



The citric acid in lemon juice could cause chemical burns and pigmentation in the skin

While lemon juice causes skin irritation, toothpaste on acne can cause scarring

## Time to bust some popular beauty myths

### LEMON JUICE TO LOSE A TAN, OR FOR FRESHER ARMPITS

"One of the most widely popular hacks is to replace deodorants with lemon juice. This involves rubbing slices of lemon under your armpits or other areas of the body that are prone to perspiration, to supposedly kill odour-producing bacteria and have you feeling lemon-fresh all day," says blogger Anuradha Mohan. Busted: While lemon juice does little to prevent body odour, cosmetic dermatologist Rinky Kapoor says, "Your skin is mildly acidic, with a pH of less than seven. Lemon, on the other hand, is very acidic with a pH of around 3.5 or 4. When applied, the citric acid in lemon juice could cause chemical burns and make your skin sensitive to sunlight, resulting in more pigmentation."

Almost everyone you come across has a 'miracle cure' for skin issues that their grandmother handed down, or that they came across on the internet. Trouble is, no matter how outrageous the hack, if you have an army of acquaintances or influencers extolling its virtues, the temptation to follow it is strong. This can often have a disastrous impact on your skin and hair; both in the long and short term. Here, experts break down some of the most common beauty hacks, for skin and hair; that you should steer clear of. —Anindita Paul/Mumbai Mirror



These scrubs can make your skin look inflamed



Certain ingredients in toothpaste can cause superficial burns on the skin

### TOOTH PASTE TO DRY OUT PIMPLES

"I applied toothpaste to my pimples before bed, hoping they would dry out the next morning. But I was horrified to find that they had become inflamed," says media professional Amrita Mukherjee. "The pimples eventually healed, but left scars that took time to fade." Busted: "Toothpaste contains calcium carbonate, which is also found in the lime cement plaster applied to walls, and this can irritate already inflamed skin. None of the ingredients contained in toothpaste reduces acne," says Dr Kapoor. Dr Shah says that other ingredients added to toothpaste, can also cause superficial burns on the skin, while post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation could result in the pimples leaving a scar.

### SUGAR, SALT OR BAKING SODA-BASED SCRUBS FOR SMOOTHER SKIN

The variations are many, but all these hacks use baking soda, sea salt or sugar, a combination of essential oils and, possibly, aloe vera. "I've tried numerous iterations of these scrubs and have invariably ended up with dry, inflamed skin," says beauty blogger Chandni Didi. Busted: "Salt, sugar and baking powder are composed of tiny crystals with pointed edges. When you rub these on your face, they cause micro-cuts that facilitate the entry of bacteria and fungi, causing infections. These scrubs will make your skin look inflamed," says Dr Saurabh Shah, a dermatologist.

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Alcohol and lacquers in the hair spray will dry out skin, and make it feel dehydrated and look older

### HAIRSPRAY TO SET YOUR MAKEUP

"Once, while rushing for a shoot, I found that I had run out of setting spray. I remembered watching a video that said hairspray could also work," says actor and influencer Vishakha Sodha. She discovered that while the makeup stayed on, she had to contend with redness and inflammation the next morning. Busted: "Certain ingredients in hairspray can irritate your skin, making it feel itchy, red and bumpy. Alcohol and lacquers in the spray will dry out your skin, and make it feel dehydrated and look older. The makeup will be harder to take off later, resulting in breakouts and inflammation," says Dr Shah.

>> If you aren't careful, you could end up peeling off a layer of your facial skin with the glue mask



### GLUE MASKS TO SCOOP OUT BLACKHEADS

People sometimes go to great lengths to get rid of blackheads, which is why glue-mask recipes are so popular on the internet. "These masks combine glue with kitchen ingredients like tea powder, and you apply the mask to your nose or other areas prone to blackheads. When you peel off the mask, it is said to also peel off blackheads," says Didi. Busted: "The glue available in most stationery shops is cyanoacrylate, which dries to form a layer on the skin. When you peel off this layer, you cause tiny micro-abrasions or cuts to the underlying skin. This can cause irritation and make your skin more prone to infections. If you aren't careful, you could end up peeling off a layer of your facial skin as well," Dr Shah says.

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