



**derma
zen**

The Seborrheic Relief Guide

dermazen.co

Three Steps to Soothing Your Beautiful, Irritated Skin





Introduction

We know it. You know it. Seborrheic dermatitis and all its cousins (dandruff, eczema, psoriasis, folliculitis, and fungal acne) can cause unending frustration, embarrassment, and confusion.

In this guide, we'll draw back the curtain and simplify the latest science behind these common fungal skin conditions.

You'll soon learn

- How these ailments develop
- Why they're difficult to treat
- How to soothe your skin naturally
- What you can do to prevent future flare-ups

Who This Guide Is For

The focus of this guide is **seborrheic dermatitis**.

But the same family of fungi that causes seborrheic dermatitis (known as *malassezia*) also causes **dandruff, fungal acne, pityriasis versicolor, some forms of eczema**, and several other fungal conditions.

The wisdom in this guide will likely offer relief for folks with any of these conditions.

Mandatory Disclaimer:

While we love to nerd out on the latest science and our formulas are trusted by dermatologists across the country, we ourselves are not doctors. Our ongoing research is based on a passion to help others and a desire to improve our own irritated skin. The information in this free guide is not meant to diagnose, treat, or cure any specific case of a skin condition. It is not official medical advice. We do our best to provide the most up-to-date information and we only preach the things we practice ourselves. That being said, for legal reasons, you might want to consult with a doctor before making any major changes to your health or skincare routine. The choice is yours.

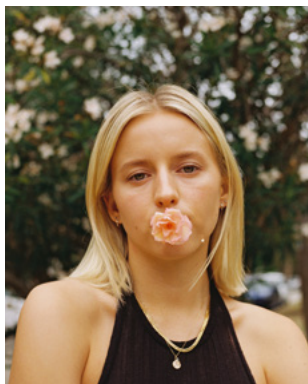


Living with irritated skin

Hardship is a spectrum. Of course, there are pains greater than redness around your nose or flakes on your scalp. But that doesn't mean inflamed skin doesn't take a toll on your mental and emotional well-being. You're not vain for wanting clearer skin. In many ways, you're only asking to look **normal**. While we believe it's vital to normalize skin conditions and recognize that human bodies come in many forms, we also understand the desire for peaceful skin.

At Dermazen, we say you don't have to choose between self-acceptance and taking care of your body. You can look yourself in the mirror with flakes in your eyebrows and redness along your hairline and know to your core that you are worthy of love, full of life, beautiful as you are, and just as valuable as every other human being. With that same self-acceptance, you can also make small changes to nourish and soothe the largest organ of your body. You can calm the constant itching, prevent the flakes, and gently remind the yeast you never gave it permission to live on your skin in the first place.

The world usually encourages us to pick sides. But there is always a higher choice available, one that combines the best of each option. We're here to help you love yourself unconditionally in the middle of flare-ups while actively taking healthy steps toward happier skin.





Managing Your Malassezia

Malassezia is the family of yeast that causes many fungal skin conditions. Seborrheic dermatitis and standard dandruff are usually caused by an overgrowth of (and overreaction to) ***malassezia furfur*, *malassezia restricta*, or *malassezia globosa***.

Everybody has malassezia on their skin. But some skin types handle it better than others. For some people, the presence of malassezia causes an inflammatory reaction that often looks like **flaking, redness, scales, and itching**.

Why Do Some Folks Struggle with Malassezia?

Scientists have uncovered a handful of potential reasons. We journeyed through the research so you don't have to. We compiled a list of the most likely reasons why you struggle with moody skin more than others.

Vitamin D Deficiency: Low levels of Vitamin D are strongly connected to cases of seborrheic dermatitis and similar conditions. Some people have seen their symptoms reduce or vanish completely by taking high doses of D3. It could be helpful to get your vitamin D levels checked or take more D3 (always combined with K2).

Stress: Anxiety and stress have a way of throwing a wrench into your skin's harmony, increasing inflammation, and flaring up your skin. Caring for your mental and emotional health can make a big difference in your skin's peace. You might also start a daily relaxation ritual - like yoga, meditation, or savoring a cup of chamomile tea as you focus on the gifts in your life.

History of Heavy Antibiotic Use: Overuse of antibiotics can disrupt your skin's delicate balance, starting in the microbiome. Switching to a gut-friendly diet, eliminating fungi like candida from your microbiome, and taking a probiotic can help restore the equilibrium, giving your skin a better chance at peace.

Chronic Inflammation: When your body is inflamed, your skin is far more likely to react with flakes, redness, itching, acne, and more. Swapping inflammatory foods (wheat, processed sugar, alcohol, etc.) for healthier options will greatly



reduce the chaos inside. You can explore our [Peaceful Skin Nutrition Guide](#) to learn more.

Hormonal Changes: Some women notice their skin is moodier as their hormones fluctuate through their moon cycle. Balancing hormones naturally through a nutrient-rich diet, exercise, deep sleep, and herbal supplements can calm many symptoms, including skin flare-ups.

Also keep an eye out for toxins in your skincare products (fragrances, parabens, etc.) which are known for disrupting hormones.

Oily Skin: If your skin produces extra sebum (oil) from your pores, this is straight fuel for the malassezia yeast. You can reduce the amount of fungal fuel on your skin with topical products like vitamin B3 (in our [serum](#) and [moisturizer](#)) and witch hazel (in our [cleanser](#)).

Your Sebum Profile: Everybody's sebum is made of a unique combo of fatty acids. Some of these fatty acids (like stearic acid) fuel the malassezia. Others (like squalane) are not edible for the fungus. So if you struggle with malassezia conditions, your skin might produce more of the fats that strengthen the fungus. You can change the fatty acids in your sebum through a healthy diet (rich in omega-3's), supplements (like primrose and flaxseed oil), and using topical squalane (also in our [cleanser](#)).

It could be more than one cause.

If you eliminate one of these triggers - for example, by getting adequate vitamin D - and your skin is still flaring up, you could also have high levels of stress or a microbiome out of balance.

The key is to never give up.

Some dermatologists say there is no cure. Other docs disagree.

