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BEAUTY

The 16 best body lotions for dry skin, according to dermatologists

The season of dry skin is nigh, so we asked our skin experts for tips.



Kara Birnbaum / TODAY

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By Rylee Johnston and Fran Sales

Soft and smooth skin is a year-round goal for most of us, but as the weather changes, so do our skin's needs. The cooler temperatures can leave skin feeling cracked and dry in the fall and winter, but if you practice careful skin care and use the right body lotion, you can help your body maintain the perfect level of moisture.

Unsurprisingly, helping your skin stay hydrated starts in the shower, as we've covered in other skin care articles. One of the main culprits that causes raw and cracked skin is scrubbing in the bath or sitting for a long time in hot, soapy water, said Dr. Rebecca Baxt, a board-certified dermatologist in New Jersey.

"Soap strips any natural oils out of the skin and makes the dryness worse. It is not necessary to scrub the skin on a regular basis with soap," she explained. "I usually recommend soap in the areas that need it and not scrubbing the arms and legs unless they are actually dirty," she added.

But on top of proper bathing, there are also countless [body lotions](#) to choose from, not to mention thicker solutions like moisturizing creams and ointments. To help you choose, Shop TODAY spoke with dermatologists to get some expert tips to care for your skin, especially with colder weather approaching. We also asked them for the best body lotions they recommend for dry skin of all types. Keep scrolling or use the links below.

[What to look for in body lotions](#) | [Dermatologist-recommended body lotions](#) | [More body lotions we recommend](#) | [Body lotion FAQs](#) | [Meet our experts](#)

What ingredients should I look for in a body lotion?

For the best results, dermatologists Dr. Ife Rodney and Dr. Lian Mack suggest looking for lotions that contain hydrating ingredients that help repair and improve skin, such as [colloidal oatmeal](#), glycerin, ceramides and [hyaluronic acid](#).

"Ceramides are fats that help to hold the skin cells together and form a protective layer that seals in moisture, and keeps pollutants out of your skin," explained Dr. Rodney, a board-certified dermatologist practicing in Fulton, Maryland. On the other hand, hyaluronic acid, a sugar that can hold up to a thousand times its weight in water, "draws moisture into the skin and holds it there, [preventing] evaporation of moisture from our skin into cold dry air," she added.

Other hydrating ingredients to look for include petrolatum, [squalane](#), coconut oil and [niacinamide](#), according to Dr. Mack, a board-certified dermatologist based in New York. For those with mature skin looking for anti-aging capabilities, she advised, "Look for [lotions with retinol](#) combined with moisturizing ingredients like those mentioned above.

With this expert advice in mind, here are the top 15 body lotions we recommend for dry skin, according to dermatologists and our own research.

The best dermatologist-recommended body lotions

Vanicream Moisturizing Cream with Pump



Vanicream Moisturizing Cream with Pump

\$11.99 ~~\$16.43~~ AT AMAZON

\$13.43 AT WALMART

\$16.79 AT CVS

Fragrances can leave skin feeling irritated or dry, especially for sensitive skin. This is why New York-based dermatologist Dr. Marisa Garshick recommends using this formula from Vanicream, **which is free of dyes and fragrances**. It also features a pump to help make application easier and more convenient.

La Roche-Posay Lipikar Balm AP+



La Roche-Posay Lipikar Balm AP+

\$19.99 AT AMAZON

\$19.99 AT LA ROCHE-POSAY

\$19.99 AT ULTA

Using the power of **glycerin, shea butter and antioxidants to smooth and lock in moisture**, this lotion is a favorite of Dr. Jennifer Chwalek, a dermatologist at Union Square Laser Dermatology in New York.

"I really like La Roche-Posay Lipikar Balm AP+," Chwalek said. "It contains the humectant glycerin, which helps the skin retain moisture. It also has shea butter, which is rich in fatty acids like linoleic acid and antioxidants like vitamin A and E. This can help to moisturize and calm dry, irritated skin. In addition, this moisturizer has niacinamide, which improves the barrier function of the skin and reduces inflammation."

