



It's the biggest nightmare ever. You wake up on the before the big event—your high school reunion, say, or the most important business interview of your life—and you look in the mirror and freak. What you've got staring back at you is an unsightly skincare emergency that will be the first thing anyone sees when they look at your face.

Ever cancelled a date because a cold sore erupted? Or been shocked by chin acne that waits to pop up until the day you need to look

your best? You could claim these aren't life threatening conditions, but for a woman, they might as well be.

Thankfully, there are quick fixes that will literally save the day, and **Dr. Rebecca Baxt, a Manhattan/New Jersey board certified dermatologist**, has got 'em. And now, so do you.

HOW TO SOLVE EMERGENCY SKINCARE PROBLEMS

1. PROBLEM: Cold Sore

FIX: Try cortisone injections to look better faster. Very diluted cortisone into the cold sore can bring the inflammation down. If you are afraid of needles, get a prescription for Valtrex, Famvir, or Acyclovir. You can pick up Abreva as it's an over-the-counter medication.

Or try some old-fashioned remedies, such as Visine, which will help take the red out. A cold compress and Tylenol or ibuprofen should help, too.



2. PROBLEM: Allergic Reaction

FIX: First off, if you know what's it is, stop eating or using whatever is causing the allergic reaction. If you've got a few days before the big event, use hydrocortisone cream twice a day and take Allegra, Claritin or Zyrtec, all of which which are longer acting and less sedating than Benadryl. Try a whole-milk compress for 10 minutes twice a day as well.



If you're out of time and need a quicker fix, use hydrocortisone cream then cover up redness using a green tinted concealer. A good quality tinted moisturizer naturally has green/yellow undertones and also provides moisture to dry skin. Note: If this type of reaction is something you have never experienced before, check with your dermatologist.

3. PROBLEM: Cystic Acne Breakout



FIX: Never cut into the cyst to fish out the clogged part of the pore—or you may end up with an infection or worse yet, long-term scarring. Plus, if any remnants of the clog remain, the cyst is likely to get re-inflamed and return with a vengeance, prolonging the time it takes to heal.

Here's a secret that many a supermodel and actress use: Treat it with a steroid shot to inject a very dilute quantity of a "glucocorticoid" steroid into the cyst. Glucocorticoids are naturally produced by our bodies and regulate human metabolism, immunity, and inflammation. They have very potent anti-inflammatory effects and within one or two days of injection into a cyst, will shrink the inflammation and pain and create almost immediate cosmetic improvement.



4. PROBLEM: Puffy Eyes

FIX: The key to reducing the puffiness of puffy eyes is having something cool applied to them. A cool compress or cooled cucumber slices applied for 5 to 10 minutes can constrict blood and lymph vessels. You can also use cool tea bags, which contain tannins that will help reduce swelling.

And keep this in mind: Since puffy eyes can be caused by a high salt diet or alcohol, try to cut out both before an important occasion.

PROBLEM: Sunburn

FIX: Take a cool bath or shower. Set the water to a cool temperature that's just below lukewarm, and relax for 10 to 20 minutes. The temperature will ease the pain, and the water will stop your skin from becoming as irritated. Avoid using soap, bath oils, or other detergents as they will irritate your skin. If blisters are forming, take a bath because shower pressure might pop them. When you get out, let your skin air dry, or pat with the towel in small, gentle movements. Apply a cold, wet compress to your skin. Dampen a washcloth or other piece of fabric with cold water, and lay it over the affected area for 20 to 30 minutes.



You can also apply aloe vera to burned skin. Using the pads of your fingers, gently apply the aloe to your sunburn. Don't "rub it in" all the way, like you might with a regular lotion. Leave it a bit goopy and moist on top of the burn and reapply as often as necessary.

Another option is to treat inflammation with a low-dose over-the-counter cortisone cream, which contains a small dose of steroids that can work to reduce inflammation.

Wear loose cotton clothing—baggy T-shirts, cotton PJs—over sunburned areas. Cotton allows your skin to breathe. Drink a minimum of 8 glasses of water a day to counterbalance the dehydrating effect of a burn. Apply unscented moisturizer to your skin as it starts to heal over. When you no longer have open blisters, or the redness of the sunburn has subsided a bit, treat your damaged skin to some TLC. Liberally apply a creamy, unscented moisturizer to sunburned areas over the next few days or weeks to prevent peeling and irritation.

5. PROBLEM: Too Much Filler



FIX: If you plan on filler, do it no sooner than 1 month before the big event to allow time for healing and touch-ups. Go for hyaluronic acid fillers such as Restylane, Juvederm and Perlane because they are easily reversed with Hyaluronidase. This product dissolves and degrades the filler so as to reverse the results of the initial injection if necessary. (It's a great insurance policy when choosing a practitioner. Make sure yours has it at his/her disposal.) Hyaluronic Acid based dermal fillers have the additional safety of being partially or completely reversed with time or with the injection of Hyaluronidase.

Before picking up the Restylane syringe, good dermatologists or plastic surgeons look at you long and hard, evaluating your skin quality and texture, tissue tone and thickness, cheek and lip volume, bone structure and how your face looks when animated versus still. An experienced, knowledgeable injector will avoid these pitfalls: Adding volume to deep-set eyes can recess the eyes further and make them look smaller; over-inflating nasolabial folds and marionette lines can take away mid-face structure; and overfilling cheeks can make the under-eye area appear hollow.



Rebecca Baxt, MD, MBA, FAAD is a Board Certified Dermatologist specializing in both cosmetic and general dermatology for adults and children. She is a nationally recognized certified Allergan Botox, Juvederm and Voluma trainer, and was part of the Voluma launch faculty in 2013. Dr. Baxt is on staff at The Valley Hospital in Ridgewood NJ, as well as Bellevue Hospital in NY. She also volunteers at Bergen Volunteer Medical Initiative in Hackensack in the Dermatology clinic.