We believe peaceful skin is possible for everyone - including you. Overtime, by reducing these causes in your life, it's completely possible you can enjoy peaceful skin without a daily or weekly treatment.



In the meantime, we are here to give you **reliable relief** along your healing journey.

One of our goals at Dermazen is to stay on the cutting edge of malassezia research. The more the scientific community learns about conditions like seborrheic dermatitis, dandruff, and fungal acne, the more we'll share that knowledge with you.

Two Vital Truths to Know about Malassezia

1. It creates a biofilm shield.

The biofilm stops antifungals (even strong ones from your dermatologist) from reaching the malassezia fungus. If you want to clear away the malassezia fungus, you first need to disrupt this biofilm shield.

No other solution that we've found (in over 10 years of struggling with seborrheic dermatitis) even touches the biofilm. When you finally strip away this biofilm shield with Dermazen, the fungus will be vulnerable for the first time.

2. It feeds on most oils.

As mentioned above, malassezia is fueled by most oils. Any oil with a fatty acid chain length between C11 and C24 has been shown to grow malassezia. Oils outside this range appear to starve or even hurt the fungus.

Unfortunately almost every skincare product contains oils (coconut, almond, hemp, jojoba, etc.) which only strengthens the malassezia. Even if an oil is known to be antifungal against other species of fungus (like coconut oil), it will often make seborrheic dermatitis worse after a few hours.

Two Reasons Why Dermazen Is a Revolution

Our formulas **disrupt the biofilm** shield. And we **never use oils** that feed the fungus.

Harnessing the two vital truths about malassezia above, we create products made for people with malassezia based conditions like seborrheic dermatitis, dandruff, and fungal acne.

That's why THOUSANDS of people are finding relief for the first time in years after switching to Dermazen.



We formulate products that work for our own malassezia-prone moody skin, and then we share them with others who share the same struggle.



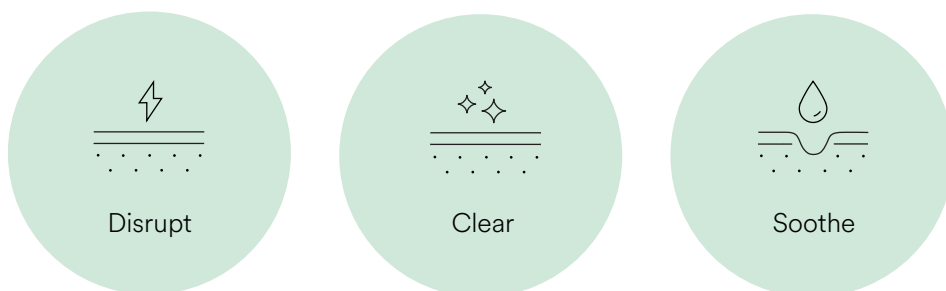


The Three Steps to Calming Your Skin

When you use our formulas, we handle all three of these steps for you. Every time you apply our [Calming Seborrheic Serum](#), you are disrupting the biofilm, clearing away fungus, and soothing your skin all at once.

But if you prefer to do the work yourself, you can follow the guidelines below to find the relief you've been looking for.

Once again, this is not a guaranteed medical treatment, but it is the most effective process we've found for calming our own beautiful, irritated skin. And it has helped thousands of people find relief for the first time.



1.) Disrupt the Biofilm

What is a biofilm? It's basically a biological shield which secures an organism in place and protects it from outside threats. Bacteria can form biofilms that make them immune to antibiotics. In the same way, some species of fungus have evolved to form their own biofilm, protecting them from antifungal treatments.

Biofilms also tend to adapt quickly. If you've ever started using a new antifungal product (like a shampoo), experienced short term relief, and noticed it quickly stops working, then you've witnessed the power of the biofilm's ability to protect malassezia from fungicides. In order to truly clear away the yeast, you must address the biofilm first. Below you'll find some of the most reliable ways to deactivate this outer shield.



Vinegar

One of the most common methods for disrupting the biofilm is vinegar - either white or apple cider vinegar (ACV). Many folks who benefit from this method tend to use a one part vinegar to four parts water mixture, though you might need to experiment to find a combination that works well for your skin. Some folks apply it with a cotton swab and leave it on for a minute before washing it off. Others will use it in the shower and leave it in for a minute before mixing in an antifungal shampoo. Everybody is different, so you may need to try a few methods to find what works best for you.

Colloidal Silver

Another ingredient that can help disrupt the fungal biofilm is colloidal silver, which is a liquid containing tiny, suspended particles of silver. Colloidal silver can neutralize the biofilm and weaken the fungus, allowing other antifungal agents to work more effectively. Beyond disrupting the biofilm, colloidal silver also stops fungal growth on its own.

Our Proprietary Formula

We have studied malassezia and the many conditions it causes for years. Thanks to this endless research, our team has developed a safe, effective combination of natural ingredients that together disrupt the fungal biofilm more effectively than anything else we have found. This patent-pending blend is one of the reasons people are finding relief from their moody skin for the first time.

Selenium Sulfide

This is a chemical compound known for fighting fungus, relieving itching, and removing dry scaly patches on the scalp. It's also been shown to be an effective disruptor of fungal biofilms. Selenium sulfide is most commonly found in products like Selsun Blue and Head & Shoulders.

Lactoferrin

Naturally occurring in milk, colostrum, sweat, tears, and other parts of mammals, lactoferrin is a protein that fights infection and safely disrupts biofilms. It's more commonly used as a consumable supplement and not often used topically to



treat fungal conditions, so it's rare to find a skincare option using lactoferrin. But it's worth keeping an eye on, especially if you suffer from systemic fungal overgrowth in your microbiome. Liposomal colostrum is a safe, natural source of lactoferrin. But again, we recommend the other three biofilm-disruptors if your goal is topical skin relief.

Deactivating the biofilm shield is the first step. Don't expect one of these treatments to do the trick on their own. We recommend a holistic approach to keep your skin as healthy (and happy) as possible. Next, we'll focus on removing the overgrowth of malassezia.

2.) Clear the Fungus

Once you've weakened or eliminated the outer shield, it's time to reduce the amount of fungus on the surface of your skin. We believe in a combination of all-natural and lab-made methods to give your body its best possible chance to fight the fungus. You may choose to go fully natural or add a few ingredients from the frontlines of the cosmetic labs.

