

Pregnancy & Your Skin

ReTone®



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Invest in your skin. It is going to represent
you for a very long time.

— Linden Tyler —



The nine months of pregnancy leading up to the most incredible day of your life can often feel like a roller coaster of physical and emotional change. Often times, pregnancy is an experience no words can describe.

Your body's magical, feminine properties can make you continuously marvel at just how strong and capable your body is. As you progress through every phase of transformation, your skin grows and stretches in a very natural and expected way.

With fluctuating hormones influencing the tone, appearance, and comfort of your skin, it can be hard to make sense of all that is happening externally and how to best nurture your skin.

Use this guide to **understand** how your skin can change during pregnancy and learn effective ways you can work toward healthy, beautiful skin at any gestational or postpartum stage.

Common Skin Changes During Pregnancy

During pregnancy, your body will undergo periods of rapid growth. Often times, your body will grow faster than your skin can adjust, resulting in small tears within the skin's tissue. Additionally, extra hormones and a heightened blood flow can cause various other changes to develop.

While your skin may not experience every change, it can form or display:

Stretch Marks

Known medically as striae gravidarum, pregnancy stretch marks are the result of your body expanding faster than its layers of skin. As your body grows, the skin's subcutaneous tissues are pulled extremely tight, causing small tears you can't physically feel. The scars that later form become stretch marks - which appear as pink or reddish streaks.

While many first think of a woman's growing belly when it comes to pregnancy stretch marks, the truth is, it's extremely natural and common for stretch marks to also appear on the thighs, buttocks, hips, breasts and lower back.

The location and prominence of pregnancy stretch marks will vary from woman-to-woman,

and for women who have multiple pregnancies, stretch marks can vary from pregnancy-to-pregnancy.

On average, stretch marks will start to emerge in the third trimester. But some women may begin to notice stretch marks whenever their belly first experiences growth.

For as natural as stretch marks are, most women would rather do without them. Stretch marks are essentially deep scars that are difficult to remedy. Short of more invasive cosmetic procedures, there are other effective methods in preventing and fading the appearance of stretch marks.



Almost 90% of pregnant women will experience stretch marks.



Dry, Itchy Symptoms

For many women – regardless if stretch marks appear or not – the stretching and tightening of the skin causes uncomfortable sensations of dryness and itchiness.

Varying hormonal changes also cause your skin to lose elasticity and moisture as it expands at an expedited rate to accommodate a growing baby and weight gain. Dry, itchy skin can lead to other, undesired changes, such as flaky, scaly or peeling skin, red and rough looking skin, chapped and cracked skin, and gray, ashy skin.

Symptoms of dry skin can affect any area of the body during and post pregnancy, not just the stomach.

With the right skin care products and regimen, you can deliver your skin the moisture, nutrients, and care it needs to thrive through pregnancy and return to its pre-pregnancy state after delivery.

Darkened Pigmentation

With a surplus of hormones being produced and circulated throughout your body, your skin's pigmentation may fluctuate in tandem. Pigmentation that is already a shade or more darker than your natural skin color – such as freckles, moles, birth marks, nipples, etc. – may become even darker during and after pregnancy.

Additionally, the 'Mask of Pregnancy' (melasma) is a common condition where dark, blotchy spots appear on your face – typically around your nose, forehead, upper lip, and cheekbones – in the shape of a mask.

Hormones are commonly to blame, but unprotected exposure to the sun can also cause and/or make this condition worse.

Melasma can fade on its own after pregnancy, but there are steps you can take to try and avoid or lessen the development of darkened pigmentation, such as wearing a UVB-blocking sunscreen and adding a comprehensive skin care product to your daily routine.



Varicose Veins

Appearing as enlarged or bulky veins, varicose veins can form on the legs during pregnancy due to your uterus applying more pressure on these veins. Hormonal changes also play a part in this skin and body condition.

While they're not desired, and can be uncomfortable for certain women, they usually resolve on their own without medical treatment approximately three to 12 months after delivery.

You can work to avoid or decrease your symptoms by staying active (like walking), avoiding standing or sitting for prolonged periods of time, and propping your legs up when sitting.

Breakouts and Acne

Being more prone to breakouts and acne during a menstrual cycle is often indicative of how your skin will react in pregnancy. Breakouts and acne are common during the first and second trimesters, when androgens – hormones that can cause the glands in your skin to grow and produce more sebum – begin to increase.

With more sebum, a waxy, oily substance, your pores can clog and cause bacterial buildup, inflammation, and breakouts.

