Womenia

Daily habits that quietly damage your skin

Skin ageing is a natural process, but certain everyday habits can accelerate the appearance of wrinkles, fine lines, pigmentation and dullness. From smoking and excessive sugar consumption to poor sleep and hot showers, small lifestyle choices can have a lasting impact on your skin's health and radiance

SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Skin ageing is a natural process, but certain lifestyle choices can accelerate visible signs of ageing. Fine lines, wrinkles, age spots, dryness and loss of elasticity may develop over time, influenced by genetics, sun exposure, diet and everyday habits.

While a good skincare routine is essential, healthy skin also depends on how we care for our bodies. Habits such as smoking, taking excessively hot showers, poor sleep and consuming too much sugar can affect skin health. Here are five common habits that may contribute to premature skin ageing and simple ways to minimise their impact.

1. Smoking

Smoking is strongly associated with premature skin ageing. Tobacco smoke contains harmful chemicals that contribute to oxidative stress and damage collagen and elastin, the proteins responsible for keeping skin firm, smooth and supple.

Smoking also constricts blood vessels near the skin's surface, reducing the supply of oxygen and essential nutrients to skin tissues. This can interfere with the skin's natural repair processes and contribute to a dull complexion.

Over time, smokers are more likely to develop deeper wrinkles, particularly around the mouth and eyes, along with uneven pigmentation, dryness and reduced skin firmness.

What you can do: Quitting smoking is one of the most effective ways to protect your skin and overall health. Combine this with a balanced diet, adequate hydration and regular sun protection.

2. Taking Hot Showers and Baths

Long, hot showers may feel relaxing after a tiring day, but excessive heat can strip the skin of its natural oils. These oils help maintain the skin barrier and prevent moisture loss. When this protective layer is weakened, the skin may become dry, tight, rough and more susceptible to irritation. Repeated exposure to hot water can also aggravate existing skin conditions and make fine lines more noticeable. The scalp and hair may be affected too, as excessive heat can contribute to dryness, itching and hair breakage.

What you can do: Choose lukewarm water instead of very hot water and keep showers reasonably short. Apply moisturiser while the skin is still slightly damp to help retain moisture. Use a gentle cleanser and avoid excessive scrubbing.

3. Excessive Screen Time

Smartphones, laptops and tablets have become essential parts of modern life. However, spending long hours in front of screens can indirectly affect skin health by disrupting sleep and encouraging a sedentary lifestyle.

Digital devices emit blue light, also known as high-energy visible light. Some research suggests that blue light can contribute to oxidative stress and pigmentation under certain conditions. However, the extent to which everyday screen exposure causes premature skin ageing remains uncertain.

Late-night scrolling can also interfere with sleep, leaving the skin looking tired and dull. Poor sleep may affect the body's normal recovery processes and overall well-being.

What you can do: Take regular screen breaks and maintain a consistent sleep schedule. Reduce device use before bedtime if it interferes with your rest. Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher daily, particularly when spending time outdoors, to protect against established causes of premature skin ageing.

4. Sleeping Position

The way you sleep may influence the development of certain facial lines. Sleeping on your side or stomach can press the face against a pillow, creating repeated compression and friction. These pressure-related lines are known as sleep wrinkles.

Initially, they may disappear shortly after waking. However, as the skin naturally loses elasticity with age, some lines may become more persistent. Side sleepers may experience pressure-related lines on their cheeks, while stomach sleepers may place additional pressure on their forehead and face.

Although sleeping position is only one possible contributing factor, reducing repeated pressure may help minimise sleep-related creases.

What you can do: If comfortable, try sleeping on your back to reduce direct pressure on your face. Use a clean, smooth pillowcase and change it regularly. Most importantly, aim for seven to nine hours of sleep each night to support overall health and the skin's natural recovery processes.

5. Excessive Sugar Consumption

Consuming too much added sugar may affect skin health through a process called glycation. This occurs when sugars bind to proteins such as collagen and elastin, forming compounds known as advanced glycation end products. Over time, these compounds can affect the structure and flexibility of collagen, potentially contributing to reduced skin firmness.

A diet high in sugary foods and refined carbohydrates may also contribute to metabolic problems and inflammation. High-glycaemic foods may worsen acne in some individuals, although responses vary from person to person.

What you can do: Limit sugary drinks, sweets and foods containing excessive added sugar. Choose a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses, nuts and adequate protein. These foods provide nutrients that support normal skin function. Occasional treats are not a cause for concern; consistency and overall dietary balance matter more.

Build Healthy Habits for Healthy Skin

Healthy skin requires more than expensive products or elaborate beauty treatments. Everyday choices, including avoiding smoking, using lukewarm water, maintaining healthy sleep habits and eating a balanced diet, can support skin health over time.

Sun protection is particularly important. Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher, reapply as directed and seek shade when outdoors.

Ageing is natural and cannot be stopped. However, by making thoughtful lifestyle changes and following a consistent skincare routine, you can help maintain your skin's health, comfort and radiance at every stage of life.

(The author is an internationally fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India)

Pankaj Bhadouria returns to gym after cancer treatment: "Can't wait to snatch back myself from my sickness"

"MasterChef India" winner Pankaj Bhadouria, who was undergoing treatment for cancer, is back at the gym as she looks to reclaim her strength and fitness after battling the illness.

