

Beauty With Shahnaz: A Close Shave

By: Shahnaz Husain

For The Guys

A man's skin is just as vulnerable as a woman's. Exposure to the sun, air-conditioning, air pollutants, chlorinated water and harsh soaps will have an impact on the skin. Your shaving routine affects your skin, making it dry and sensitive, and sometimes leading to dark patchy skin.



Many after-shave products are alcohol based and this compounds the problem, causing further dryness, skin irritation, sensitivity, ingrown or coarse hair. Dead skin cells or hardened oil collecting in the pores can often cause irritation and ingrown hair.

Please send your questions and comments to beauty@citymasala.com.

Of course, this does not happen to all men. Some are more predisposed to them, due to genetic factors. Other shaving related problems may be itching of the skin or even pain.

A PROPER TECHNIQUE

Proper shaving techniques and skin care go a long way in avoiding problems and dealing with them when they occur. One should select shaving and after-shave products with care. A mild face wash or cleanser would also help to counteract dryness. In fact, in cases of dryness, it may be a good idea to discontinue soap and use a cleansing gel instead. Before shaving, ensure that the beard is thoroughly wet - the hair is porous and absorbs the water which makes shaving easier. Many men prefer to shower before shaving and this makes the beard totally wet. Or, apply lukewarm water to the face before shaving, rinsing well.

Use a shaving cream that contains moisturizers and emollients (lubricants). If it contains natural ingredients like aloe Vera, it would help. The products should produce a rich creamy lather. It would be best to leave the cream on for a minute and then start shaving, so that the beard

is soft. Choosing the right shaving brush is also important. The bristles should not be too soft or too hard. Everyone uses circular movements with the brush to work up lather, but if more pressure is applied as you go upwards, it will help to lift the beard and make shaving easier. Needless to say, the blades should be sharp, because a close shave helps to avoid problems. A dull blade makes the beard scratchy and blotchy. Don't wait too long to change the blade. If the beard is hard, blades should be changed more often. Shaving against the direction of hair growth helps to get a close shave, but there are more chances of nicks and ingrown hair if you shave this way.

Rinse your face with lukewarm water after shaving, finish with a cold water rinse and then apply an after-shave cream. A cream is better than lotion, as it also helps to moisturize the skin. In fact, an after-shave cum moisturizing cream helps to replace the moisture that is lost while shaving.

CLEANSING

If there is no skin sensitivity or irritation, using a facial scrub two or three times a week would help to deal with the accumulation of dead skin cells. Scrubs also make the skin smoother, brighter and more translucent.

HOMEMADE PACKS

If you wish to use home ingredients and have normal to dry skin, take two tbsp almond powder and one tbsp honey. Apply on the face and leave on for 5 min., rub in gently and wash off with water. For normal to oily skin, mix half a cup of oatmeal and one tbsp yogurt, mix together and apply on the face. Wash off after 20 minutes.

Honey is an ideal ingredient for the skin. It suits all skin types and is one of the most powerful natural moisturizers. It also has healing properties. Honey can be used even if the skin is prone to pimples and acne. Apply honey on the face and wash it off after 15 to 20 minutes. If you have dark patchy skin, scrubs would definitely help. Once a day, mix one tbsp honey with one tsp yogurt or lemon juice and apply on the skin, wash off after 15 minutes with plain water.

For an ideal skin softener for normal to dry skin, take four tbsp honey, one cup milk, four tsp wheatgerm oil, mix together and keep in a glass jar with a lid. Keep in the fridge. Apply a little of this lotion on the face and neck. Rinse with water after 15 minutes.

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