Sea Salt (Natural)

There are numerous anecdotal cases of people dramatically improving their seborrheic dermatitis and fungal skin conditions using sea salt. Salt is widely known to be antibacterial and antifungal, so it makes sense that people are finding relief with this natural molecule. People seem to have better results using salt from the Dead Sea, which is believed to be richer in minerals. Sea salt hasn't worked for everyone with fungal skin conditions, but it's likely to be a great tool when combined with the other remedies in this guide. When using sea salt, most people prefer to dissolve the salt in warm water, slowly pour onto the affected area, and massage it in. It can usually be left on the skin for several hours or overnight. You can also use our [Calming Seborrheic Serum](#), which is powered by a generous amount of Dead Sea salt.

Grapefruit Seed Extract (Natural)

Research studies have found that grapefruit seed extract stops the growth of numerous species of bacteria and fungus, including fungi like malassezia. It also contains antioxidants that can help combat inflammation and redness and protect your skin from sun damage. There's also some evidence that grapefruit



seed extract can help improve your skin's appearance by promoting collagen repair. If you want to use grapefruit seed extract on your skin, make sure it's diluted (like it is in our formulas) since it's a powerful ingredient.

Tea Tree Essential Oils (Natural)

The term “essential oil” is a little misleading. Like animal or plant oils, essential oils are insoluble in water, but they contain no fatty acids. This means that essential oils are safe for folks with malassezia overgrowth and seborrheic dermatitis. Tea tree oil, in particular, has claimed the spotlight for its impressive antifungal properties. It can help eliminate fungus and combat the inflammation and itching related to fungal skin conditions. When picking a suitable tea tree oil product, choose a pure variation with no additives or carrier oils. Make sure to also dilute tea tree oil before applying it to your skin directly.

Raw Honey (Natural)

One of the only interventional studies conducted around seborrheic dermatitis examined the effect of raw (aka crude) honey. The 30 participants applied raw



honey on their scalp, face, and chest every other day for four weeks. The downside is they had to leave the honey in place for three hours each time. The upside is that every patient saw a big improvement in their condition. After the four weeks, half of the participants received one treatment each week for six months. None of them saw any relapse during those six months. The other half received no treatment at all and most began experiencing symptoms again after two to four months.

So it appears raw honey has the potential to be a very potent treatment against seborrheic dermatitis. Unfortunately, most of us don't have the time or desire to spend three hours every other day covered in honey. But for those willing to be disciplined for a month (with a bit of maintenance once a week afterward), this can be a great way to both clear the fungus and soothe the skin.

Willow Bark (Natural)

This natural alternative to salicylic acid helps clear away the fungus and tame the oiliness of the skin. It's incredibly gentle and much less likely to cause redness, irritation, or dryness compared to salicylic acid, even at a high concentration. Owing to its gentle exfoliating properties, willow bark can help remove dead





skin cells and promote cell turnover, which is the generation of new skin cells. Its anti-inflammatory properties can also tackle any redness, inflammation, or swelling resulting from seborrheic dermatitis. For all these reasons, we're proud to include it in our [Purifying Facial Cleanser](#).

MCT Oil (Natural)

Medium chain triglyceride (MCT) oil is made from purified coconut or palm oil by extracting the caprylic and capric acid from the other fats. It is naturally antifungal, both internally and topically. As we'll mention in the next section, it's also one of the few oils that are safe to use when treating malassezia because it doesn't feed the fungus. We typically suggest massaging the MCT into the affected area, leaving it in overnight, and washing it out the next day. Keep in mind, oil always has the potential to stain fabric so we recommend using a dark pillowcase or keeping a spare pillowcase handy for nights you use a topical remedy like this. When shopping for an MCT oil, it's important to find one without lauric acid, since this will feed the malassezia.

Fun fact:

MCT oil is a powerhouse ingredient in our [Soothing Malassezia Moisturizer](#).







Garlic (Natural)

Some folks with chronic fungal skin conditions have seen a big improvement from applying garlic topically. Garlic is very antifungal - especially when it's fresh and raw. You might consider applying the garlic directly after mincing or juicing it or combining it with something like raw honey. Though, because of the persistent smell of garlic, we don't recommend this for most people. Unless you're passionate about keeping vampires (and coworkers) at a distance.

Salicylic Acid, Ketoconazole, Coal Tar, and Pyrithione Zinc (Less Natural)

We prefer to stay as natural as possible. We also recognize the power of modern science. Sometimes using a lab-made compound can tip the scales in your favor. Most of these ingredients are derived from natural sources, but slightly altered and concentrated for maximum potency. You can add these to your routine by picking up almost any antifungal shampoo like Nizoral, Happy Cappy, T-Gel, or T-Sal. You might have tried one of these in the past, but if you weren't disrupting the biofilm (with vinegar or colloidal silver), the antifungal agents would be rendered less effective against the yeast.

You'll notice we didn't mention some of the popular antifungal oils like coconut, tea tree, or oregano. We'll dive into the science behind this further in the next chapter, but for now, it's important to know these oils actually feed the *malassezia* fungus. So while these natural antifungals may be effective against other strains of fungus, when it comes to *malassezia*, they often do more damage than good. When in doubt, try to avoid adding oils to your skin (besides the ones we recommend, which do not feed the fungus).

3.) Soothe Your Skin (Without Feeding the Fungus)

The next step in our three-part process is to soothe, calm, and moisturize the skin while avoiding oils that feed the *malassezia*. This yeast affecting our skin is lipophilic, meaning it loves oils. It mostly lives off the natural oil from our skin called sebum. That's where the term seborrheic comes from. That's why flakes, redness, itching, and scales tend to be most prominent in areas of the body where sebum is most common (the scalp and face).



But malassezia can also feed on lipids from oils in skincare products and the food we eat. Fats with a chain length between 11 and 24 seem to feed this yeast pretty drastically. That's why lipids such as olive and coconut oil can make fungal skin conditions worse. But lipids like capric and caprylic acid (found in MCT oil) which have a fatty acid chain length of 8 and 10 can be beneficial for our skin and harmful to the fungus.

