



Minimizing Pores is Actually Possible



In the summer, when your pores seem to be holding onto excess sebum the way "Hoarders" subjects cling to newspapers, keeping blackheads at bay is its own special project. We caught up with cosmetic dermatologist and founder of 5th Avenue Dermatology Surgery and Laser Center Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank to find out just how often we should exfoliate, which ingredients to use and avoid, and which in-office treatments will keep our pores tiny and clear.

Look For Cleansers With An AHA

Frank says face washes containing glycolic or salicylic acid prevent breakouts. "Retinoids, such as Retin A, also help reduce pores while helping build collagen to improve fine lines," he says. If you have oily skin, Frank suggests looking for a physical exfoliator like a scrub or a cleansing brush like a Clarisonic. "If you have breakouts, use a chemical exfoliator to fight oil and acne from a deeper level in the skin — use products with salicylic, lactic, and glycolic ingredients because these will help unclog pores and improve the skin's texture," he says. Be careful not to overdo it, though. Frank recommends exfoliating two to three times a week.

Avoid Ingredients That Clog Pores

Lanolin, fragrance, D and C red pigments, and mineral oils can clog pores. "While lanolin is a known emollient with moisturizing properties, it can have skin-clogging capabilities, triggering the cycle of breakouts," says Frank. Artificial fragrances can lead to acne infection, skin sensitization, and photosensitivity. D and C red pigments are coal tar derivatives that are used as dyes, and, according to Frank, have exhibited highly comedogenic and acneogenic properties. Last, mineral oil is an occlusive, something that physically blocks water loss in the stratum corneum. "It's used in many products, however, and has been shown to cause and exacerbate acne."

Make Pores Look Smaller

To shrink the appearance of pores, Frank says to use a salicylic acid-infused face wash. "LAB SERIES Power Pore Anti-Shine & Pore Treatment (\$33) also helps to minimize the appearance of clogged pores the look of pores and absorbs excess oil from the skin," he says. For an overnight pore treatment, try Dermstick For Pores (\$29), which blends glycolic acid and tea tree oil to reduce the appearance of pores without irritation.

Mask The Problem

Masks are a fantastic way to keep oil at bay and they're simple enough to don during your next Netflix binge. Philosophy Total Mattiness (\$18) multitasks like a dream employee: It can be used as a daily facial wash or as a weekly mask for shine control. If a refreshing tingle is more your thing, Pro X Wash In Treatment (\$30) can be used as a wash, mask or spot treatment, so it's ideal for decanting for travel. Clinique Pore Refining Solutions Mask (\$25) purifies pores and leaves skin smooth thanks to added charcoal, which works so well to absorb toxins. (It's even administered in emergency rooms to patients who have ingested poisonous substances.)

In-office Treatments

Frank says that laser resurfacing such as Fraxel can reduce the appearance of large pores. A more wallet-friendly alternative is Skin Laundry, which offers a ten-minute \$100 facial that includes the YAG laser and intense pulsed light (I.P.L.), which vaporizes dirt and removes bacteria from the skin.