

skin in the city

City life can wreak havoc on your skin. While a sticky climate, pollution and hot sun are par for the course in HCM City, it's possible to counteract their harmful effects and have a smooth, glowing complexion. AsiaLIFE chats with skin-care gurus on opposite sides of the globe to find out how.

Humidity

Humid weather is known to aggravate acne-prone and sensitive skin, so fight back by cleansing twice each day with salicylic acid. Tighten your pores with a mild toner and always use oil-free moisturiser for hydration, even on blemishes. Take time for monthly facials—they work wonders on clogged skin by removing dead skin cells, blackheads and even small cysts.

Smog

Smog is composed of dirt and airborne substances that leave a pore-clogging residue on the skin. Motorbike riders are most prone to this pollutant, but wearing a cloth mask while tooling around town will block some particles. Upside: smog provides sun protection by partially blocking UV radiation. Just don't rely on it for sunscreen!

Sun Protection

Vietnam has a relatively high UV index. To counteract the effects, use high SPF sunscreen with UVA/UVB protection. Repair free radical damage from the sun with antioxidant creams containing green tea, vitamin

C and coenzyme Q10. Above all, visit your dermatologist every six to 12 months for a full-body skin exam.

Air Conditioning

Skin serves as a barrier for the body, protecting it from dehydration. But too much time spent in a/c dries the skin by disrupting its lipid content. Extra moisturising is essential and a humidifier will help. Or switch to a powerful ceiling fan and open the windows.

Smoking

In a city without smoking regulations, the temptation to light up can be strong. However, consider that puffing on cigarettes shrinks blood vessels on your face, decreases oxygen levels and slows blood flow. Eventually, the skin takes on a sallow, yellowish hue and premature wrinkles form, resulting in a tired appearance.

Information provided by Dr. Judith Hellman, M.D. (www.bigappleskin.com) and Quynh Nga, skin care specialist, Jasmine Total Body Wellness Spa 45 Ton That Thiep, D1, (www.jasmine-spa.blogspot.com)

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