Fortunately, pregnancy and postpartum acne is usually short-lived, clearing up once your hormones return to normal levels.

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The Linea Nigra

The linea nigra – **a guaranteed skin change in all pregnancies** – is a dark line that runs from your navel to your pubic bone. Most skin experts note that this line is present on the abdomen of every woman, whether they're pregnant or not, but it is the exact color of your skin tone when your body is not carrying a child.

When pregnant, and as your belly continues to grow, this line becomes more dark and noticeable around the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy. The darkening of the linea nigra is believed to be caused by an imbalance in hormones.

This is one skin change that has no prevention techniques or remedies, and it will fade as your stomach and skin shrink after delivery.



A Pregnancy Glow

Saving the best for last. These skin changes can seem overwhelming and may be a little scary. After all, pregnancy is quite possibly the most life-changing event your body will endure. While a big event like a pregnancy certainly warrants big changes, it can also embody your finest glow.

For the majority of pregnant women, the pregnancy glow is not a myth. A pregnant body will produce upwards of 50% more blood, which boosts blood circulation throughout the entire body – including your face. With more blood flowing, your face and skin will appear brighter.

But wait! That's not all.

There is an upside to your oil glands working overtime during pregnancy. You see, extra oil secretion can help create a naturally glistening face, and, without question, your pregnancy glow stands out more than any other skin change you may experience.

Natural Ways to Take Care of Your Skin During Pregnancy

Skin care is important all the time, but while you're pregnant, it's essential – and it starts with the basics. Before you introduce any product into your pregnancy skincare routine, focus on the fundamentals of what your skin needs to be healthy and strong.

Drink Water

Hydrate from the inside out.

Arguably the best way to support your skin every day and through every stage of pregnancy is to drink plenty of water.

Water:

- Helps maintain a healthy elasticity level within your skin's tissues
- Promotes soft, supple skin
- Aids in detoxifying the body and skin cells
- Helps your skin grow and stretch in times of stress (like growing a baby in your belly)

Staying well-hydrated is also imperative for overall health and will help your other body systems thrive.



Exercise

Get your blood pumping to boost circulation.

Physical activity – anything from a power walk to a run, yoga to Pilates, swimming to water aerobics, and much more – delivers a whole host of benefits to your skin:

- Exercise can decrease your levels of cortisol – the body's stress hormone – which can help reduce the appearance and symptoms of chronic skin conditions like acne, eczema, psoriasis, and more, even during pregnancy.
- Exercise increases blood circulation, delivering a greater amount of oxygen and nutrients to your skin. Overall, this helps repair your skin and increase collagen production – two vital pieces to skin health during pregnancy.
- Exercise also boosts blood flow, aiding in skin cell regeneration and the effective removal of harmful toxins – further supporting your skin during and after pregnancy.

Eat a Well-Balanced Diet

Include foods that promote skin health.

When it comes to food and pregnancy, it can feel like you're a whole different person. With morning sickness, new cravings, food aversions, and a body that can't seem to get enough calories, eating for healthy, clear skin may be the last thing you want to concern yourself with. But eating to promote body, baby and skin health doesn't have to be complicated.

Talk with your doctor about adding foods to your diet that will help your baby and skin thrive.

- Foods high in omega-3 fatty acids keep cell membranes healthy and promote glowing skin.
- Foods high in vitamin A help repair skin tissue.
- Foods high in vitamin E protect skin cell membranes.
- Foods high in antioxidants nourish and protect the skin.

Additionally, foods high in protein, zinc, and vitamins C and E are known to boost collagen production. With appropriate levels of collagen, the formation of stretch marks can be minimized or prevented.

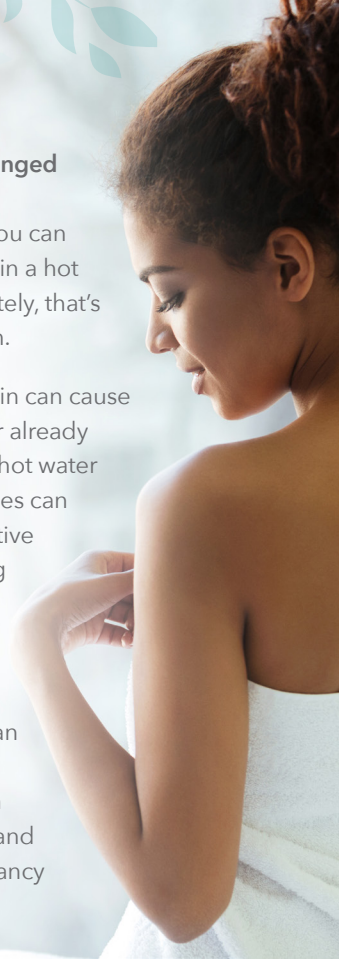
Take Warm Showers or Baths

Be gentle to your skin and avoid prolonged hot soaks.

