

Call it nagging, call it scolding, call it...correct? It's time to take a second look at all the beauty advice that came from your mother—and get better skin. By Elizabeth Einstein

reat minds have long probed the fraught, prickly relationship between mothers and daughters. Why do they nag each other, get on each other's nerves, and drive each other to tears? The theories have a fairly consistent theme that goes something like this: Sweetheart, get your hair out of your face. In other words, beauty is the main area of contention. Daughters are always wearing too much makeup, slouching, eating too much junk, biting their nails. And mothers

are like a Greek chorus, trying to correct every errant move. Can you hear them?

Even if we didn't want to listen and didn't want to believe them, these mothers knew their stuff. "I think it's because mothers have made their own mistakes and learned from them," says Patricia Wexler, associate clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. Science has been vindicating them over the years, concluding that in many cases, your mother's advice is worth following.



Cleansers available in cream & towelettes

BEAUTY SECRETS

"STOP EATING THAT JUNK FOOD; IT WILL BUIN YOUR SKIN."

Conventional wisdom used to be that diet didn't affect the complexion. Now it seems that steering clear of candy, The reason? "High-glycemic foods cause your blood sugar to rise, triggering a surge of insulin. The insulin stimulates oil-producing hormones called androgens, leaving you with pimples," says Leslie Baumann, professor and director of cosmetic dermatology at

"A diet high in refined sugar may be linked to acne," says one dermatologist.

sweetened cereal, and sugary drinks could benefit your face as much as your waist. "A diet high in refined sugar or flour may be linked to acne," says Katie Rodan, associate clinical professor of dermatology at Stanford University School of Medicine. A recent study in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology found that people who replaced processed carbohydrates, such as white bread and sugary cereals, with foods high in protein and whole grains developed fewer breakouts.

the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. "About 25 percent of my patients whom I tell to cut out junk food see a vast improvement in their acne in about six weeks."

"IF YOU KEEP MAKING THAT FACE, IT'LL FREEZE THAT WAY."

Your expression won't actually be paralyzed in an instant—and these days, you probably don't have your tongue stick-

Family Resemblance

Rifling through your mother's medicine cabinet as a kid always turned up treasures.

Allure editors remember what they discovered—and still appreciate.

—JESSICA PRINCE

"My mother had a blue powder that you shook into your hand, mixed with water, and rubbed all over your face. It was my introduction to exfoliation. She also used Elizabeth Arden 8 Hour Cream, and now I always have a tube. I rub it on my lips, cuticles, elbows—really, anywhere my skin is dry. She loved Chanel and Clarins skin care, and while the products she had when I was growing up don't exist anymore, they got me hooked on luxurious creams in beautiful packaging."

-LINDA WELLS, EDITOR IN CHIEF

"I have loved Olay products since they were called Oil of Olay, and I have to believe it's because the original fluid was one of the only skin products my mom used. She liked the way it felt—light and creamy, not heavy or greasy, with a soft, clean fragrance. I still turn to Olay for skin-care products with nice textures and great science."

—AMY KELLER LAIRD, BEAUTY DIRECTOR "I started washing my face with Noxzema as a teenager because my mother always kept a vat of the original Deep Cleansing Cream by her sink. She used to slather it on every night, and when she'd rinse it off, her skin would look so rosy. It did the same for my skin, but the menthol smell is too strong for my taste now. My mom's favorite Olay cleanser had exfoliating beads, and she loved rinsing with it because it didn't make her skin feel dry. I swore by that cleanser for years, but then I had to stop using it when it was discontinued."

--VICTORIA KIRBY, BEAUTY EDITOR

"I can always remember a big pink bottle of Johnson's Baby Lotion sitting in our bathroom. My mom used it because she loved how smooth it made her arms and legs. I started dipping into it myself when I was about 12, and now, when I'm not testing new products for work, I always go back to it."

- JESSICA PRINCE, EDITORIAL ASSISTANT







ing out at your little brother. But in a twist on your mother's weirdly prescient complaint, consistent movements do etch lines into your skin over time. "Muscle contractions in the face cause the skin lying over them to be pushed, pulled, and scrunched," says David E. Bank,

toxins, which induce free-radical damage—that means wrinkles and sagging over time—and constricting blood flow, which makes skin sallow," says Rodan. "In addition, the consistent repetitive sucking movement causes little lines to form around the mouth." Quitting

Biting your nails makes them weak and prone to peeling and splitting.

associate professor of clinical dermatology at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City. "Many lines in the upper part of the face are caused by these multiple repetitive movements and, to a larger degree, sun damage."

