



Your Guide to Never Getting Chapped Lips Again

Like your soul, your lips take a battering from cold, cruel winter. They chap, flake, burn, and can feel drier than a week-old baguette. This is partly because they don't have sweat glands, just a small number of oil-producing glands, according to Dr. Heidi Waldorf, the director of laser and cosmetic dermatology at the Mount Sinai Medical Center.

But though chapped lips are annoying, they're also one of the easiest beauty problems to solve. Read on for tips from dermatologists about how to prevent and treat chapped lips, and for our recommendations of lip balms that will make your mouth feel like it's summer all year round.

Tip No. 1: Don't be a mouth-breather. Not only is it annoying to anyone you cuddle with, but it can also give you flaky lips. Moisture evaporates faster from your lips when you breathe in and out with your mouth because of the hot air you're expelling.

Tip No. 2: Don't lick your lips all the time like LL Cool J. Dermatologists agree that the biggest cause of chapped lips is constantly biting or licking them. It's a never-ending cycle, says Dr. Whitney Bowe: Saliva evaporates and dries out your lips, causing you to want to continue licking.

Tip No. 3: Don't do the Kylie Jenner Lip Challenge. Topical enhancers like lip "venoms" work by dilating blood vessels, which swell the lips but also dry them out. Also avoid any long-wear lipsticks that include alcohol. As you've learned from *American Psycho*, alcohol dries out your skin, including your lips.

Tip No. 4: Drinking water won't help you. Unless you are very, very dehydrated, your dry lips have nothing to do with how much you're drinking. They're more likely to be dry for the reasons above. "For your lips to be dry, it would have to come from days of not drinking water. Not because you went to hot yoga," says cosmetic dermatologist [Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank](#).

Tip No. 5: Get a humidifier. It doesn't only help your skin but your nose, throat, and lips, too.

Tip No. 6: Don't forget to apply lip balm after eating and drinking water. "You have to reapply it regularly after eat and drinking," says Dr. Waldorf. Water left on the lips from food or drink can also evaporate, adding to dryness.

Tip No. 7: Look for lip balms that seal in moisture and hydrate. In moisturizer terms, you want a lip balm that is both humectant, which draws in moisture, and occlusive, which seals in moisture, Dr. Bowe explains. Waxes and petroleum jellies are occlusive, while shea butter is a humectant. If your lips are cracked, Dr. Waldorf suggests avoiding balm that contains menthol or camphor, as those can sting.