



It's just before noon and I've already washed my hands a handful (sorry, too easy) of times. Keep in mind that I'm working from home and I've gone outside only once, for a coffee and a quick walk in the park. These days, excessively washing has become a necessary norm, and hand care in general feels like a brave new world. If, like me, you're a novice at truly taking care of yours, here's what you should know about keeping hands healthy, but also about saving your skin, rescuing your mani and more.

Scrub with Cool Water

While there's a technique to getting hand washing right (we won't bore you with the well-known *Happy Birthday* method), one thing you don't need to worry about is the water

temp to get a good clean. According to Dr Michael Joshua Hendrix from Washington University School of Medicine, any water will do as long as it's fresh. But where temp does come into play is your skin: hot water strips your skin of moisture, something that's been depleted by all that regular washing, so keep it cool. Another hack for a gentler wash is to look for a cleanser that won't



steal all the moisture from your mitts.

Koala Eco Natural Hand Wash, \$18, features a plant-derived formula that's pH-balanced and includes lemon and rosemary to invigorate the senses. P.S. Don't forget to completely dry your hands. Germs spread more easily when hands are wet, say Bond University experts.

Keep Moisturiser on You

Hands feeling tight and dry post-wash? That's because soaps and sanitisers can "strip the outer layer of the skin of its natural oils," says Dr Dana Stern, a dermatologist who specialises in hand health. Think of it this way: "The skin cells are the bricks, and the mortar is the various lipids, including cholesterol and ceramides, that hold the cells together to create a barrier," Stern says. And since cleansing your hands is vital,