

# Best face forward

Breaking down teen skin care

by ERIN SILVER



CHRISTINA MUÑOZ MOYE



## COSTCO CONNECTION

Skin care items, including cleansers, moisturizers and Hero Mighty Patches (above: Item 1828317), are available in Costco warehouses and at [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca).

If you're a parent of a teenager, you've likely heard of the multi-step skin care routine. That's because tweens and teens are turning to social media for skin care advice, and this can lead to a lot of misinformation.

Unfortunately, many of these routines do more harm than good for young skin.

"Influencers are typically looking for the most views, not necessarily to provide correct information," says Dr. Jill Greenspoon, dermatologist at the Canadian Dermatology Centre in Toronto.

Using too many products, or the wrong products, can easily worsen skin. This can lead to dryness, blocked pores, redness and irritation, and make common teenage skin conditions such as acne and eczema worse.

That's why dermatologist Dr. Ron Savin, based in New Haven, Connecticut, says having a simple, gentle skin care routine is key. "Wash the face with a fragrance-free soap and water twice a day, morning and night."

Moisturizer can help skin feel less dry in certain climates, but he suggests using it sparingly. However, sunscreen is a must.

Savin says, "Sunscreen is vital to good skin care and the prevention of premature aging and skin cancer."

Over-the-counter products may also help. For those with acne-prone skin, Greenspoon recommends looking for skin care products with the following ingredients: salicylic acid to unclog pores, benzoyl peroxide to kill bacteria and retinol to increase cell turnover. Niacinamide and azelaic acid are also helpful for treating skin redness.

If your teen doesn't see any improvements after three to four months of a stable routine, or if it's affecting their self-esteem or mental health, contact a doctor or dermatologist for advice. ■

Erin Silver is an author and freelance writer in Toronto.

## Pimple popping

Pimple popping increases the risk of scarring and infection. "Pimple patches are some of my staples for

acne-prone skin," dermatologist Dr. Jill Greenspoon says. "They not only hide a big pimple, they stop you from picking." If you're going to do it, be smart.

"If you really need to pick one, make sure you wash your hands well and use two [cotton swabs] to apply gentle pressure on each side."—ES