



[Shira Hirschman Weiss](#)
Writer and Entrepreneur

Cosmetics, Creams and Eye Health

Posted: 03/17/11

As a chronic dry eye sufferer and someone who blogs about the condition, I can tell you that my entire routine has been altered. By that, I refer to my life routine -- from what I eat to what I drink (and don't drink -- alcohol!) to the eye drops and ointments that I insert, to the humidified rooms I inhabit, to the moisturizer and makeup I apply.

As a product and beauty junky, the latter is something I decided to expand on in this post. If your own eyes are even mildly sensitive and you like cosmetics as much as I do, following are tips so you don't have to suffer (too much!) for beauty:

Hand Washing

LA Lasik surgeon Dr. Brian Boxer Wachler, can't stress enough how important it is to wash one's hands before applying or removing eye makeup; Viruses on one's hands are the most frequent cause of conjunctivitis. This piece of advice applies to those with sensitive eyes and those who care about preserving the health of their eyes in general!

Look for Products with Natural Ingredients

Boxer Wachler is of the mindset that all-natural ingredients are important. He recommends the following: Safflower oil for hydration, Caffeine to decrease UV damage to eyes, as well as redness of the delicate eye-orbital area skin, Organic soybean oil to nourish and protect skin, Grapefruit seed extract to fight oily production on eyelids, Alpha Lipoic Acid to decrease skin damage and boost anti-aging, Vitamin C (in the form of Ascorbyl palmitate) to assist with collagen production, reduction of fine lines and hyper-pigmentation.

Eye Cream

Chemist Ron Robinson, Founder of [BeautyStat.com](#), cautions to avoid products that contain fragrance and that if you wear contact lenses, use products that are tested to be safe for wearers. His favorite non-irritating eye creams: Clinique All About Eyes Rich, 100 percent Pure Caffeine Eye Cream and Boots No. 7 Eye Cream.

Robinson says that if allergies are to blame for your ocular distress, you can look for products that contain botanical ingredients that help to soothe, comfort and decongest under-eye puffiness (GreenTea, White Tea, Pomegranate, CoffeeBerry extracts).

Relief Jones III, M.D. of San Antonio Eye Institute likes products that contain hyaluronic acid. "This is a thick gel that is actually used in many surgical procedures," he explains, "Ophthalmologists inject it into the eye during cataract surgery to keep the eye formed. It is also injected into the dermis to fill wrinkles (Juvederm)." He recommends B5 Hydration by

gloTherapeutics. "It doesn't irritate the skin and does a great job increasing the moisture content of the skin (and can also reduce the appearance of fine lines)."

Amy Friedman, owner of Cedarhurst, NY based Kiss and Makeup, www.KissandMakeupNY.com, recommends Mario Badescu's brand of hyaluronic eye cream. I tested this product myself and found that it really smoothed my skin and didn't irritate my eyes. In addition, I woke up with my under-eye area feeling tightened and brightened with puffiness decreased from the day before.

Eye Makeup

George H. Garcia, M.D., an Ophthalmologist at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, CA says that in addition to looking for hypoallergenic products, those with sensitive eyes should select products that are light in composition like Physician's Formula eye makeup.

Richard Shugarman, M.D. of the American Academy of Ophthalmology says the key thing to keep in mind is not brand, but that products don't cake and drop flakes into the eye.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology "Flakes can get into the tear film and increase your eyes' irritation." Shugarman adds that eye makeup must be replaced regularly (every 3 months) because those with dry, sensitive eyes are more prone to infections.

Furthermore, avoid metallic or glitter eye shadows: According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology "Glitter eye makeup is a common cause of corneal irritation or infection, especially in contact lens users."

Elise Brisco, O.D., spokesperson for The California Optometric Association, cautions to avoid Kohl eyeliners as well; they may contain dangerous levels of lead.

Take The Day Off!

Friedman recommends Kiehl's Supremely Gentle Eye Makeup Remover. After using a sample, not only does it thoroughly remove waterproof mascara and liner, but it didn't irritate my highly sensitive eyes at all. Several ophthalmologists who I spoke with recommend washing eyelids and lashes with a tiny amount of baby shampoo after makeup is thoroughly removed, then washing the face with plain warm water and following that with a warm compress before bed. William Tattler, M.D. of the Center for Eye Care in Miami also recommends using moisture chamber goggles right before bed.

Don'ts

Brisco issues many "Don'ts" to her patients:

- Don't keep any makeup that was used if you developed an eye infection, you should throw away any makeup that has come in contact with your eyes and purchase new makeup.
- Don't use dried out mascara, and don't try to moisten it with your saliva or water. The risk of infection is increased if you moisten the brushes with saliva.
- Don't keep eye makeup in your car or in a steamy bathroom. High temperatures can cause it to spoil.
- Don't mix and match cosmetics. Use what's intended for your eyes on your eyes only. Don't use the same pencil for both lips and eyes, as that can introduce bacteria.

- Don't use permanent coloring and dyes for eyelashes; they can cause irreversible eye damage if not used correctly.
- Don't share your cosmetics with a friend. Sharing make-up can be risky as you may be sharing bacteria too. It's particularly inadvisable to share mascara and eyeliner.
- Don't put eye makeup on while driving or riding in a car. Your mascara wand can all too easily scratch your cornea. Also, avoid applying eye makeup on buses or subways; sudden stops can also increase the risk that you'll scratch your eye.
- Don't use eye makeup when you've got an irritated or infected eye. If you think that a particular cosmetic is irritating your eyes, stop using it right away.
- Don't use eye makeup close to your eye, keep it on the outside. Don't use eyeliner on the inner eyelids, where makeup can get inside your eye. It can block the glands there and lead to styes and dry eyes.
- Don't dig into your makeup bag and start applying eye makeup before washing!
- Don't forget to wash or replace all brushes and sponges frequently.
- Don't use samples that may have been touched by another person, as it's a common route for eye infection. If you must test a product, use a fresh applicator.
- Don't sleep in your makeup, even if you're exhausted from a late night party. Mascara can stay on the lashes and start to flake off and into your eyes when you bury your head in your pillow.
- Don't put contact lenses in after applying eye makeup. Always insert lenses beforehand. You don't want to get makeup underneath your lenses, as this also puts you at risk for infections.

Cleanliness is key, both outside and inside of the eyes, and that is something you don't want to forget!