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Is Your Self-Tanner Making You Break Out?



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We recently reported that Victoria Beckham ditched her fake tan because she thought it made her skin look old. However, the biggest difference in her skin we can see is that it is much clearer than it was in the past. When looking at pictures of her five years ago (with a fake tan), her skin is broken out and ruddy. Today, with no tan, it is free of blemishes and looks radiant. Which begs the question: Does fake tanner cause breakouts?

La Jolla, CA, dermatologist Susan Stuart, MD, says yes. "Many self-tanning products contain harsh chemicals that can irritate the skin and cause acne breakouts. Some products are quite oily and block the pores causing a build up of bacteria and flare up of acne," she explains. "Also, you really can't be sure how clean equipment is in a salon nor how often the chemicals are changed or inspected." **New York dermatologist Rebecca Baxt, MD, agrees and says that if her clients are acne prone, she never recommends fake tans.**

Does this mean that people with problem skin can never have a healthy-looking faux tan? "The best way to avoid breakouts with a fake tan is to look for self-tanners that are oil-free, alcohol-free and non-comedogenic or non-acnegenic. Such products will help you avoid the whiteheads and blackheads of acne," says Dr. Stuart. Try Jan Marini Bioglycolic Sunless Self Tanner (\$28), which is non-comedogenic and contains glycolic acid to help keep the skin looking its best.

Or avoid a faux tan altogether and stick with makeup. Dr. Baxt says that for acne-prone patients she only "recommends bronzer powder for the face if you want to look tan."