

This is why sunscreen gives you acne and what you can do about it

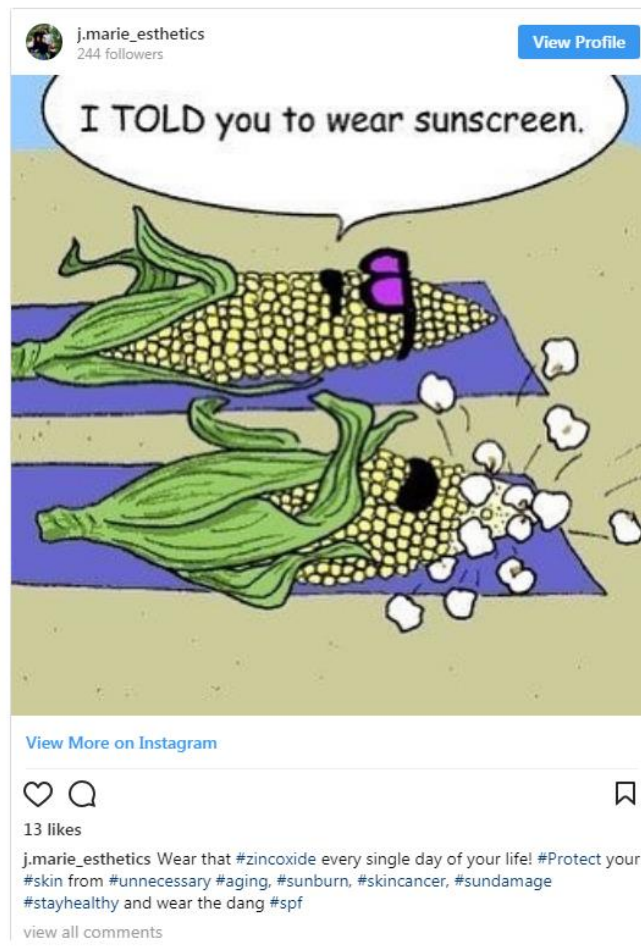
[f SHARE](#)[TWEET](#)[Google+](#)[+ SHARE](#)

Tuesday, July 10, 2018 - 09:12 AM



Along with trying to get a tan without getting sunburn, and frolicking in the sea without leaving your hair a frazzled, salty mess, this is one of the great summer beauty dilemmas: How do you keep your face protected from the sun without causing an outbreak of acne?

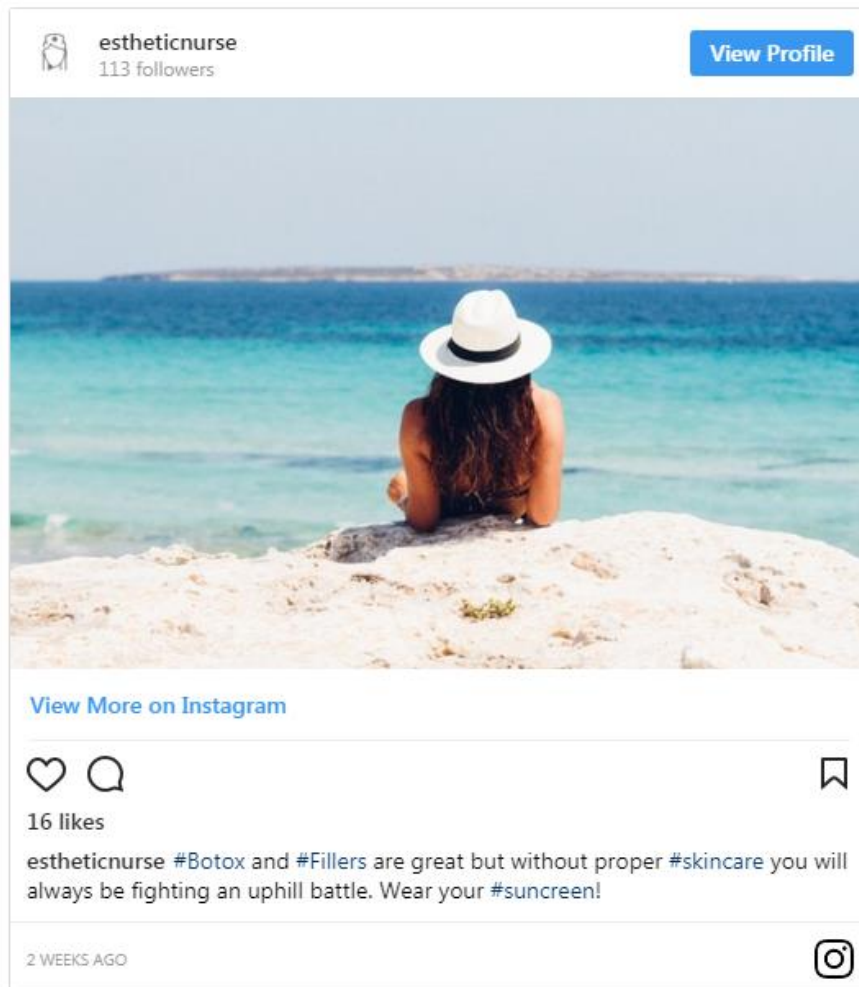
Sick of playing 'SPF roulette' every time we go on holiday (will it or won't it lead to a smattering of spots the next morning?), we decided to turn to the skincare pros to find out exactly why some sun creams are to blame for this very irritating problem, and what can be done about it. Here's what they had to say...