Note: [Sezia.co](https://sezia.co) is a reliable, third-party source that will tell you whether a product or ingredient is likely to worsen malassezia symptoms. You can find a full list of oils to avoid [on their lipids page](#).

In no specific order, below you'll find our favorite methods to soothe irritated skin without feeding malassezia.

Aloe Vera

The gel (and concentrated powder) from this succulent plant is widely known for its ability to reduce redness and soothe inflammation. On its own, it's not likely to clear away fungus, so we don't recommend it as a solution by itself. But when combined with other ingredients, it's a great way to naturally calm irritated skin.

Niacinamide (vitamin B3)

As one of the most commonly-used ingredients in skincare, niacinamide is well-known for its impressive benefits and hydrating properties. This compound can help reduce inflammation, ease redness, and minimize the appearance of pores. It's also used to regulate the skin's oil production and protect the skin against environmental damage and sunlight. It's one of the most important ingredients in both our [Calming Seborrheic Serum](#) and our [Soothing Malassezia Moisturizer](#).

MSM

Methylsulfonylmethane (or MSM for short) is a naturally occurring, sulfur-based compound found in plants, animals, and humans. Studies have shown MSM can drastically reduce inflammation in humans while improving hydration of the skin. Some believe the antioxidant properties may also prevent skin from aging and wrinkling.



MCT and Squalane Oil

As we mentioned earlier, most oils are problematic for those with an overgrowth of malassezia on their skin. This yeast feeds on lipids (oils) that have a fatty acid chain length between C11 and C24. But the three oils outside of this range are MCT, mineral, and squalane. For almost everyone with fungal skin conditions, these three are safe to use and are a great way to moisturize your skin.

Cucumber Extract

While cucumber extract cannot eliminate malassezia on its own, its incredible hydrating and soothing properties are beneficial for tackling irritated, moody skin. This natural ingredient can help to fortify your skin's moisture barrier and reduce skin redness, irritation, and inflammation.

Hyaluronic Acid

This clear substance is naturally produced by your body in small amounts. It can also be added topically to improve the hydration of your skin. Hyaluronic acid (HA) has the ability to pull moisture from the air and lock it into your skin for an extended period of time. It's best to use HA when the skin is slightly damp so the compound has an abundant source of water to absorb into your skin. HA has also been shown to speed up wound healing so it makes sense to add it to a routine for irritated skin.

Urea

This is a powerhouse ingredient. It's a mild exfoliant and a strong humectant, meaning it gently removes dead skin cells, softens skin, and improves hydration. It can also improve the absorption of other cosmetic ingredients, creating a helpful synergistic effect. If you're looking for a way to remove infected skin while moisturizing the skin underneath, finding a product with urea is a good choice.



The Foundation for Malassezia Skincare: Our 3-in-1 Solution

Calming your skin requires a well-rounded approach

As you've learned so far, if you want lasting relief, you must disrupt the biofilm, clear away the fungus, and soothe your skin without feeding the malassezia.

Fortunately, the [Calming Seborrheic Serum](#) handles all three overnight.

1. You will disrupt the biofilm with our patent-pending proprietary blend of natural ingredients.
2. You will clear away the fungus with tea tree, grapefruit seed extract, MSM (sulfur), and sea salt.
3. And you will soothe your skin with aloe vera, vitamin B3 (niacinamide), rosemary, hyaluronic acid, and urea.

Our most popular formula will calm and nourish your skin while you sleep.

Trusted by Experts

"I have been recommending the Calming Seborrheic Serum to my patients with seborrheic dermatitis and psoriasis and they have seen significant improvement in their skin."

- Dr. Maria Bonilla



Try it for yourself and see why thousands of people have (finally) found relief from seborrheic dermatitis, dandruff, and fungal acne.

[Get Relief](#)



The Skin Peace Score

Skin Stressors and Soothers





Picture your skin's peace as a spectrum stretching from zero to 100.

Below the midway point of 50, we find the land of 'Moody Skin,' where flare-ups and outbreaks hide around every corner. Above 50, we enter the realm of 'Peaceful Skin,' full of harmony and happiness.

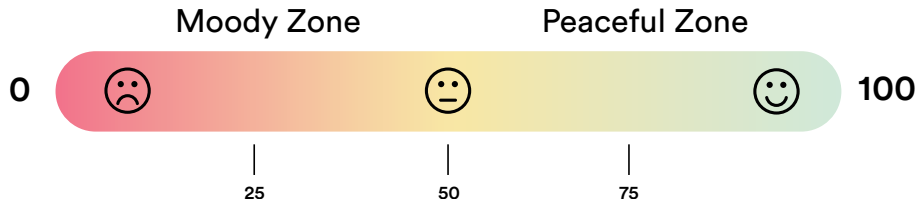
Life, however, is an unpredictable dance of **Stressors and Soothers**.

Stressors

are unexpected triggers like an anxious day of work, erratic hormones, fast food for lunch, low levels of vitamin D3, an excess of oil in your skin – all capable of sending your skin into a moody flare-up.

Soothers

are calming ingredients and lifestyle changes like aloe vera, meditation, topical vitamin B3, balancing your hormones, eating anti-inflammatory foods, or gently cleansing your skin.



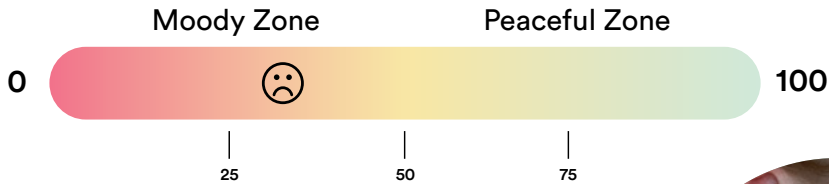
The more Soothers you welcome into your life, the closer your Skin Peace Score will be to 100, where peaceful skin is a daily reality.

This is why we encourage you to use **more than one Dermazen formula**, along with peaceful lifestyle changes, to increase your chances of clear skin – despite the unpredictable Stressors that cross your path.

