

Aqua fresh

When it comes to water and your skin, how l'eau should you go? Tracy Picha sorts the fact from the fiction

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- Spritzing your face with water can replace moisturizing. [Fact or fiction?](#)
- Even water-based products can clog your pores. [Fact or fiction?](#)

Hard water is bad for your skin.

FICTION

Hard water, which is defined by dermatologist Dr. Peter Vignjevic as “water with a high concentration of calcium salts” (you have hard water if there’s a chalky buildup inside your pipes or at the bottom of your kettle), isn’t damaging to the skin, but your cleansers can be. “With whatever type of water you have, it’s important to use a good, gentle cleanser,” he explains. His picks: La Roche-Posay Lipikar Surgras, 150 g, \$8.50, for the body, and La Roche-Posay Toleriane Dermo-Cleanser, 200 mL, \$18.50, for the face.

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Drinking water can prevent dehydrated skin.

FICTION

Your body flushes out those eight glasses of Evian that you’re downing religiously before it reaches your epidermis. “Skin moisturizing is best achieved from the outside,” adds Dr. Vignjevic. Esthetician Kristen Ma concurs: “Water is really important, but our skin is the last organ to get nutrients, so just drinking water won’t guarantee hydrated skin.” Ma stresses that agua is key to good health, however. She recommends drinking water that’s more alkaline than acidic and suggests trying Trinity Springs Natural Spring Water, 1 L, \$2.25 (hunt it down at your local health-food store).

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Water rich in selenium is good for your skin.

FACT

“Water rich in selenium can have healing, soothing and antioxidant properties,” says Dr. Vignjevic. “It’s been used for centuries in Europe as a means of treating chronic skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis.” If you can’t get to the selenium-rich La Roche-Posay spa waters in France (where Napoléon Bonaparte sent his troops to get their burns treated), give your complexion a daily dose of La Roche-Posay Thermal Water, 150 mL, \$12.50, right here at home.

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Saltwater is better for your skin than chlorinated water.

FICTION

Chlorinated water can be harsh, but any water with “high chlorine or salt content can be drying and irritating,” says Dr. Vignjevic. After swimming, he recommends using a gentle soap to remove traces of salt or chlorine, then apply a good quality moisturizer to rehydrate après shower while your skin is still a bit damp.

FLARE’s pick: Dove Intensive Nourishing Lotion, 250 mL, \$8.50. If you have extra-sensitive or extra-dry skin, Dr. Vignjevic suggests applying petroleum jelly or an extra-rich body balm prior to plunging into the deep end.

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Spritzing your face with water can replace moisturizing.

FICTION

As Ma says, “Just spraying water on your skin won’t moisturize it.” Dr. Vignjevic is in the same camp. Thermal spring water atomizers are a great refresher for your face and they deliver “antioxidant and healing properties that soothe irritated skin and reduce redness.” However, they aren’t enough to quench your skin.

Do the two-step: apply your regular moisturizer after spritzing your face with your favourite spray. Try healing spa waters from Vichy, France, with Vichy Thermal Spa Water Spray, 50 mL, \$6, and Vichy Oligo 25 Anti-Dull Hydrating Care for Dry Skin, 50 mL, \$31.

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Even water-based products can clog your pores.

FACT

“Most skin products out there are water-based,” says Ma. And that doesn’t mean all of those products are guaranteed to keep your pores clean, so don’t confuse “water-based” with “light.” If you have oily and acne-prone skin or you’re looking for a light moisturizer, Ma suggests trying serums, which have a lighter consistency.

Try: Pure + Simple Algae Serum, 50 mL, \$19.

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The expert advisors: Dr. Peter Vignjevic, dermatologist and assistant professor at McMaster University’s School of Medicine in Hamilton; and Kristen Ma, co-owner of Pure + Simple spa in Toronto and a licensed esthetician specializing in ayurvedic treatments and holistic skin care.

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