

# NEW BEAUTY®

## SKIN HEALTH

### 7 Things That Should Never Happen When You Apply Skin Care

Signs Of A Skin Care Snafu.

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By Liz Ritter, Executive Editor · Feb 7, 2023



**I**f you need a skin care signal that a product just isn't right for you or isn't doing what it is supposed to, look no further than these expert-provided signs.

#### Breaking Out In A Rash

This might sound super obvious, but Louisville, KY, dermatologist Tami Buss Cassis, MD stresses this one doesn't necessarily have a time limit like so many people think. "If you break out in a rash, the product is not correct for you—no matter how long you have been using it," she says. "I hear, 'I haven't started anything new,' all the time but what we forget is that allergic contact dermatitis happens after you have used something for some time and your body has developed a sensitivity to it and then eventually a rash. It's time to figure out what you are allergic to and avoid it."

## Developing Hives

It may be on the more serious side, and Fort Lauderdale, FL dermatologist Dr. Matthew Elias says if you're experiencing hives after applying a product, it shows signs of a potential allergy. "Wash it off and make sure to watch for other signs of allergy like swelling, difficulty swallowing or breathing," he says. "Any of these signs are an emergency."

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## Itching

This sort of encompasses all of the above, but New York dermatologist **Jody A. Levine, MD** explains "while your skin can have subtle reactions to skin care products, such as peeling and dryness, an itchy and scaly rash is a sign of an irritant or allergic reaction to the product."

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## Feeling "Something"

Oh, those pesky feelings—they're just no good when it comes to skin care. "Ideally your skin should not feel anything after application of a product," says Phoenix, AZ dermatologist Dr. Karan Lal. "We all have different skin sensitivities due to differences in our skin barrier. By far the worst feeling is that of burning after immediately applying a skin product. This could be because you stripped your barrier from aggressive cleansing and are using a potent active. It could also be that you are applying a strong active. It could also simply mean that your skin is dry and needs moisturizer."

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## Warmth

Dr. Lal says if you do feel a sensation of warmth, it means you have contact urticaria, which could mean you are allergic to an ingredient in the skin product, although he does flag a couple of exceptions. "This can happen with certain chemical sunscreens," he says. "Sometimes, however, the pH of the product or a certain ingredient universally causes it to sting. For example, vitamin C often has a 'bite' to it, and this is normal for vitamin C."

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## Flushing + Heat

In regard to the above, celebrity aesthetician Nerida Joy says unless a product is "active"—like a glycolic, lactic, salicylic acid, etc.—burning, flushing and heat is not a good sign. "With each product brand, their formulas have a synergy that work together with its pH, percentages, delivery systems and ingredients," she explains. "A brand categorizes their products into levels or regimens that work in support of each other."

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## Pilling + Curdling

This one might give you a chill, but Joy says if you "choose to use multiple brands in one application, this is where it can be risky and separation, pilling or curdling" can happen. "In more severe cases, burning, redness and irritating can quickly occur. Products that burn or tingle on the skin usually have a lower pH and should NOT be used every day—for example, an exfoliant or 'active' serum or moisturizer." Joy says, in her opinion, a product like that is OK when used as a skin "boost" a couple of times a week, but if used daily, the skin can get rough in texture, discolor, and become itchy and irritated. "This is now considered a skin chemical burn. In this case, you must stop all actives until the skin heals and recovers. Layering the skin has value to certain skin types especially in the cooler months, but I recommend that you keep to using one brand and their recommendations at either your morning or night routine to avoid skin barrier confusion or discomfort."