

# COSMOPOLITAN

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THE SKINNY

## HOT SECRET FOR BETTER SKIN

There are a lot of reasons to have sex: The orgasm! The calorie burn! The cuddle sesh after! As if these weren't enough, doing the deed can also score you great skin.

Here, the skin-care perks of getting it on. **BY DEANNA PAI**

### It Gives You a Rosy Glow

➤ Just like any other form of physical exercise, having sex boosts your circulation. To deal with this increased blood flow, the small capillaries in your face expand, giving you a pretty, healthy flush—like you've just run a really fun 5K.

### It Staves Off Signs of Aging

➤ Consider sex a supplement to your anti-wrinkle cream. Balanced estrogen levels don't just keep skin soft, they also keep it plump. In addition, sex can help boost your immune system, says Julie Karen, MD, which minimizes inflammation, a process that, over time, breaks down collagen and elastin.

### It Banishes Breakouts

➤ Who knew? Doing the dirty actually helps clean out your pores. During sex, your body releases mood-boosting hormones called beta-endorphins, which have an anti-inflammatory effect. Your levels of cortisol—the notorious stress hormone that exacerbates acne—tend

to be lower when you're doing it on the regular. Cue clear skin.

### It Hydrates Skin

➤ Regular action keeps hormone levels in check, says sexologist Yvonne Fulbright, PhD. This is key with estrogen, which plays a large role in how well-moisturized your skin is. Plus, it also promotes collagen production!

### ➤ How the Pill Plays With Your Skin

The latest oral contraceptives are actually FDA-approved to treat acne. How? They decrease the production of androgens (hormones that put oil glands into overdrive) so they can't make skin go haywire, stopping hormonal acne at the source. It isn't instant. "It could take about three months until [hormones] get totally normalized," says Dr. Karen. It's not a magic bullet either—other things can cause breakouts, so don't abandon your acne regimen entirely.