

# THE SINGAPORE **Women's Weekly**

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# Know what is RIGHT for your skin



**Dr Wong shares her expertise on the importance of having a healthy skin barrier.**

## Dry skin is caused by a damaged skin barrier

**DR Wong:** An intact skin barrier minimises water loss through the skin, as well as prevents external irritants or allergens from entering the skin. When this natural skin barrier is damaged by environmental and behavioural factors (such as dry climate and use of harsh cleansers), more water is lost through the skin, resulting in skin dryness. Some of the tell-tale signs of a damaged skin barrier are a feeling of skin tightness especially after washing and visibly dry flakey skin.

## Wrong skin care products can lead to damaged skin barrier

**DR Wong:** Overly harsh soap and cleansers can strip the skin of its natural oils (lipids), leading to damaged skin barrier. Some moisturisers which contain emulsifying agents can damage the skin barrier further instead of repairing it.

## Damaged skin barrier can contribute to dry and aged-looking skin

**DR Wong:** Damaged skin barrier leads to increased water loss through the skin and dehydration of the skin, which will accentuate wrinkles and fine lines. In this situation, restoring skin hydration and repairing the skin barrier will lead to improvement in wrinkles and fine lines, and softer, smoother, supple skin.



Dr Wong Su-Ni is a dermatologist in private practice with over 15 years of medical experience. Her subspecialties include Dermatologic & Laser Surgery and Psoriasis & Photodermatology. Dr Wong currently practises at Dr SN Wong Skin, Hair, Nails & Laser Specialist Clinic and is also a visiting consultant to National Skin Centre.

## Ideal moisturiser to repair the damaged skin barrier

**DR Wong:** An ideal moisturiser contains lipids similar to the natural lipids found in the human skin, which can penetrate the skin surface and repair the natural lipid barrier function. It should not contain emulsifiers which can disrupt the lipids of the skin, or potential allergens such as fragrances (for eczema-prone or sensitive skin).

## Ideal cleanser to improve dry skin

**DR Wong:** An ideal cleanser for dry skin removes surface dirt without stripping precious skin lipids, preferably adding more lipids as it gently cleanses. These are generally known as "soap-free cleansers".

*\*The comments given by the doctor is for educational purposes and not a product recommendation. Readers should consult their doctor if they have further enquiries.*



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\*\*For dry, itchy skin. Based on a 2011 market research on dermatologists in Singapore (n=12), commissioned by GlaxoSmithKline.

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