Melach 33 Silky Shea Body Butter



Melach 33 Silky Shea Body Butter

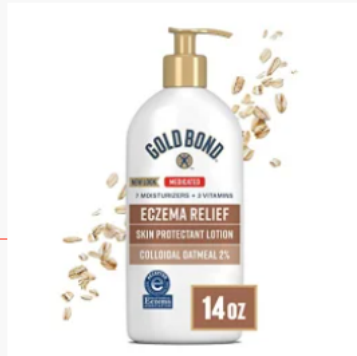
\$52.00 AT AMAZON

\$52.00 AT MELACH 33

Smooth and silky skin can be hard to achieve in dry environments, but this body butter uses shea butter to help provide a smooth consistency. If you want a lotion that won't leave a greasy residue, then Garshick suggests trying this body butter.

"This nourishing body butter includes shea butter to hydrate and nourish the skin without leaving it feeling greasy," Garshick told us. "This product is great as it also includes antioxidant plant oils and dead sea minerals, leaving the skin feeling soft and smooth."

Gold Bond Eczema Relief Medicated Cream and Lotion



Ultimate Skin Protectant Cream for Eczema Relief

\$16.96 AT AMAZON

\$17.49 AT TARGET

\$16.14 AT WALMART

For Fran Sales, Shop TODAY associate editor and a lifelong eczema sufferer, this lotion has been a standby. And it's the lotion Dr. Mack suggests for the condition, as well.

"For my patients who suffer from eczema, I recommend Gold Bond's Ultimate Eczema Relief [the product's former name], which combines **2 percent colloidal oatmeal with seven moisturizers and three vitamins** to hydrate and protect the skin the skin barrier," she explained.

Not only is this body lotion formulated to target the top symptoms of eczema, including dryness, itching and scaling, but it's also fragrance-free, which Dr. Mack recommends for those with dry skin because they tend to be more reactive to products that have fragrance.

Aveeno Eczema Therapy Daily Moisturizing Cream



Aveeno Eczema Therapy Daily Moisturizing Cream

\$19.67 AT AMAZON

\$19.68 AT WALMART

\$19.99 AT TARGET

This another pick for those with eczema, but "you do not have to have eczema to use this cream!" said Dr. Robyn Gmyrek, a dermatologist based in New York.

If you have eczema-prone skin, then Gmyrek and Chwalek recommend using this because of the **glycerin, colloidal oatmeal and ceramides** in the formula. It's also fragrance-free, making it safe for eczema-prone skin.

"It is one of the few moisturizers I've used that is more long-lasting," Chwalek said. "It has good occlusive properties [creates a protective barrier on top of the skin to keep moisture in], but can feel a little tacky in my opinion, which I don't mind because I have dry skin."

Mustela Stelatopia Emollient Balm



Mustela Stelatopia Baby Emollient Cream

\$23.71 AT WALMART

\$27.00 AT TARGET

\$27.99 AT BUYBUYBABY

This is a personal favorite of New York-based dermatologist Dr. Jennifer MacGregor. She recommends that people who tend to have drier skin **should consider using lotions marketed towards babies and toddlers.**

"I have mild eczema and I use this on my face!" MacGregor told us. "If you are really dry, some of the best are those marketed to babies."

The formula was made with avocado perseose and sunflower oil distillate that can help soothe and replenish skin. It's also fragrance-free and safe for sensitive skin.

CeraVe Moisturizing Cream



CeraVe Moisturizing Cream

\$17.78 AT AMAZON

\$14.97 AT WALMART

\$16.39 AT TARGET

MacGregor loves this moisturizer so much that she keeps in most rooms of her house, while Garshick likes how **the texture is oil-free and never leaves behind a greasy consistency.**

"It is non-comedogenic and oil-free, making it okay to use on the face and body without leaving the skin feeling greasy," Garshick said. "It also uses a patented MVE Delivery technology to help deliver moisturizing ingredients all day and night."

Josie Marin Whipped Argan Oil Body Butter



Josie Maran Whipped Argan Oil Body Butter

\$38.00 AT AMAZON

\$38.00 AT SEPHORA

\$38.00 AT TARGET

We tend to stay indoors more when the weather gets cold, so Gmyrek suggests using this body oil to help skin retain moisture. **The glycerin in this formula helps improve the skin's appearance,** which is important during the colder months.

