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7 Skin Care Rules You had Better Reexamine

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Rules are made to be broken, it is said. That, of course, is not true. In most cases, rules are made to be followed and if you break them, sooner or later you'll find yourself find trouble. However, when it comes to the skin care rules handed down to you by your mom, aunt or an older sister, it would probably do you good to reexamine few of them because many of them are built on misconceptions rather than scientific facts.

To discover what rules were based on fact and what were based on pure myth, we talked to a group of skin experts comprising **Dr. Semira Bayati, a cosmetic surgeon based in Orange County, California**, Alexandra Spunt and Siobhan O'Connor, authors of 'No More Dirty Looks: The Truth About Your Beauty Products', Dr. Jeannette Graf, a dermatologist based in New York City, and Dr. Michael Gold, a dermatologist based in Nashville, Tennessee. The following is what they had to say:

- **Wash your face twice a day:** This is not always good. Washing your face too often washes away the natural hydrating oils and drying skin and leaves your skin vulnerable to bacteria. You don't always need to wash your face, according to authors Spunt and O'Connor. If you live in a place where there is less pollution or on days when you don't wear makeup, washing your face only once a day is enough.
- **Exfoliate your skin often:** This is based on the misconception that dead skin is bad for your complexion. Dead skin actually has a purpose. It protects your complexion from bacteria and environmental pollutants. Therefore, it is enough to exfoliate only once in every two weeks, according to Gold.
- **Retin A and Retinol should be used only for wrinkles:** This is not true. These ingredients can be effectively used for wrinkles, acne, pore size and other skin problems. Retinol has a proven track record of about 50 years and can be used to fix almost any skin condition, according to Gold.
- **Those who are acne-prone or have oily skin should always use oil-free products:** There are three problems with this rule. First, oil-free isn't even a regulated term, which leaves it open to any number of interpretations by manufacturers, according to dermatologist Graf. Second, even the oiliest of skins need moisture and avoiding oil-free products can result in the skin secreting more oil, according to cosmetic surgeon Bayati. Third, some oils such as argan, coconut and lavender oil are actually good for the skin, no matter what type, because of their anti-bacterial properties, according to Spunt and O'Connor.
- **Use benzyl peroxide or salicylic acid to dry out zits:** Better look for an alternative, according to Spunt and O'Connor. Although these ingredients are effective in killing bacteria and getting rid of zit, they are harsh, irritating and drying and may leave you with red, flaky skin.
- **You need a separate eye product for your eye area:** Mostly not true. You can use the same cream and moisturizer in your eye area that you use for the rest of your face, unless your dermatologist recommends otherwise, according to Gold.
- **Natural means it's gentle:** Not always true, according to Spunt and O'Connor. Some natural products and treatments can be harsh and may damage your skin. For example, tea tree oil can cure you of zits, but if you use it too liberally it may leave your skin red and flaky.