

SKIN FASTING

by Rachele Dupree, marketing and communications director at Vivoderm Natural Skincare

One of the latest beauty trends to hit social media is called skin fasting. Just like fasting for the body is recommended to cleanse toxins and allow natural bodily functions to normalize, skin fasting has become a new hack among an arsenal of cleansers, moisturizers, and serums. The hack being no beauty products at all – just for a little while.

The term was originally coined in 2011 by a Japanese skin and body care brand that describes skin fasting as a way “to strengthen the skin’s natural protective barrier that is weakened by excessive nourishing, to normalize the secretion of natural oils, and support the natural rejuvenation process.”

This idea is not new to certain other holistic and organic skin care brands either. Some well-established organic beauty brands recommend not using any heavy facial products at night or intermittent skin fasting in order to allow the natural detoxification of the skin and proper oxygenation to take effect.

Ironically, this beauty hack requires no purchase of anything, which is kind of a relief to the pocketbook.

DOES IT WORK OR IS IT ALL JUST HYPE?

Published results from self-professed beauty hoarders and reviewers were not all positive. The majority of skin fasters online reported drier or tightening skin without all the serums and moisturizers and some acne breakouts. This may in fact be proof of what skin fasting is trying to avoid: an over-reliance of external moisturizers or oil-free products that prevent the skin from naturally balancing itself.

Overall, the reactions were positive to give skin a weekly break from heavy night creams and maybe a Sunday break from makeup.

There also seemed to be a misconception of just how to skin fast. While some beauty experts recommend slowly removing one product from skin routines if one tends to overindulge – like an allergy test – others suggest not using a bedtime moisturizer one night a week. Many users were taking it to the extreme, forgoing all products for weeks at a time. This was not recommended.

Many dermatologists when interviewed on this topic did advocate streamlining skin care to only the most-needed products and advised simplifying routines to keep adverse reactions to a minimum.

Skin fasting can be very beneficial to those who tend to over-cleanse or strip the skin’s barrier of its natural oils and nutrients, causing breakouts little by little.

As many aestheticians already know, the epidermis is covered with trillions of microorganisms, primarily bacteria, which are essential to healthy and beautiful skin. Some say overreliance on any beauty product can erase that natural protective barrier and cause more skin issues, while other skin care professionals disagree.

As with any new beauty trend, it is up to the individual and the professional to determine the best course of action for their skin type regarding the number of products they are using. Still, a brief skin fast every now and then certainly could not hurt and can help determine which products may be unnecessary.