Short of Botox, the best prevention for this type of wrinkling is relatively simple: Try to relax, wear sunglasses, and don't read in low light, since squinting contributes to wrinkles and crow's-feet.

"DON'T EVER LET ME CATCH YOU SMOKING."

This one, courtesy of not just your mother but the surgeon general, is hard to ignore. Really, does anyone need to tell you that smoking is bad? But what you may not have considered is that besides the obvious health risks, smoking will make you look older. "Every time you take a puff, you're inhaling

boosts the color of the complexion in a matter of months, as blood flow returns to normal; and although the time frame depends on how long you were a smoker, you will eventually see fewer fine lines and increased firmness.

"GET YOUR HAIR OUT OF YOUR FACE."

There's a good reason to keep your hair from constantly hanging over your skin—it can carry oil from the scalp. Add styling products to the mix, and breakouts are more likely. Dermatologists call chronic forehead zits "pomade acne," says David J. Leffell, professor of dermatology and surgery at Yale School of Medicine. If you do wear bangs (which, by the way, can also hide breakouts), shampoo them daily or every other day, and keep any styling products oil- and silicone-free. And "sometimes just grow-

She Was Wrong

You always suspected it. But now here's proof that, yes, your mother was wrong about a few things.

"BRUSH YOUR HAIR 100 TIMES BEFORE BED TO MAKE IT STRONG AND SHINY."

Here is one ritual you can skip before hitting the sheets. "Too much brushing can break or weaken hair," says Wexler. A 2008 study done by Dove showed that brushing once or more a day can cause up to a 23 percent increase in damage. (Yes, brushing even once.) Hair is most delicate when wet, so use only a wide-tooth comb then; and when you do brush, use natural bristles, which are less harsh than metal or plastic ones.

"DRINK GELATIN TO MAKE YOUR NAILS HARDER AND STRONGER,"

Watch it wiggle, see it jiggle. But neither bowls of Jell-O nor its less appetizing counterpart, a glass of water with dissolved, unsugared gelatin, will give you unbreakable nails. What will, according to Bank: taking 2.5 milligrams of Biotin a day (and eating a balanced diet). If nails are still brittle or peeling, see a doctor to find out if there's an underlying problem.

"DON'T PLUCK THOSE GRAY HAIRS! MORE WILL JUST GROW BACK."

No single hair is affected by what you do to another. But that doesn't mean you should yank them out. "If you do it too much, you could damage the follicle and create bald spots," says Wexler.

"DON'T SHAVE YOUR LEGS—IT'LL MAKE THE HAIR GROW BACK THICKER."

Although regrowth may seem coarser than what's sliced off, that's only because unshaven hair is tapered at the ends, and shaving cuts it midshaft, revealing the broadest part. Still, if you can't deal with shaving's stubble, you can try a depilatory, waxing, or laser treatments.

"YOU GET BREAKOUTS. WHY ARE YOU USING MOISTURIZER?"

Adding moisture to skin doesn't cause pimples, says Bank. "Acne happens when the cells that line the inner pores fail to fall off properly, clogging the pore. This can happen whether skin is oily or dry." So hydrate if skin is dry, and dot a benzoyl peroxide or salicyic acid treatment on pimples.



ing out bangs will get rid of bad acne confined to the forehead," says Karyn Grossman, a dermatologist in Santa Monica and New York City.

"DON'T BITE YOUR NAILS."

Gnawing is not only unattractive: It also makes nails weak and prone to peeling and splitting; it can cause infection, since even a minor cut around the nail

"STOP PICKING AT YOUR SKIN."

Walking around with a full-blown pimple is a recipe for self-consciousness. But you must keep your hands off. "Squeezing moves the contents of the pimple laterally, which increases inflammation, redness, and swelling, and can cause scarring," says Wexler. Plus, once you start aggravating the area—and this is key—the zit will take longer to heal. (One exception

Replacing Cheetos with carrots can actually fight wrinkles. No, really.

provides a gateway for bacteria; and it may lead to lasting injury. "Biting can cause damage to the nail bed, which will then prevent the nail from growing out smoothly," says Grossman. For many women, a manicure with bright polish is enough to deter chomping, but if you've got a real addiction, consider hypnosis or even psychotherapy-compulsive nail biting could be a sign of chronic anxiety.

to this rule: A dermatologist can inject a pimple with cortisone, and it will go down within 24 hours.)

"IT'S PAST YOUR BEDTIME."