AmLactin Daily Moisturizing Body Lotion



AmLactin Daily Moisturizing Body Lotion

\$13.97 ~~\$15.99~~ AT
AMAZON

\$15.99 AT WALGREENS

\$20.49 AT CVS

Gymrek recommends this lotion because it contains a good dose of lactic acid (12 percent, in fact). **The lactic acid will help exfoliate dead skin**, allowing better penetration for moisturizing ingredients like glycerin.

Cetaphil Moisturizing Lotion



Cetaphil Daily Moisturizing Lotion

\$19.95 ~~\$26.72~~ AT
WALMART

\$19.99 AT AMAZON

Upgrade your skin care routine with this lotion that's designed to soothe and smooth sensitive skin. Rodney recommends this brand because of the **amino acids and ceramides that help restore the skin's barrier**.

"It is ideal for even the most sensitive skin, as it contains no fragrances or parabens," Rodney told us.

Neutrogena Hydro Boost Whipped Body Balm



Neutrogena Hydro Boost Whipped Body Balm

\$7.31 AT WALMART

\$7.99 AT WALGREENS

\$6.49 AT BED BATH & BEYOND

For a cream that "melts" into your skin, Rodney suggests using this option from Neutrogena. It contains a **hyaluronic acid base, which provides moisture using a non-greasy formula**. The brand also suggests using it daily for the best results.

First Aid Beauty Ultra Repair Cream



First Aid Beauty Ultra Repair Cream

\$38.00 AT AMAZON

\$38.00 AT SEPHORA

\$38.00 AT ULTA

New York City-based dermatologist Dr. Blair Murphy-Rose prefers using this shea butter-based cream to protect skin against cold climates. It's also a "clean" brand, meaning it's free of artificial colors and fragrances, parabens, phthalates and sulfates.

"[It] has a luxurious, whipped consistency that is rich and highly moisturizing yet still blends in well," Murphy-Rose told us. "This lotion – and the brand entirely – is also **free of propylene glycol, which some of my patients are allergic to and can be a difficult ingredient to avoid.**"

Eucerin Roughness Relief Body Lotion



Eucerin Roughness Relief Lotion

\$9.24 ~~\$11.77~~ AT AMAZON

\$10.56 AT WALMART

\$12.99 AT CVS

For those days when your skin is feeling bumpy and itchy, this lotion can help soothe and relieve discomfort. According to Garshick, this formula will **moisturize and gently exfoliate at the same time**.

Drunk Elephant Sili Body Lotion



Drunk Elephant Sili Body Lotion

\$20.00 AT AMAZON

\$20.00 AT SEPHORA

Give your skin the self-care it deserves by using a lotion with reliable ingredients. This body lotion is made with **amino acids and plant oils to hydrate the skin and protect against the dry air** that comes with cooler temperatures.

"This moisturizing lotion helps to improve dry and irritated skin using a combination of marula and shea butter, squalane, amino acids and plant oils," Garshick said. "This hydrating lotion also contains fruit-derived antioxidants to help fight free-radical damage."

Caudalie Vinosculpt Firming Lotion



Caudalie Vinosculpt Firming Body Cream

\$45.00 AT AMAZON

\$45.00 AT SEPHORA

While most moisturizers aim to soften and smooth skin, this one does even more. Garshick likes this lotion because it helps to hydrate and firm.

"In addition to shea butter, it also contains **antioxidants and iris extract thought to help with firming**, especially when applied to the abdomen, arms, thighs and chest," Garshick said.

More body lotions for dry skin we recommend

Vaseline Intensive Care Advanced Repair Unscented Lotion



Intensive Care Advanced Repair Lotion

\$6.99 AT TARGET

\$20.91 AT AMAZON

Formulated for extremely dry and combination skin, this unscented body lotion by household name Vaseline uses **a combination of Vaseline jelly and super-hydrating lipids to strengthen the skin's barrier** and replenish lost moisture, according to the brand. Plus, one customer and their son, who bought this lotion for the upcoming cold climate, raved, "[We] have severe dry skin and eczema, and we noticed after a few days of using this lotion our skin improved greatly. ... I highly recommend!"

Selfmade Corrective Experience Comfort Cream



Corrective Experience Comfort Cream

\$6.65 AT SELFMADE

For stressed skin prone to dryness and eczema, associate editor Sales highly recommends Selfmade's comfort cream, an occlusive moisturizer that's formulated for those with sensitive skin and conditions like eczema and keratosis pilaris. The cream is said to soften the skin and restore its moisture barrier.

