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City Living May Be Preventing You from Getting That Bridal Glow—Here's What to Do About It

Don't let air pollution sabotage your skin!

By [Elizabeth Swanson](#)



If it seems like **your skin looks miraculously better** when you're on vacation (maybe in the mountains, or by the beach, perhaps), it's not just because you've gotten some R&R—it could also be because there's less air pollution. If you live in a congested city, environmental pollutants can exacerbate skin issues, says Washington, D.C.-based dermatologist **Dr. Tina Alster**. "Pollution causes premature aging by inflaming the skin," Alster says. "It can also make your complexion look more sallow; if you're **acne-prone**, your pores may get clogged more easily; and if you have hyperpigmentation, it can worsen, because inflammation makes the skin produce more melanin."

So what to do about it, aside from taking **a hiatus in Fiji** for the year before your wedding? The good news, Alster says, is that there are four main steps you can take to negate the effects of pollution. Here, find out how to put your best face forward.

THE BEST CURES FOR COMMON SKIN EMERGENCIES

Wash Well

The first step to fighting air pollution is quite simple: **Wash your face really well**. This doesn't mean irritating it with harsh scrubs or wash cloths, but using a sonic cleansing brush, like a Clarisonic, to gently loosen dirt, oil, and prep your skin for any treatment you'll put on top so that it penetrates better.

Turn to Antioxidants

After cleansing in the morning, pat on an antioxidant serum, like **SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic**. "When pollutants get into your skin, antioxidants will help reverse the damage," Alster says.

Smooth on SPF

After washing your face and applying your serum, **add a mineral sunscreen** on top for extra measure. Along with protecting from ultra violet light, it also acts like a physical barrier, preventing pollutants from adhering to your skin. Alster recommends **Senté Broad Spectrum Pollution Shield SPF 46**.

Master Your Bedtime Routine

Before bed, apply a repairing, antioxidant-infused cream, like **Sunday Riley C.E.O. C + E Antioxidant Protect and Repair Moisturizer**, to brighten and help reverse any damage caused during the day. (And yeah, try to take a vacation every once in a while, too.)