By welcoming multiple 'Soothers' into your life (such as combining Dermazen products and calming lifestyle choices), your path towards daily peace becomes more reliable.



The Magic of Using More than One Formula

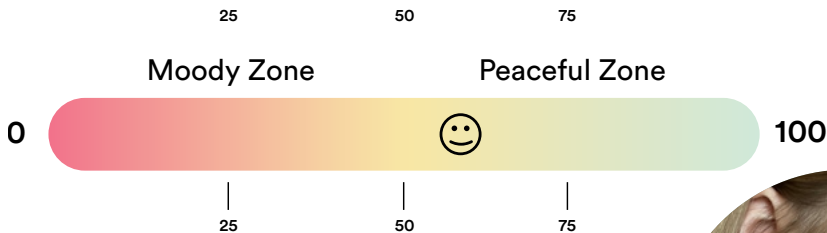


Imagine - before finding Dermazen - your Skin Peace Score averages about 30. Everyday feels unpredictable as your skin hovers in the Moody Zone and flare-ups are a common frustration.



Skin Peace Score

30
↓
100



Then you start using the Calming Seborrheic Serum. Within a few days, your skin improves to 60/100. You've made it to the Peaceful Zone and your skin is finally looking clear and calm.



Skin Peace Score

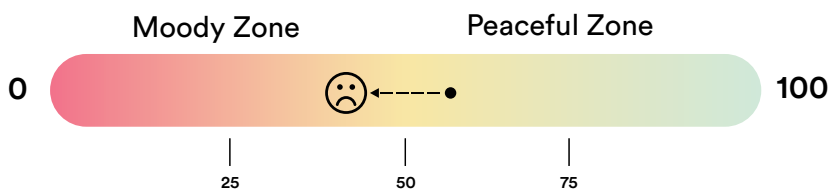
60
↑
30
100



But life is unpredictable, and Stressors can strike at any time.

What if you have an anxious day at work, you treat yourself to fast food filled with gluten, or your menstrual cycle fluctuates and your elevated hormones disturb your skin's balance?

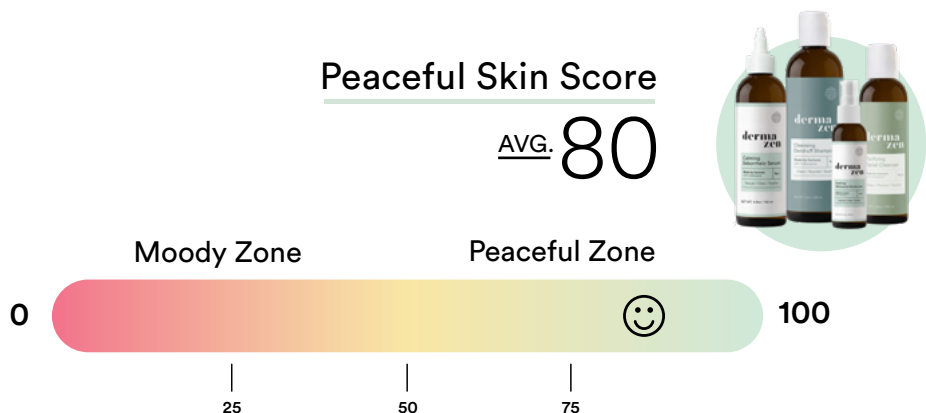
These disruptions could drop your Skin Peace Score down to a 40, sending you back to the Moody Zone and making you more likely to flare up.



Fortunately, your skin's peace doesn't need to be this erratic.

If you secure yourself by combining the serum with the **Purifying Facial Cleanser** and the **Soothing Malassezia Moisturizer**, your average Skin Peace Score could live consistently above 80.

Then when those same unexpected Stressors cross your path, your score only dips to a 60 for a few days until the stress is dealt with. And you remain in the Peaceful Zone all the way through. Flare-up and frustration free.





If you are tired of unpredictable skin, we highly recommend treating yourself to the Peaceful Skin System. It includes the serum, moisturizer, cleanser, shampoo, and scalp massager - everything you need to keep your face and scalp calm and healthy, regardless of what life throws at you.

If you are already using the Calming Seborrheic Serum and want to protect and nourish your skin even more, you can choose the Complete Your Bundle package to get everything except the serum (which you already have).

Everything you need for daily peaceful skin.

The Peaceful Skin System



[Explore the System](#)

Get to Know Your Stressors & Soothers

Everybody is unique. You might flare up from dairy while your partner can eat yogurt by the gallon without an issue. But in general, the two lists below will help you identify inflammatory Stressors and experiment with new Soothers.



Stressors

- Stress at work or home
- Using skincare products with unsafe oils like coconut or jojoba
- Fluctuating hormones
- Inflammatory foods like wheat, sugar, and seed oils
- Low levels of Vitamin D3
- Excess sebum / oil
- Chronic inflammation
- Microbiome imbalance
- Neglecting to cleanse your skin
- Heavy antibiotic use
- Poor sleep quality
- Dehydration
- Too much caffeine or stimulants

Soothers

- Gently cleansing your skin
- Meditation and deep breathing
- Topical ingredients like aloe vera and vitamin B3
- Eating anti-inflammatory foods
- Balancing hormones
- Disrupting the fungal biofilm
- Removing fungus from the skin
- Exercise and movement
- Reducing sebum production
- Getting sufficient D3 (and K2)
- Healthy relationships
- Hobbies you enjoy
- Consistent hydration
- Adequate sleep

More Wisdom for Peaceful Skin





The three steps we handed you in the last chapter are a powerful strategy to soothe your beautiful, irritated skin once it's already acting up. But there are a handful of lifestyle changes you can make to prevent your skin from flaring up in the first place. That's what this chapter is all about. You'll find five levers you can pull to improve the overall health of your skin and reduce your need for topical treatments.

1.) Increase Your Vitamin D3

Most humans are deficient in vitamin D. It's a shame, because this vital nutrient is responsible for dozens of processes in the body. It's been shown to improve mood, balance hormones, boost the immune system, strengthen teeth and bones, increase muscle growth, reduce inflammation, prevent diabetes, reduce hypertension, promote weight loss, and - for some - improve the health of your skin.

