

What, Theoretically, Should You Do if You Fall Asleep in Your Makeup a Lot?

BY SABLE YONG JANUARY 26, 2017 3:07 PM



No one is judging you here, but we all know falling asleep in makeup isn't exactly great for our skin. Does that mean we're all perfect and never do it? Nope! Obviously it's not *that* difficult to wash the day's look away before diving into bed, but maybe you're stumbling in come sunrise and only have crashing on your mind—or maybe that crash happened spontaneously in someone else's bed. Or you just fell asleep on the couch while watching *How I Met Your Mother* reruns and sleepy you couldn't have given two cares about walking the six feet to the bathroom to grab a makeup wipe. The point is, life's too short for a skin-care routine sometimes.

But here's the unfortunate part: This doesn't mean your face won't punish you for it the morning after. It seems so harmless until you're waking up the next day with dull, uncomfortable skin that feels like someone planted some express overnight breakouts, set to bloom by midday.

A setback though it can be, there's some easy rehab you can do to get your skin feeling back to normal again. And here it is, your handy damage control guide to sleeping in makeup.

1. Assess the Damage.

Most people are concerned with clogged pores when it comes to snoozing in a full face. If you have anywhere from a normal to oily skin type, this is probably true. But it's those with sensitive and easily irritated skin who probably suffer the most. Think about it this way: An already impaired skin barrier left a mess all night will be much worse for the wear come morning. [Jessica Weiser, M.D.], (<https://www.nydermatologygroup.com/doctors/dr-jessica-weiser/>), a dermatologist from the New York Dermatology Group, explains that your skin cells really do benefit the most from a good night's rest, since that's when they can gain the most benefit from your nighttime skin-care treatments for effective and healthy cell turnover rate. Makeup left on your face hinders that process and robs your skin of a nice, clean (and potentially enriched, depending on what skin-care products you use) slate at night to repair. Just putting that out there so you know what you're working against.

2. Stop Touching Your Face.

If you slept in your makeup because you didn't fall asleep in your own bed in your own home within proximity to your skin-care products, the first thing you can do to keep things sanitary is wash your hands. Seems weird, but [Dendy Engelmann, M.D.], (<http://www.mdcnyc.com/provider/dendy-engelman-md>), director of dermatologic surgery at Metropolitan Hospital, cannot stress hand washing enough. "Throughout the day, our hands come into contact with so many things that it's hard to even keep track—your phone, doors, pens, keyboards. These all have bacteria and can transfer from your hands to your face and cake on top of your makeup. So, even though it's difficult, focus on eliminating facial contact with your hands and washing your hands and face when you get home."

3. Power-Wash Your Face (but Not Aggressively).

Yes, the obvious move. Day-after makeup, however, is going to be a bit tougher to remove since it's been practically embossed into your pores at this point. The good news? You've got a few options for going about it. Dr. Weiser recommends a micellar solution to grab the grime straight off your face. "There are micellar oil molecules that help to emulsify makeup and debris so it lifts off your skin easier and also hydrates your skin, as well, which is what it really needs at this point," she says. This will work particularly well if you were wearing minimal makeup the night before, or you're not prone to heavy breakouts.

If you do tend to get zits immediately after skipping a P.M. wash or you went to bed wearing a full face, Dr. Engelman suggests the double-cleansing approach, using an oil-based cleanser to emulsify all the dirt, oil, and makeup off before going back with a regular foaming or exfoliating cleanser to get rid of excess residue. "After you've pat your skin so that it's semidry, replenish moisture," she says. She recommends Skinceuticals hyaluronic acid booster and Differin Gel, an all-over acne treatment available OTC. "Retinoids are proven to help with skin turnover and fight inflammation," she adds.

Or if two steps really is too much, makeup artist Katie Jane Hughes swears by a cleansing oil. "Cleanse with a good oil like bareMinerals Oil Obsessed Total Cleansing Oil. It's super good at removing makeup and feels amazing if you accidentally or not so accidentally sleep in your makeup," she says. Her tip? Warm the cleanser in your palms, then massage around your (dry) face and wipe away with a cold-water washcloth—"it will perk up your skin like no other. Follow by a cream like Weleda Skin Food for an added boost."

4. Switch Up Your Sheets.

So (double) cleanse, treat, moisturize. Seems pretty easy...too easy almost. You know what's the most crucial move of all? Changing out or washing your pillowcase.

Some wise logic from Dr. Engelman: "If you don't launder your pillowcase and sheets the next day, you risk reverse contamination, so even if you end up washing your face before going to bed, that residual product will be on your pillowcase already and in effect will transfer back onto your skin when you lie down." (Ugh, sorry, we know.)

That makeup wipes in your nightstand hack is sounding more doable by the minute, huh? Baby steps!