



## What your face says about your health will probably knock you off your chair

Your eyes, lips and teeth can give you clues to how your body is *really* shaping up. Prepare to have your mind/capillaries blown.

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You look at it every day but did you realise how many things your facial features can determine or reveal about your [health](#). Here are 10 cosmetic clues to check out...

# 1. Spots and skin tone could signal food issues

Health-based face reading is a huge trend right now in the UK thanks to naturopathic doctor Dr Nigma Talib and her book *Reverse the Signs of Ageing*. There are clear signs associated with overeating – or intolerances to – certain foods, she explains.

"The signs are so predictable that it's got to a point where I can tell exactly what foods someone has been overeating simply by looking at them," says Dr Talib.

Here's what to look for:

**Too much gluten:** Spots on the forehead, puffy cheeks and jowls that make your face look like it has gained weight, redness and/or red spots on the cheeks and spots or darkened patches on the chin.

**Too much dairy:** Swollen eyelids, under-eye bags, darkness under the eyes, widespread spots and pale cheeks.

**Too much alcohol:** Pronounced lines or spots between the brows, droopy eyelids, feathery lines on the cheeks, reddish skin and enlarged pores.

**Too much sugar:** Lines and wrinkles on the upper forehead, sagging under the eyes, spots, particularly pustular ones all over the face, and a greyish or pasty-white hue to the skin.

Skin breaking out? Check what could be causing it in your fridge...

## 2. Long lashes can mean drier eyes

There's a perfect length for your eyelashes and that's about a third of the width of your eye.

"Eyelashes form a barrier to control airflow and the rate of evaporation from the surface of the cornea," says Dr Guillermo Amador from the Georgia Institute of Technology in the US.

He found that when lashes were the perfect length they kept air and dust particles away from the eyes.

But while shorter lashes decreased this protection, slightly long lashes caused the biggest problems as they funnelled dust into the eyes and increased airflow around the area, increasing risk of dryness and irritation.

If you're always rubbing your eyes, skip lash-lengthening mascaras, false lashes or extensions and see if that helps.

## 3. Lines in your eyes show impulsivity

The more impulsive we are the more we're at risk of overeating, drinking too much alcohol and taking risks like speeding – and, your eyes, or specifically structures called contraction furrows that appear in the iris, can reveal someone's tendency to be impulsive.

Contraction furrows appear as light circles of pigment (like the trails of a snail) around the iris and the more of them you have the more impulsive you are likely to be, say Swedish researchers.

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## 4. Large lips protect you against pollen and colds

When we breathe in through the mouth two things can happen to the particles we inhale – they can enter our system or bounce off our lips. And, the larger your lips the more particles that bounce back into the atmosphere, says US experts.

If you're not blessed with a plump pout, there's another simple way to reduce your cold risk – just use lip gloss. US researcher Dr Renée Anthony says lip gloss also causes particles to stick to the lips and prevents them from entering the system.

## 5. If your nose has a red tip, you could be stressed

The Chinese theory of the Five Elements believes that health problems clearly manifest in changes on the face. "And a red tip at the end of the nose indicates an excess of fire chi, which is linked to high levels of stress or anxiety and a tendency to have high blood pressure," says psychosomatic therapist Kelly Sanders.

If you regularly suffer from stress and a red nose, get your blood pressure checked. "As well as trying to reduce stress, aim to minimise sugar, spices, coffee, alcohol and fried foods and introduce more wholegrains, vegetables and pulses to help balance the excess fire chi."

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## 6. Deepen wrinkles may mean weaker bones

How wrinkled do you look compared to your friends of the same age? If it's more

so, then you might need to take extra care of your bones. Dr Lubna Pal from Yale University in the US found that the more pronounced a woman's wrinkles were by early menopause, the lower her bone density.

The reason is that skin and bone share common building blocks in collagen. As we age, the changes in collagen that cause wrinkles are likely paralleled by similar changes that affect bone.

## **7. Crooked teeth might be more prone to gum disease**

"The more crowded or crooked your teeth the harder they are to clean correctly, which increases the risk of plaque and tartar build-up that can lead to gum inflammation (gingivitis) or periodontal disease," says Dr Peter Alldritt, chairman of the Australian Dental Association's oral health committee.

If you have very crowded teeth, your dentist or hygienist should be able to spot any areas you're not cleaning correctly and give you tips to change things – this might be different tools to use (like interdental brushes instead of floss), or even suggesting brushing some areas using your other hand to reach crooked teeth from a different angle.

Moral of this story? Get your teeth checked for gum disease, pronto!

## **8. Your eyebrows might be linked to weight gain**

Eyebrows that are thinning at the outer corners are a common sign of an underactive thyroid, which can cause weight gain. If you suspect this, ask your GP

for a thyroid function test.

"If the eyebrows start to look unusually wiry or long, however, that can be a sign the adrenal glands that produce stress hormones are under pressure," says

nutritional medicine

expert Fiona Tuck. If you notice your brows growing, it's definitely time to reduce your stress levels.

## 9. A shaking tongue can indicate magnesium deficiency

"A major role of magnesium is to relax the muscles in your body and, because the tongue is a muscle, a deficiency in magnesium can prevent the muscle fibres from fully relaxing, which leads to it quivering," explains naturopath Katherine Maslen.

"Poke your tongue out in the mirror and allow it to relax fully. If it shakes or quivers as you do this, your magnesium levels could be low." Correcting this is relatively simple – just add more magnesium-rich foods like almonds, cashews, legumes and leafy green vegetables to your daily diet.

## 10. Facial hair can reveal a hormone imbalance

While a little hair above the upper lip is normal, hair or acne that appears around the jawline can be a sign of PCOS (polycystic ovarian syndrome).

"This is due to elevated androgens, which are male hormones such as testosterone, in the body," says naturopath Jillian Foster.

"This causes women to develop hair growth in masculine areas of the face and

increases sebum in the skin, leading to acne."

If you suspect your facial issues might be PCOS-related, see your GP for advice on diagnosis and treatment.

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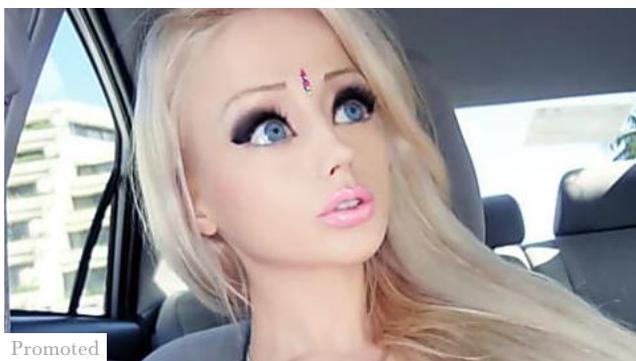
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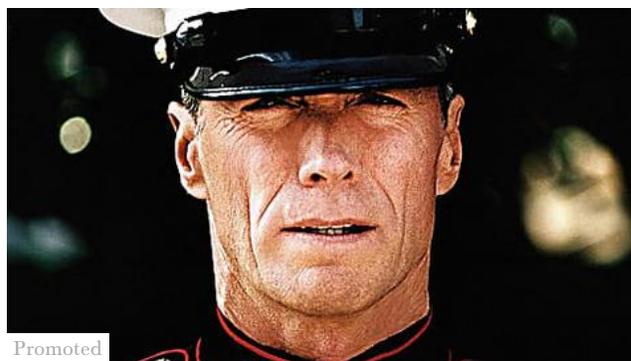
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