

# Do You Actually Need to Wash Your Face in the Morning?



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I always wonder if washing my face when I wake up is totally necessary. Besides the fact that it tacks on time to my already rushed morning ritual, my before-bed skin care routine consists of four or more steps and I *always* hit the pillow with a makeup-free face. So, is washing my face *again* in the morning a total waste of my not-exactly-inexpensive cleanser (all I did was go to sleep!), or is it actually helping my skin for the better? I sought out [Melanie Palm, MD, MBA](#) to find out.

The answer, to my surprise, is that we should be washing our faces when we awake. “Generally speaking, cosmetic dermatologists recommend that patients cleanse their face twice daily (morning and night),” Palm tells *InStyle*. “The nighttime cleansing removes dirt, debris, environmental pollutants, makeup and excess oil from a busy day.” However, Palm says that a daytime or morning cleanse is just as important for three main reasons:

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## **1) Removes unwanted skin contactants:**

Believe it or not, your skin can accumulate environmental debris in your sleep, so it’s necessary to wash them off in the morning.

“Dead skin cells and allergens may collect on your pillowcase and be transferred to the facial skin throughout the night,” Palm says. “Circulated air (from your air conditioner or forced heated air) can also kick up dust, mold and other environmental irritants that may collect on facial skin overnight.” Yuck!

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## **2) Eliminates skin-producing oils and irritants:**

According to Palm, oils can also accumulate on the skin overnight, so properly removing them is crucial for your morning routine to be effective. Why? Removing the oils allows for better penetration of skin products and proper application of makeup. “For sensitive skin types in adults, particularly those with rosacea, there is a small skin mite that grows within our skin pores called Demodex,” Palm

adds. “Properly cleansing our pores in the morning removes the dirt and debris that this skin critter lives off of and decreases the number of them living on our skin.”

## **3) Prepares skin for your morning routine:**

To get glowing skin, Palm recommends cleansing in the morning specifically to boost skin hydration levels—following up with your favorite moisturizer seals in the water, which in turn makes the skin appear plumper and more radiant. “Cleansing the skin properly prepares a fresh canvas for topical antioxidants, moisturizers, sunscreen, and/or makeup application, ensuring an even finish for your morning face,” Palm says. In addition, a morning cleansing routine is an opportunity to remove any traces of makeup that were not effectively removed the night before.

Tired of your everyday cleanser, but still want a fresh face in the morning? Try [face wipes](#), cleansing [facial oil](#), or [micellar water](#) as an innovative alternative.