

4 Cosmetic Procedures to Avoid During Summer (And Why)

BY Lindsay Tigar · June 26, 2017



Longer days mean longer time spent outdoors. And while this sounds like a treat for our social calendar, not so much for our skin according to dermatologists.

Because our skin is more sensitive and susceptible to damage during the hottest months of the year, it's important to adjust our beauty regimens accordingly. And we don't just mean exfoliating more often or applying sunscreen more frequently. According to experts, we also need to steer clear of certain cosmetic procedures and treatments that put us at a higher risk for sun damage, dryness and increased sensitivity. Here are the cosmetic treatments dermatologists suggest to put off to keep the largest organ of your body—your skin!—safe this summer.

1. Chemical Peels for Skin Resurfacing

People are motivated for a variety of reasons to get a chemical peel. This technique is meant to improve the overall appearance of the skin on your face, neck or hands. This can include minimizing acne scars, reducing the signs of aging and decreasing age or sun spots. How does it work? Kind of how it sounds: a chemical solution, determined by your dermatologist based on your specific skin's needs, is applied to your skin. Then, your skin literally sheds off a layer, revealing an untouched and smooth brand-new layer underneath. **Board certified dermatologist, Jeffrey S. Fromowitz, MD, FAAD**, says most of the time, peels aren't recommended during the summer, but not for the reason you might think.

“Great outcomes after a chemical peel depend on sun avoidance to prevent re-pigmenting the skin,” he explains. “Performing chemical peels in summer months limits their effectiveness because skin doesn't have a chance to heal properly.” Since peels can be expensive and require several rounds before you get the look you're lusting after, **Dr. Fromowitz** says it's better to wait until it's colder, when you don't mind holing up in your apartment for a weekend to let your skin heal.

Editor's Tip: Need a milder alternative? Try an at-home water peel, like Aquareveal Satin Bright Soft Water Peel for Face.

2. Laser Hair Removal for Unwanted Hair

Especially when you find yourself having to shave your legs daily because you're sporting dresses instead of jeans, the idea of laser hair removal might sound more appealing than ever. But **Dr. Fromowitz** says to hold off until you pull out those boots to start your multi-step procedure. Why? The issue with laser hair removal in the summertime is that your skin is darker than it normally is, even if you don't tan, per se, your skin might freckle or get sunburned, changing the color pigments. Because laser hair removal works via specific wavelengths in our skin, targeting melanin pigment, when our skin isn't its normal shade, it can be difficult for your dermatologist to see where he or she left off when you go back for round two.

3. Intense Pulsed Light for Hyperpigmentation

Ever look down at your hands or glance in the mirror and notice some sun spots? Usually these tiny pieces of evidence that you were in the sunshine for too long worsen with age, and while you might want to remove them now, experts suggest waiting until fall. Dr. Tahl Humes, medical director of Vitahl Medical Aesthetics explains that while intense pulsed light (or IPL) is typically an effective treatment for dark spots, most professionals won't offer it during summer because you're more likely to create new sunspots, thus defeating the purpose.

4. Prescription Retinoids for Fine Lines and Wrinkles

To maintain a youthful complexion, many people swear by prescription retinoids, which are typically more potent and help you get faster results than their over-the-counter versions. And though they *can* be part of your beauty routine year-round, board-certified dermatologist Jessica Wu advises to go easy on prescription retinoids between Memorial and Labor Day. "Retinoids, especially rx-strength, can make your skin burn more easily. Instead, switch to a gentler, over-the-counter version and only use it at night," she says.

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