"I keep this at the ready on my desk at work. Stress and a cold office exacerbate my hand eczema, and I only need to slather this on once or twice every day. I love the slightly cool, tingly and calming sensation it immediately gives my hands," she said.

Its secret ingredient lies not just in its hydrating ingredients that include glycerin, but also in a **cortisol-reducing (read: stress-relieving) ingredient derived from the Helichrysum italicum flower, called Cortinhib G (TM)**. It does this by "promoting the release of beta-endorphins to self-soothe and counterbalance the cortisol," according to the brand.

Body lotion FAQs

In addition to body lotions, what else should I do to tackle dry skin?

Like Dr. Baxt, Dr. Garshick also advises that you cut back on long, hot showers and steer clear of intense body washes.

"It is important to avoid harsh soaps that can strip the skin of its natural oils and use cleansers that are gentle on the skin barrier," Garshick said. "If not already doing so, it is best to limit showers to once daily, making sure to take short showers, only five to 10 minutes, in lukewarm water to avoid further drying out the skin as the weather gets cooler."

Dr. Mack echoed Baxt's and Garshick's advice regarding limiting time in the shower and using lukewarm water, but added, "As the weather changes and the humidity decreases in our environment, consider adding a humidifier to your bedroom to combat excessively dry skin." She also recommended avoiding lotions with fragrance: "Individuals with drier skin tend to be more reactive to products that have fragrance, developing rashes and other areas of irritation," she explained.

What other types of body moisturizers are there?

It helps to look at the three strengths of moisturizers typically available, according to Dr. Baxt.

- **Lotion.** These are the lowest strength of moisturizers, and they're "typically a thin, easy to apply [solution] that comes in a pumper bottle," Baxt said. But if those don't work to hydrate your particular dry skin, you may need to progress to creams.
- **Creams.** "These are thicker, and they have a higher oil to water ratio," Baxt explained. Creams typically come in tubes or tubs. "They're difficult to apply because they are thicker. However, they work better [than lotions]," she added. If those are still not adequate, ointments are the next step.
- **Ointments.** The strongest moisturizers, according to Baxt. "These tend to be a Vaseline-type base, such as plain Vaseline, Aquaphor or Vaniply [Vanicream]," Baxt explained. Those are the thickest; they are a bit greasy, but if your skin is raw and cracked, they will be very soothing," she said.
- **Alternative: Natural moisturizers.** For people looking for an all-natural alternative, Baxt suggested coconut oil or other natural oils.

Meet our experts

- **Dr. Rebecca Baxt, MD**, is a board-certified dermatologist practicing in New Jersey and New York City. She holds particular interest in non-invasive cosmetic procedures.
- **Dr. Jennifer Lynn Chwalek, MD**, is a board-certified dermatologist at Union Square Laser Dermatology in New York, where she specializes in cosmetic and laser procedures. She holds fellowship training in procedural dermatology and cutaneous laser surgery.
- **Dr. Marisa Garshick, MD**, is a board-certified dermatologist who serves patients in both New York and New Jersey. She is also an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Cornell's New York Presbyterian Medical Center.
- **Dr. Robyn Gmyrek, MD**, is a board-certified dermatologist working for UnionDerm in New York. She has been awarded national recognition for her contributions to cosmetic dermatology, including Castle and Connolly America's Top Doctors, New York Magazine's 2013-2020 Best Doctors and a spot in the 2013-2020 lists of Super Doctors.
- **Dr. Lian A. Mack, MD**, is a board-certified dermatologist and fellow of the American Academy of Dermatology. She is particularly focused on skin conditions as it pertains to skins of color. She is based in New York City.
- **Dr. Jennifer MacGregor, MD**, is a board-certified dermatologist at UnionDerm in New York. Before UnionDerm, she directed the Laser and Cosmetic Dermatology Center for Georgetown University Hospital.
- **Dr. Ife Rodney, MD**, is a board-certified dermatologist and founder of Eternal Dermatology + Aesthetics in Fulton, Maryland. In addition to general dermatology, she specializes in skin cancer prevention, detection and treatment, skin rejuvenation and anti-aging, and hair and scalp disorders.



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