Early to bed, early to rise may not make you wealthy, as the saying goes-but it certainly is wise. "Sleep deprivation causes stress, which can aggravate all



ONALD ASADORIAN/SPLASH NEWS

skin conditions, including acne, eczema, and psoriasis," says Grossman. "Sleep is also the time when your body repairs the damage from the day, and interrupting that process will slow down cell turnover." In the short term, this can interfere with proper blood flow to the skin, making the complexion sallow.

"SIT LIKE A LADY."

Maybe this one came from your grandmother, but still: Crossing your legs at the ankles, rather than the knees, can help prevent spider veins. Although multiple factors contribute to the veins, "increased pressure from crossing your legs can lead to more," says Grossman. So if you notice them starting to appear, try not to cross your legs. If you want to get rid of spider veins, doctors recommend sclerotherapy—injections of salt solution that shrink and dissolve the veins.

"GET OFF THE PHONE."

Resting your chin or cheek against a phone—cell or old-school—can lead to breakouts, whether or not the phone is clean and bacteria-free. "Just leaning your face against it can cause friction, occlusion, and heat, all of which can make you break out," says Rodan. If your chatting habit is too ingrained to shake, consider a headset.

"ALWAYS WASH YOUR FACE BEFORE YOU GO TO BED."

Letting skin marinate in makeup—not to mention a day's worth of oil buildup—can lead to clogged pores and zits, especially if you're prone to acne. "Your body temperature increases slightly when you sleep, which can enhance absorption of whatever's on the surface," says Rodan. "So you really want only beneficial ingredients on your face when you sleep." Ideally, that means anti-aging retinol, as well as hydrating powerhouses like glycerin. "You can use richer formulas at night because you don't have to worry about



looking greasy while you sleep," says Rodan. At the very least, swipe your face with a premoistened cloth designed to take off makeup as well as dirt.

"EAT YOUR VEGETABLES."

Replacing Cheetos with carrots can actually fight wrinkles. No, really. "Eating fruits and vegetables high in antioxidants can help protect the skin," says Grossman. Scientists have found that an antioxidant-rich diet can enhance sun protection (thereby fighting wrinkles): One study showed volunteers who ate a daily serving of

mediately and over time, it has been shown to decrease tension, which can result in better skin. "When you're stressed, cortisol levels rise, and that leads to acne and other skin aggravations," says Rodan. "Lessen your cortisol spikes, and your skin will become smoother and clearer." (Of course, you should wash your face immediately after that workout.)

"DON'T RUB YOUR EYES."

The skin around your eyes is among the most delicate anywhere. "The occasional gentle rub is probably fine," says

Along with lifting your mood, exercise increases blood flow to the skin.

tomato paste, which is packed with the antioxidant lycopene, were 33 percent more protected against sunburns.

"TURN OFF THE TV AND GET SOME EXERCISE."

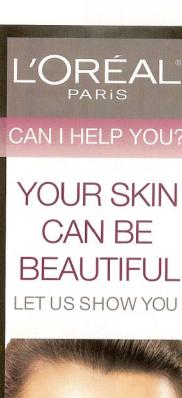
Along with lifting your mood, exercise increases blood flow to the skin, causing a healthy-looking flush. Both im-

Grossman. But if it's aggressive, it can be trouble. "You can irritate the skin, making it red and swollen, and break little blood vessels there, leaving you with red marks that could be permanent and, if so, would only be treatable with lasers," says Grossman. "If you do it all the time, you could possibly even cause stretching and loose skin." Besides kicking the habit, using a cream with a peptide and mild retinol can help. •

MOM GENES

ome women imagine their mothers' skin to be like a magical mirror in a Disney cartoon, showing them exactly how they will age. And there is some truth to that notion. Genetics are responsible for about 10 to 20 percent of how your face will look over time. Sun damage makes up the remaining 80 to 90 percent, says David J. Leffell, a professor of dermatology and surgery at Yale School of Medicine. When our mothers were kids, sunscreens were not widely available, and "the notion of using sunscreen to prevent aging didn't come about till the 1980s," says Leffell. In other words, a woman in her 20s or early 30s who uses sun protection regularly can have less sun damage than her mother—and will therefore have fewer wrinkles. Leffell's rule of thumb: If your mother has crow's-feet or sun spots—and if you've had the same degree and kind of sun exposure—you are likely to develop them. But a more accurate, and surprising, gauge for young women who diligently wear sunscreen? Photos of your grandmother when she was in her 50s, 60s, and beyond. Leffell explains, "That generation probably didn't get as much sun exposure, so what you're seeing in their aging is probably what you're inheriting."

—DAISY SHAW





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