We know – when you're pregnant, all you can think about after a long day is relaxing in a hot bath or taking a hot shower. Unfortunately, that's not always the best option for your skin.

Allowing hot water to soak into your skin can cause a heightened level of sensitivity to your already sensitive pregnancy skin. Additionally, hot water mixed with most soaps and body washes can strip your skin of its natural, oily protective barriers. With stretching and tightening skin that is battling dryness, this can increase your skin discomfort by making dry skin symptoms worse.

If your skin is naturally oily, hot water can make your skin's oil glands create even more oil than necessary, since so much is being removed during hot showers and baths. This can actually intensify pregnancy breakouts and acne.





Massage Your Skin

Avoid itching as best you can.

Dry skin is downright irritating and begs to be itched for relief. Add the element of pregnancy, where your skin is constantly in a vulnerable, tightened state and prone to increased levels of dryness, and the act of itching can become impulsive.

But itching will only further irritate your skin. Instead, gently massage areas that are irritated to alleviate the itch and deliver a relaxing sensation to your skin and muscles.

Frequently Asked Pregnancy Skin Care Questions

Women who develop stretch marks, darkened pigmentation and dry skin during pregnancy want to know what remedies are out there.

Short of cosmetic procedures, what's the most effective way to get rid of stretch marks and darkened pigmentation caused by pregnancy?

Ensure you're taking care of your skin the natural way and using a comprehensive stretch mark fading cream that also reduces the appearance of darkened pigmentation.

What's the most effective pregnancy stretch mark cream?

It's all in the ingredients. Look for proven ingredients that are safe and non-toxic.

How to get rid of stretch marks fast after birth/pregnancy?

Use safe skin care products that exfoliate to remove dead skin cells, then penetrate below the surface of the skin to support the natural regeneration of collagen and elastin - which results in thicker, less translucent skin, and a visible reduction of stretch marks, dark spots, or scars.

Skin Care Products During & After Pregnancy

With the basics taken care of, you can take your skin's comfort and beauty to the next level – and potentially prevent or diminish the appearance of skin changes altogether – during and after pregnancy with certain skin care products.

Not every pregnancy skin care product delivers the same effectiveness and safety, however. That's why it's imperative you know what ingredients are safe and which to avoid. Of course, before beginning any new regimen, it's always a good idea to consult your physician.

Ingredients to Look for:

These safe, proven ingredients deliver ultimate results in reducing the size and color of stretch marks, curbing dry skin, and improving or preventing darkened skin pigmentation:

- **Glycolic Acid** - a naturally occurring substance that is referred to as the holy grail for exfoliation.
- **Hyaluronic Acid** - a naturally occurring molecule that is known for its capacity to draw and hold moisture.
- **Matrixyl 3000 Protein Complex** - a proven anti-wrinkle formula that supports the skin's metabolism.
- **Allantoin** - an organic substance that encourages skin to shed dead cells, grow new ones, and lock in moisture.
- **Centella Asiatica** - a perennial herb that speeds up wound healing.
- **CoQ10** - a substance that helps produce energy for growth and maintenance, prevents damage to collagen molecules, and preserves the elasticity of your skin.



Ingredients to Avoid:

Interestingly enough, some ingredients found in pregnancy skin care products – even well-known, over-the-counter products – are not safe due to the active ingredients. The following ingredients are frequently cautioned against:

- **Retinol** – a vitamin-A derivative that is most commonly found in anti-aging and acne products. Some studies have suggested that this ingredient can be harmful to the cell development of a fetus and can lead to congenital disabilities. While risk is highest when ingesting retinol, trace amounts can also be absorbed through the skin. For these reasons, pregnant and breastfeeding women are encouraged to avoid products with retinol.
- **Hydroquinone** – a popular agent used to treat darkened skin pigmentation and melasma ('Mask of Pregnancy'). Hydroquinone is classified as a category C substance because of its higher absorption rate than most topical treatments. This means that higher amounts are more likely to enter your bloodstream and negatively affect the growth of your baby. It's also not advised if breastfeeding.
- **Avobenzone** – an ultraviolet A filter approved by the U.S. FDA is effective in sunscreens. If pregnant or breastfeeding, however, avobenzone can absorb into the skin and cause free radical damage. This is why choosing a safe sunscreen and other skin care products – free of avobenzone – is highly encouraged during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- **Oxybenzone** – a popular ingredient also found in sunscreens and skin care products ranks an 8 on the toxicity scale and is one of the most toxic ingredients found in cosmetic products. Oxybenzone has been shown to be an endocrine-disrupting chemical and can pose a risk to your reproductive system.
- **Parabens** – a group of synthetic compounds widely used as preservatives in cosmetic products. Prenatal exposure to certain types of parabens has been linked to certain pregnancy issues, such as miscarriage, low birth weight, and impaired fetal growth.