Why does sunscreen cause acne?

“Two things can cause sunscreen breakouts: occlusion of the pores by comedogenic materials, or a sensitivity reaction to chemical UV-blocking agents,” says Dr Sarah Shah of Artistry Clinic (artistryclinic.co.uk). “Mineral sunscreens sit on top of the skin and can block your pores, which then causes spots, while chemical sunscreens can irritate the skin, creating a bumpy, spot like rash.” Dr Justine Kluk, Consultant Dermatologist at 25 Harley Street (25harleystreet.co.uk), explains: “Sunscreens have typically been very thick and greasy in the past. We are then encouraged to apply them frequently and liberally in order to get sufficient protection from harmful UV rays.

“While this is essential to reduce our risk of sunburn and skin cancer, applying greasy or occlusive products on a regular basis can make the skin oilier, leading to blocked pores and ultimately blackheads and pimples. It can also lead to flare-ups in people who already suffer with acne.”



Does sun help to dry up spots?

“There is a temptation to skip the sunscreen if you have acne-prone skin, thinking that it may help the skin by drying it out and reducing the acne,” says Dr Mervyn Patterson, Founder, Woodford Medical (woodfordmedical.com). “There is some element of truth in this, as a slight tan may temporarily hide the red spots and in some people, oil production is reduced. Unfortunately the effect is temporary, and a rebound increase in oil production and inflammation may occur.

“An additional problem, particularly in the darker skin types, of exposing acne to UV is the risk of developing what is called post-inflammatory hyper pigmentation,” he continues.

“Here, the inflammation found in the acne spot triggers production of melanin by the melanocyte, so as the redness of the acne spot recedes it is replaced by a persistent area of brown pigmentation.

It is therefore important that those with oily or blemish-prone skin find a sunscreen that they are comfortable using.”



healinghandsofnewtown
26 followers

[View Profile](#)



[View More on Instagram](#)



7 likes

healinghandsofnewtown We wear SPF everyday, do you? It is always important to wear sunscreen everyday to protect your skin from the☀ suns rays☀ that could cause skin damage and hyper-pigmentation. Call Healing Hands of Newtown today to book an appointment with one of our amazing aestheticians who will cater to your skins needs! #sunscreen #skincare #aestheticians #healinghands #sunprotection #summer #SPF

2 WEEKS AGO



What type of sunscreen should you use to prevent acne?

“The good news is that these days, there are lots of less oily and occlusive options available,” says Dr Kluk. “The best advice is to look for sunscreens or sun protection moisturisers that are non-comedogenic, meaning non pore-blocking. This is usually stated on the package label and means that the product can be safely used to protect the skin without increasing breakouts.”

“The formulation and ingredients of the sunscreen can exacerbate your spots,” adds Dr Patterson, who recommends opting for a ‘physical sunscreen’ rather than a chemical one.

“Physical sun protection avoids the need for chemical sunscreen ingredients. Physical UV blockers are inert, meaning they don’t undergo chemical reactions and act like minute mirror particles reflecting the UV rays off our skin,” he explains. “If a sunscreen contains zinc and titanium, then you can be sure that product is a physical block. If you see ingredients ending in ‘zone’ and ‘salate’, then you are looking at chemical protection.”



Using a sunscreen that has a high water-resistance is also sensible but importantly, the formulation is critical. Many sunscreens on the market that claim high water-resistance are heavy, sticky products, prone to causing outbreaks.

Dr Shah adds: “Many people with problems such as acne or rosacea tend to choose mineral [formulations] as they can limit irritation and flare-ups due to the sunscreen not being absorbed in the skin.”

How should you apply sunscreen to avoid spots?

“For best protection, the advice is to apply sunscreen half an hour before and then just before going out into the sun. Further applications are encouraged depending on how active you are or how much you have been swimming, and this adds up to a very large amount of potential pore-clogging ingredients,” says Dr Patterson.

“Think differently about your face and the rest of your body, as it is often the face that is much more prone to spots. Find ways to reduce the amount and number of sunscreen applications by common sense steps, such as keeping your face under the umbrella and wearing a good wide-brimmed hat. If you avoid diving under the water, then you may not need to reapply to your face after swimming.”

5 of the best sunscreens for acne-prone skin



(Bioderma/PA)

Bioderma Photoderm AKN Mat SPF30, £14.10, [Boots](#)



(La Roche-Posay/PA)

La Roche-Posay Anthelios Ultra-Light Sun Cream Fluid SPF 50+, £16.50, [Boots](#)



(Epionce/PA)

[Epionce](#) Daily Shield Lotion Tinted SPF 50, £45



(Teoxane/PA)

Teoxane Advanced Perfecting Shield SFP 30, £48



(ZO Skin Health/PA)

ZO Skin Health Oclipse Daily Sheer Broad Spectrum SPF 50, £57 (for stockists, see zo-skinhealth.co.uk)

- Press Association