

PROTECTING SKIN in Dhaka's Extreme Climate

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Dhaka's residents now breathe some of the world's most polluted air, with PM2.5 often in the "hazardous" range (AQI 150–200). Even outdoors before dawn, masks are advised. This toxic smog isn't just a respiratory threat – dermatologists are seeing more flare-ups on city skin. Professor Dr Rashed Mohammad Khan, the former Head of the Department of Dermatology and Venereal Disease of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, notes that city dust and fumes literally "block our pores" and trigger breakouts. "Dust and sand pollution block our pores, causing acne breakouts." He even warns of surging eczema: "Atopic dermatitis is frequently occurring from this extra pollution and dry weather." In short, Dhaka's toxic air and heavy metals are straining the skin's defences.

UNDERSTANDING THE SKIN BARRIER

The skin's barrier is the outermost layer (stratum corneum) of our largest organ. It functions as an impenetrable barrier of dead cells and oils, retaining moisture and warding off potential threats. One vital function is "regulating water loss" while preventing microbes and pollutants from entering. As Dr Khan puts it plainly, "The outermost layer of the skin protects us from pollutants etc. from outside." In Dhaka's climate, preserving that shield is crucial. Fine smog particles, soot and chemicals can degrade lipids in the barrier, allowing water to escape and in turn causing dryness and irritants to penetrate. Similarly, harsh water or soaps can weaken the barrier, allowing pathogens and allergens to infiltrate. Keeping the "acid mantle" and the normal skin pH intact is part of this defence.

POLLUTION, WATER AND SKIN

Daily air pollution and hard tap water both stress skin health. Inhaled particles and exhaust gases can oxidise the fatty layers of the skin, weaken hydration, and promote inflammation. Dr Khan explains that street dust and sand literally clog pores, causing irritant dermatitis and acne as trapped oil leads to breakouts. Bangladeshi reports confirm this: villagers near polluted factories



were found with chronic itching and rashes after waste contaminated their environment. Dermatology experts also note hard water can raise skin's pH and make it more prone to irritation. In practice, this means Dhaka's water is often full of minerals or chemicals and can leave skin feeling tight or flaky and may exacerbate acne by altering the skin's delicate balance.

DAILY SKINCARE ESSENTIALS

Experts stress the basics: a gentle cleanser, a proper moisturiser and daily sun protection. Dermatologists recommend a mild, pH-balanced face wash suited to your skin type. For example, an oil-cutting gel for oily skin or a hydrating creamy cleanser for dry skin. Dr Khan agrees that "a good cleanser and moisturiser is non-negotiable" for keeping the barrier strong. He advises one cleanse in the morning and one at night but stresses that too much washing is counterproductive.

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NEW PACK

KEEPS SKIN SOFT AND SMOOTH






SERUM IN LOTION

Creative Visualization