

HOW STRESS AFFECTS YOUR SKIN



Excessive stress and cortisol have direct effects on the skin.



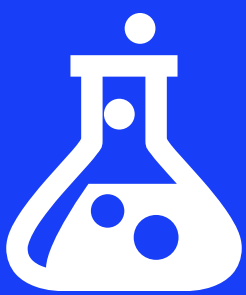
There are superficial and immediately visible effects of the stress response, but there are deeper effects too.



The skin normally has a fatty layer which protects and insulates it, retains moisture, and gives it a smooth softness. Excessive cortisol damages this layer and results in thin, fragile skin prone to easy bruising, stretch marks, and infection.



Stress also induces cumulative skin damage over time because it accelerates production of free radicals (the biological equivalent of rust).



Not only does the skin react to the stress hormones generated by the adrenal glands that circulate throughout the body, but also to cortisol generated within specialized cells in the skin itself.



In addition, when cortisol levels are out of balance (too high or too low) it can disrupt the balance of sex hormones like testosterone and progesterone, which also affect the skin.