There seems to be a connection between low levels of vitamin D and the occurrence of seborrheic dermatitis. A [study](#) conducted in 2013 showed, out of 22 patients, not a single person had healthy or optimal levels of vitamin D in their system. Every single participant was deficient. Another [study](#) published in 2017 gave 32 patients 1,600IU of cholecalciferol (D3) a day for three months. The frequency of flare-ups was reduced in 65% of participants. We would argue the daily dose should be much higher.

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble nutrient, which means it stays in your system for longer. Water soluble vitamins like B and C will exit your body quickly through your urine. But your bodily levels of vitamins D, K, and A can be built up overtime and take longer for your body to use up. That's why some physicians will give a patient 100,000IU or 300,000IU of D3 in one day, meant to last them a few weeks. The goal is to get your serum levels high enough so your body has the D it needs to function.

As mentioned in the introduction, doctors are still confused by seborrheic dermatitis and aren't sure exactly why it happens in different patients. But there seems to be a connection between healthy levels of vitamin D and skin that is free of sebderm. But you might need to take more than you think.



Important Note

If you are going to supplement with D3, we highly recommend combining it with vitamin K2. These two nutrients work closely together. If you take too much D3, you run the risk of hypercalcemia (or too much calcium in your blood). But K2 tells your body where to send the calcium: out of your arteries and into your bones and teeth. From what we've seen, vitamin D toxicity only occurs in the absence of vitamin K supplementation. It's our hypothesis that it's almost impossible to overdose on vitamin D while supplementing with adequate levels of K. It's generally a good practice to take 100 micrograms (not milligrams) of K2 for every 5,000IU of D3. Most of the top vitamin D supplements will be made with K2 added to the formula.

Of course, more research needs to be around D3 and seborrheic dermatitis. And we'll continue to stay on the forefront of this exciting connection.

2.) Use a Silicone Scalp Scrubber

If you haven't used one of these scalp brushes, you're in for a treat. This simple, affordable tool can do wonders for a flakey, irritated scalp. Simply purchase a silicone scrubber of your choice, bring it in the shower with you, and use it to massage in your shampoo and cleanse your scalp. Hint: If you try our [Zen Skin Trio](#), you'll get a free scalp scrubber included in your order.





Why It Works

There are three main reasons. First, it exfoliates dead skin and removes the scaly buildup accumulating at your roots. Second, it helps your antifungal shampoo penetrate deeper into your skin and absorb more thoroughly. Third, it improves blood flow to boost the growth of new skin and hair. Plus, it feels good!

Most people enjoy moving the scrubber in circular patterns on their scalp, but there's no exact science to it. Simply use it to massage your scalp and enjoy all the natural benefits.

3.) Cleanse Your Face to Prevent Flare-Ups

Cleansing your face is one of the most important steps in any skincare routine. Not only does this help to reduce dead skin cells, but it also removes excess sebum that feeds the malassezia fungus. Doing a thorough cleanse also helps to get rid of dirt and makeup residue that can clog pores and further irritate the skin.

In general, dermatologists recommend washing your face once or twice a day. But you'll want to find the right rhythm for your skin.

It's important to choose a cleanser that does not contain irritating ingredients, like sodium lauryl sulfate or any oils other than MCT and squalane - which are the only oils that don't feed malassezia fungus.

Your cleanser should also be free from fragrances and parabens, as these compounds may irritate sensitive skin and disrupt your hormones.

Our [Purifying Facial Cleanser](#) is a gentle and holistic formulation that clears away fungus, excess oil, and dirt. It contains xylitol, which aids in weakening the fungus and deactivating its protective biofilm, as well as willow bark, which helps clear away the fungus. Squalane, cucumber extract, and 200x concentrated aloe provide a hydration boost and help to soothe moody skin, while papaya fruit extract and witch hazel shrink pores, exfoliate dead skin, and reduce sebum. We think you'll love it :)



“Eliminate causes of stress before they occur, practice mindfulness in the midst of stressful situations, and practice self-care to undo the damage after you’ve experienced stress.”





4.) Manage Stress: Before, During, and After

Some skin conditions like seborrheic dermatitis seem to be closely connected to stress. When you get stressed, your body releases the hormone cortisol and launches into fight, flight, or freeze mode. It sends blood into your limbs for faster movement and away from your vital organs, specifically slowing down your digestive tract. In short bursts (like defending yourself from a tiger), this is a helpful process that keeps you alive. But when you live in a state of chronic stress, your body constantly feels under attack and never shifts fully into rest-and-digest mode, which is where most healing takes place.

Many people experience flare-ups of their symptoms in seasons of stress, like a busy schedule at work or during holidays with in-laws. What's fascinating is people who have suffered unilateral strokes (on one side of their bodies) have sometimes developed seborrheic dermatitis on only that side of their body. This is another sign this condition of ours may be closely connected to the nervous system.

To manage your stress effectively, we recommend a three-pronged approach: eliminate causes of stress before they occur, practice mindfulness in the midst of stressful situations, and practice self-care to undo the damage after you've experienced stress.

Before

A simple way to reduce the amount of chronic stress in your life is to minimize the sources of irritation before they occur. Technically, there is no such thing as a "stressful person or event" (we'll get to that next), but we can be honest that some things tend to trigger us more than others.

It's important to protect our energy from sources, people, and events that drain us. While it's helpful to stay informed, most of us don't need to watch or listen to as much news as we do. Media outlets thrive on fear, confusion, and stressful events to keep your attention, but that doesn't mean it's the best use of your energy. Consider replacing negative news cycles with positive action that actually makes a difference in the lives of people around you.

You're also free to set healthy boundaries in your relationships and limit the time you spend around people who drain you. This is easier in some situations than others, but



we encourage you to be mindful about whom you're spending time with. Do they add stress to your life or spark joy? Can you surround yourself with more people who remind you of life's gifts?

Beyond news sources and relationships, pay close attention to the habits that add more stress in your life like too much social media and a cluttered work or living space.