- **Phthalates** – a group of chemicals used as solvents in cosmetics has been linked to damage in the liver, kidneys, lungs, and reproductive system – including the developing testes.
- **Tazorotene** – a chemical commonly used to treat acne and skin infections. Tazorotene has been linked to birth defects, miscarriage and, when used in the second or third trimesters, can cause baby's milk teeth – a condition that permanently stains and discolours a baby's teeth when they come through after birth.

Keep in mind that some of these ingredients may come in various forms or different names. Generally speaking, if the long ingredient name contains one of the names above, it's more than likely a variation of an unsafe ingredient.

If you're unsure about a product or ingredient, it's always best to talk with your dermatologist to err on the side of caution.



Want to Try a Body Oil Instead of a Lotion or Moisturizer?

An effective, multifaceted alternative to certain over-the-counter lotions and moisturizers, body oil is a robust, hydrating pregnancy skin care solution that combines essential oils, vitamins, and other substances – such as herbs – to penetrate the surface of the skin and support elasticity, strength, and firmness.

With antioxidants and the right combination of ingredients, some body oils can make all the difference in preventing or treating certain pregnancy skin changes and jumpstarting the rejuvenation process.

Look for these key body oil ingredients:



Tamanu Oil – Effective at accelerating the skin's healing and regeneration process.

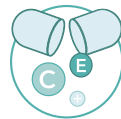


Rosehip Oil – Known to enhance the skin's complexion while simultaneously creating a healthy barrier against environmental stressors.



Gotu Kola – One of the most underutilized but exceedingly powerful ingredients, gotu kola – nicknamed “tiger herb”

because it has been said that injured tigers rub against the herb to heal their wounds – has some of the most amazing skin rejuvenating properties. This herb is proven to boost antioxidant activity, support collagen production, increase blood circulation, and prevent swelling.



Vitamins C & E – When combined, these vitamins create a powerful antioxidant duo that help retain moisture and increase collagen production.



Jojoba Oil – A major supporter of the skin's overall equilibrium, jojoba helps skin maintain an appropriate oil balance.



Argan Oil – A do-it-all-oil, argan oil helps protect, heal, moisturize, fight aging, and much more.



Steer Clear of Oils with:

- Retinyl Palmitate
- Mineral Oil
- Artificial Colors
- Artificial Dyes



**Safe, Beautiful Skin During and After Pregnancy
is Possible**

Discover Two Revolutionary Skin Care Products That Prevent & Reduce the Appearance of Stretch Marks and Scars



Comprehensive Stretch Mark Therapy Kit

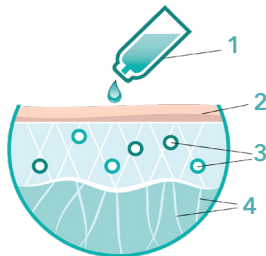
Delivering a simple, straightforward, and all-encompassing method to tackle even the most stubborn stretch marks post delivery, this kit exfoliates and penetrates the skin's surface to:

- Significantly reduce the size and appearance of stretch marks
- Support elastin and collagen production
- Hydrate and rejuvenate surrounding skin tissue



Body Oil

A breakthrough in the body oil skin care category, ReTone offers a Gotu Kola oil base with essential oils and vitamins C+E to reach beneath your skin hydrating and supporting strength, elasticity and firmness.



- 1. CONTROLLED DISPENSER**
with an exclusive non-greasy formula
- 2. ESSENTIAL CARRIER OILS**
Tamanu, Argan, Rosehip and Jojoba oils
- 3. VITAMINS C & E**
strong antioxidants to prevent damage
- 4. GOTU KOLA & VITAMIN C**
supports collagen production



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Aging is a fact of life. Looking your age is not.

— Howard Murad —

Tone and
ReTone[®]

