration is 99 percent water, 1 percent minerals and other stuff, and 0 percent tequila and salty bar snacks. That said, exercise does increase circulation in the skin to make it glow-y and lower the cortisol in the blood that can cause wrinkles and laxity.