During

Regardless of how well we organize and plan our lives, we will still face situations that surprise us or events that seem to be the opposite of what we want. In these moments, it's essential to take responsibility for the story we are making up in our minds. For our stories determine our emotional experience. Remember how we mentioned there's no such thing as a "stressful" person or event. Sure, there are people and there are events, but they aren't inherently stressful. We make up that label. Someone else might experience that person or event in a totally different way.

It's important to remember we do not experience life objectively. We experience life through the filter (or lens) of our internal story. This is not bad or wrong, simply the nature of being human. Recognizing this truth helps free us from getting lost in the stories we make up.

One helpful acronym to remember is **CTFAR**: circumstance, thought, feeling, action, result. This is a pattern we experience thousands of times per day (often without realizing it). First, a circumstance occurs. In other words, something happens. Then we choose a thought or story about what the circumstance means. This thought creates a feeling or emotion inside us. That feeling usually prompts us to take an action which aligns with that feeling. Then our actions create our results in life. Rinse and repeat a thousand times per day and you get the human experience. One of the best places to take responsibility for this cycle is at the T or thought stage. When a situation arises and we start to feel stress, we can stop and decide if we'd like to change the story we're telling ourselves.

It may feel clunky at first, but with practice, we begin to recognize how much choice we have around the stories we make up about our lives. Is our partner really a stupid jerk or are they simply tired, insecure, and lacking the tools to



communicate how they really feel? Both may be true in a way, but we get to choose which story will serve our energy best.

After

Eventually we all get caught by inner monologues that stress us out. There will be times when our cortisol levels spike and we need tools to reduce our anxiety and release our stress. You can call upon the following practices to lower your stress and add more peace to your life.

Meditate

This can take on many forms (there's no one right way). The goal is to give your mind the gift of rest and space. You can use an app, a relaxing playlist, or good ol' silence. Sit quietly away from distractions and allow your busy mind to slowly begin to settle. As you focus on breathing deeply, eventually, your thoughts will slow and you'll start to feel more connected to this moment. Like we said, there's no right or wrong way to meditate (the trick is to just start), but if you'd like to learn more, the internet is full of helpful advice to deepen this practice.

Physical Touch

This might look like receiving more massages (whether professionally or from a partner or friend), hugging your family more often, rubbing your own muscles, cuddling a pet, scheduling more intimate time with a partner, etc. When humans experience extended physical touch, our brains release the hormone known as oxytocin which automatically reduces our stress hormone, cortisol.

Exercise: Ironically, working out is a form of short-term stress that reduces your overall level of cortisol and anxiety. When you exercise, your body releases feel-good hormones like serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins. Exercise can also improve your sleep, which in turn will lower your stress. Whether it's a brisk walk, an outdoor sport, gardening, a group class, or bodyweight exercises at home, physical movement is an essential part of a healthy inner life.

Aromatherapy

Studies show pleasant smells like candles and essential oils can reduce stress and fatigue. For some, the effects are limited, but others are greatly impacted by the smells around them, so it's worth keeping this tool in mind. We'll add in a bonus practice of taking magnesium salt baths with candles or essential oils to take your relaxation to the next level.





Exercise: Ironically, working out is a form of short-term stress that reduces your overall level of cortisol and anxiety. When you exercise, your body releases feel-good hormones like serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins. Exercise can also improve your sleep, which in turn will lower your stress. Whether it's a brisk walk, an outdoor sport, gardening, a group class, or bodyweight exercises at home, physical movement is an essential part of a healthy inner life.

Nature: The Japanese have a phrase (shinrin-yoku) which translates to “forest bathing.” It's the practice of spending time among tall trees and it's been prescribed as a treatment for mental stress since the 1980's. Several studies have shown hanging out in nature often leads to less anxiety, less depression, more peace, and a greater sense of connection with the world around you.

Social Connection: Similar to physical touch, spending time with people you love can increase oxytocin, serotonin, and dopamine while lowering cortisol and adrenaline. In person is usually best, but even a phone call or video chat can reduce your stress levels if you're able to be seen, known, and accepted just as you are. If it feels like you're lacking in social connection, remember to start by being the type of friend you would want to have. Eventually, life will return the gifts you give with interest.

Flow State: Also known as being in the zone, the flow state is about becoming fully immersed in an activity. It usually happens when we're engaged in a hobby or project that captures our attention. Research has shown entering the “flow state” more often can lead to less stress and more happiness. You can practice getting in flow by engaging with a hobby like creating art, making music, playing a sport or game, reading, etc.

As you practice reducing your stress before, during, and after triggering events, you'll likely start to notice fewer flare-ups of your skin condition. While there are many factors at play when it comes to inflamed skin, lowering chronic stress is another weight on the scale in your favor.



5.) Limit Inflammatory Foods

Everybody is different. Some folks in the seborrheic Reddit and Facebook groups have shared how certain foods like gluten or dairy can cause their symptoms to flare up drastically. Others have tried abstaining from these foods and don't notice much of a difference. The goal is to pay attention to your body and reduce foods or ingredients that might be causing inflammation.

This tip (like any of them) is optional, but if you'd like to experiment with reducing problematic foods, you can start by reducing gluten, dairy, processed oils (like canola), and/or added sugar, as these tend to be the most inflammatory categories for the average human. Of course, Person A might tolerate gluten perfectly but react poorly to a random ingredient like nutmeg, while Person B has no problem with nutmeg, but suffers from a stomach ache and inflamed skin whenever they eat pasta. This is why it's important to experiment and listen to your body.

When searching for a possible food culprit, many people find it helpful to start with an elimination diet. This is when you remove as many inflammatory foods as possible, then gradually add some back in to see if you notice a difference. For example, you might commit to a month of something like Whole 30 where you eliminate all grains, dairy, and sugar from your diet for 30 days. See if your symptoms improve at all. Then you can experiment with eating a meal with plenty of wheat and notice how your body responds. If you don't notice a difference after a few days, you can try adding in dairy and see if your symptoms get worse.

If you think food might be a strong cause of your symptoms, you can research "elimination diets" to find a plan that works for you. In general, we believe in tipping the scales in your favor. So even if food isn't the core trigger of your symptoms, it's a good idea to give your body every possible advantage by eating foods closer to their original form (often called whole foods) while avoiding inflammatory ingredients.