Sharing an optimistic update on her Instagram stories section, Pankaj said she is determined to take back control of her body and promised a "new" version of herself.

She posted a video of herself doing the Bhujangasana in the gym and wrote: "I am back to the gym now! I can't wait to snatch back myself, my body from my sickness. And I will! You and I will meet the 'new' Pankaj very soon!" It was in May, when Pankaj revealed that she has been diagnosed with breast cancer.

Taking to her social media account, on May 28, Pankaj shared a picture of herself from the hospital where she was seen lying on a hospital bed dressed in a patient gown with medical wires attached to her.

Sharing the post, she wrote, "I have been diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Need your prayers and support."

Pankaj also posted a video from the hospital as she underwent multiple medical tests. In the clip, she was seen sitting in a hospital robe with a medical cannula attached to her hand.

The text on the video read, "Going for tests and more tests…..not a happy place to be."

"I just wanted to share with you all that I have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Since all of you are like an extended family to me, I wanted to share this with you personally. Right now, I truly need your prayers and support. As they say, prayers work miracles. So please keep me in your prayers," said Pankaj.

Pankaj rose to fame after winning the first season of 'MasterChef India' in 2010, becoming the country's first-ever MasterChef winner. Before entering the culinary world, Pankaj worked as an English teacher and reportedly left her 16-year-long teaching career to participate in the cooking reality show. (IANS)

Anushka Sen on representing India globally: Our stories deserve to be heard across the world

Actress Anushka Sen opened up about representing India on a global platform after being named the country's Global Brand Ambassador for the 2026 Newport Beach Film Festival.

Reflecting on the honour, she said, "Our stories deserve to be heard across the world," emphasizing the importance of bringing Indian stories and talent to international audiences. Speaking about the appointment, Anushka said, "Being named the Global Ambassador representing India at the Newport Beach Film Festival is a moment that means more to me than words can express. For me, this is about so much more than a title; it is about the stories we carry, the boundaries we break, and the doors we open for those who come after us."

Emphasising the importance of believing in one's roots and ambitions, she added, "India has incredible talent and stories that deserve to be heard across the world. I want every young Indian to know that you don't have to fit into a certain mold to make your country proud. Where you come from can be your greatest strength, and your dreams should never be limited by your circumstances."

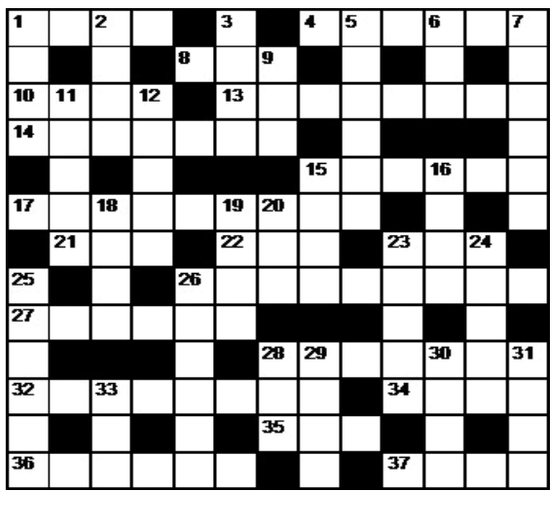
Anushka, who continues to explore opportunities across international entertainment, hopes her journey encourages more young Indians to pursue their ambitions and represent the country on global platforms.

"I feel incredibly fortunate to be experiencing this, and I hope more young Indians get the chance to represent our country on global platforms. If my journey can encourage someone to believe in themselves and take a step towards their dreams, that would mean a lot to me," she shared.

"For me, the real achievement is seeing Indian talent find its place on the global stage. I feel truly proud to represent my country, and I hope to make this moment count for something bigger than myself," Anushka further explained.

Anushka Sen has been named the Global Ambassador representing India at the 2026 Newport Beach Film Festival. The recognition comes after Anushka became the only Indian to debut in a Korean film project, "Jeju Olle." (IANS)

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Slow-growing trees (4)
4 Writhe (6)
8 I am telling you for the ___ time.... (3)
10 South Indian snack (4)
13 Daring (8)
14 Meaning the same as (7)
15 Fit for farming (6)
17 In a dull and boring manner (9)
21 Military inits., 1946-92 (3)
22 Cavity (3)
23 Bashful (3)
26 Tried or essayed (9)
27 Gambling house (6)
28 Honours gained (7)
32 Seven-sided object (8)
34 Experimental (4)
35 Desire to get money in Japan ? (3)
36 Least feral (6)
37 Sharp-sighted (4)

DOWN

1 Japanese sashes (4)
2 Potter's oven (4)
3 ___ put : do nothing, in a way ? (4)
5 Prey (6)
6 Three for Tiberius (3)
7 Violent confusion (6)
9 Sing wordlessly (3)
11 Units of force in CGS system ? (5)
12 Classical Greek style (5)
15 Der ___ (Adenauer) (4)
16 Thailand money (4)
18 Platform (4)
19 As many as (2,2)
20 Take a chair (3)
23 Spout (5)
24 Shouts (5)
25 Old time classic movie ___ Kanya (6)
26 Records (6)
28 Myrna of movies (3)
29 Again (4)
30 Like congers (4)
31 River of Hades (4)
33 Pamela's nickname (3)

Solution to October 20

SUDOKU

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Solution to October 20