

## *The Science of Skin - 5 Things You Need to Know*

At Ditch the Label and Bioré, we know that when you are struggling with a skin issue, it can really get you down. But we don't often think about just how much our skin actually does for us. It's the largest organ of our bodies, a barrier protecting us from all kinds of bacteria. Even when we struggle with acne, blackheads, oiliness or any other kind of skin condition, it's still working to protect us. But when we are struggling, we often find ourselves really hating our skin.

This guide will help you better understand just what our skin is doing behind the scenes, because understanding what is going on is a great first step to making peace with it.

**Dr Sasha Dhoat MBBS, BSc (hons), FRCP, PGCME is a Consultant Dermatologist, with a specialist interest in Paediatric and Adolescent Dermatology, with over 18-years experience. She is the recipient of numerous national academic awards and prizes and has published in peer-reviewed scientific literature. She was nominated to become a Fellow of the prestigious Royal College of Physicians and was invested in FRCP in 2015.**



## 1. What does our skin do for us?

Your marvellous skin is your largest organ, making up 15% of your bodyweight- average human carries a Dachshund's worth of skin: roughly 10kg covering two square metres. The skin simultaneously protects against injury and hazardous substances, prevents moisture loss from the body, helps regulate body temperature, reduces the damaging effects of ultraviolet radiation, guides us safely through the outside world through the sensory function of touch, pain and temperature and is in itself an immune organ to detect and fight infections, as well as the producer of that all-important vitamin D.

## 2. How does it work?

The skin has three basic levels. The top layer, or epidermis, makes new skin cells, gives skin its colour and protects the body. The middle layer, the dermis, produces sweat and oil, provides sensations and blood to the skin and grows hair. Finally, the bottom layer, or subcutaneous tissue controls body temperature and stores fat.

## 3. What should you do if you are worried about your skin? Who should you talk to?

If you have a skin problem but are unsure of the diagnosis, if over the counter remedies just aren't cutting it, or it is taking a toll on your self esteem, you should consider booking a GP consultation. They may refer you to a dermatologist, a specialist in skin care.

#### 4. What are the most common skin issues you see in young patients? Is it common to suffer from these?

There are thousands of skin disorders but the biggest hitters in terms of numbers for young adults by a long shot would be acne and eczema. Approximately 85% of people between the ages of 12 and 24 experience at least minor acne, it can occur at any stage of life and may continue into one's 30s and 40s.

#### 5. What is the best practical way to deal with skin issues?

When pores become blocked by excess sebum (oil), dead skin cells, bacteria and dirt, blackheads, whiteheads and red spots of acne are the result. People can often control oily, greasy skin, by using a skincare routine that includes ingredients such as salicylic acid.

Most importantly, listen to your skin. It is unique at different sites of your body and even across your face. If I have three essential general tips, it would be to gently but thoroughly cleanse twice a day, moisturise according to your skins' 'thirst' needs and invest in a high factor, broad-spectrum sunscreen.

**Feeling bad about your skin? Here's some practical tips on how to boost your skin esteem.**

**If you want to know more about how to boost your skin esteem, explore the rest of the campaign here.**