For a deep dive on how to eat in a way that supports your skin (and the rest of your body), you can enjoy our free [Peaceful Skin Nutrition Guide](#).





5.) Mind Your Pillowcase

You probably wouldn't press your face against your kitchen floor for eight hours at a time. But we regularly make this kind of contact with our pillowcase while we sleep. Most folks don't realize the effect their pillow and its case can have on the skin. But it turns out, changing your pillowcase regularly (and using the right case in the first place) can make a big difference on breakouts and flare-ups.

A dirty pillowcase can clog your pores. The dirt and grime from your face and hair begins to collect from the time you start using it. This can compound overtime and turn your pillow into a breeding ground for bacteria. If you make a habit of washing your face at night, then sleeping on a dirty pillowcase may reverse much of your hard work. The buildup of dirt, oil, germs, and dead skin can create an environment that inflames and irritates your skin while you sleep.

To prevent your pillowcase from causing problems, we recommend washing it more often. Depending on the severity of your symptoms, you might consider washing it 1-2x a week. Another option is to keep spare pillowcases handy so you can swap them out midweek without needing to run another load of laundry. It's also important to buy a new pillow (not just the case) every one to two years. Reaching for a hypoallergenic pillow is usually best.

Another great option is to use a copper pillowcase. Copper is naturally antimicrobial so it's difficult for harmful bacteria to live and reproduce on the surface. In fact copper ions are shown to rupture the cell wall of pathogens while remaining perfectly safe and beneficial for human skin. Some [research](#) has even shown that copper ions improve collagen production in the skin. Most true copper pillowcases also prevent odors and maintain a fresh feeling because of their antimicrobial nature.



The Dermazen Promise



Whether you choose to add Dermazen products to your routine or simply enjoy our free educational content, our mission is to support you along your journey to healthier skin and a happier you. As part of that mission, we are committed to four core promises that keep us on track.

1. We craft our formulas based on the latest skincare science.

Dermazen is equal parts head and heart. We care deeply about the people and stories behind every order. We also aren't ashamed of our love of science. We like to nerd out on biofilms, skin pH, and fungicides so you don't have to. Of course, you're welcome to dive into the literature, but we do our best to take care of the heavy lifting. As new research emerges and new discoveries are made, we promise to keep our formulas powered by the latest in skincare science.

2. We never use ingredients that feed the malassezia fungus.

Most cosmetics aren't designed for people with seborrheic dermatitis or fungal conditions. They come filled with coconut oil, castor oil, and other lipids shown to feed the fungus causing our flare-ups. Dermazen is committed to creating great products without problematic oils. You can trust that every product on our digital shelves is safe for people with excess malassezia.

3. We encourage and practice self-care.

At the end of the day, we want your life to be filled with more inner peace, tangible love, and deep joy. Flawless skin doesn't do you much good if you can't get along with the person beneath it. This is about transforming your relationship with the person in the mirror. Calming irritated skin is a worthy goal. But befriending and celebrating all parts of you is the true prize.

We also recognize you can't lead people somewhere you haven't gone. In order to fulfill our promise to you, the Dermazen team is committed to taking care of ourselves and each other. When our writers start their day with meditation, the content they create is filled with more peace. When our customer support staff, exercises and nourishes their bodies, their replies are filled with more kindness. When our product development team spends time in nature, they open their minds to a source of inspiration beyond themselves. We practice self-care ourselves, so we can encourage it in you.



4. We know you, because we are you.

We know what it's like to maintain a love/hate relationship with your body, especially your skin. We know how skin has a mind of its own. Some days it's happy and calm. Other days are filled with flare ups, flakes, and frustration as you scramble to cover up the irritation.

You aren't obsessed with your looks. You just want calmer skin. You aren't asking for much. We have lived your struggles, tried the so-called solutions, and found the secrets to happier, more reliable skin.

Big name brands are unaware of the biofilm layer and continue to make products with oils that aren't safe for people like us. Because the problem is personal, we are the experts in safe and soothing fungal relief.





The Seborrheic Relief Checklist

Top Priority

1. Disrupt the Biofilm

Use vinegar, colloidal silver, or our proprietary formulas to safely neutralize the biofilm shield.

2. Clear the Fungus

Eliminate malassezia overgrowth with an antifungal such as sea salt, grapefruit seed extract, raw honey, MCT oil, tea tree essential oil, ketoconazole, and pyrithione zinc.

3. Soothe the Skin

Moisturize and calm your skin without feeding the fungus by using safe ingredients like aloe vera, niacinamide, hyaluronic acid, MCT oil, MSM powder, and urea.

Treat yourself to the [Calming Seborrheic Serum](#) to handle all three steps overnight.

Recommended

4. Increase Your Vitamin D3

Consider adding a D3 supplement to your routine. While the relationship between vitamin D and seborrheic dermatitis is still mysterious, there does seem to be a strong correlation. When using high doses of D3, it's a good idea to also supplement with vitamin K2 to prevent hypercalcemia.

5. Use a Scalp Scrubber

Massaging your scalp with a silicone scrubber, especially when combined with an antifungal shampoo, is a great way to reduce flakes and improve healthy blood flow to your scalp.



6. Cleanse to Prevent Flare-Ups

Cleansing the skin is an important step that gets rid of excess sebum, dirt, and makeup residue, all of which can further irritate the skin and fuel the growth of the fungus. Our [Purifying Facial Cleanser](#) is a holistic option designed to prevent future flare-ups.

7. Manage Stress (Before, During, and After)

Reduce your cortisol levels by preventing stressful triggers before they occur, noticing your inner dialogue during a stressful event, and reversing the damage by releasing tension after the event.

8. Limit Inflammatory Foods

Give your body its best chance at healthier skin by cutting back on foods that inflame your system. Explore the [Peaceful Skin Nutrition Guide](#) and consider finding safer alternatives to gluten, vegetable oils (like canola), sugar, and alcohol.

9. Wash or Upgrade Your Pillow

An unwashed pillowcase leads to clogged pores and inflamed skin. For best results, wash or change your pillowcase 1-2x per week. Even better, consider upgrading to an antimicrobial copper pillowcase.



Thank You