

CLEAR SKIN for everyone

FACT: No one needs to live with problem skin anymore. We've grilled the world's top skin experts to find out how to beat breakouts, flare-ups and oil slicks for good

Whether it's a corker of a zit the day before a hot date or a greasy complexion that ruins your Facebook photos, it seems that problem skin (annoyingly) isn't something we grow out of. In fact, the average age of acne sufferers has risen from 20 to 26½ in a decade, meaning adult acne is a growing problem. And according to a recent Clinique Global Beauty Survey, a whopping 103 million people worldwide suffer from pimples, officially making it the most common skin concern. Well, at least we know we're not alone!

But why the eternal skin dramas? "As we get older, cell turnover slows down, meaning that dead skin cells sit on the surface for longer, increasing the chance of all kinds of problems," explains Sally Penford, education manager for the International Dermal

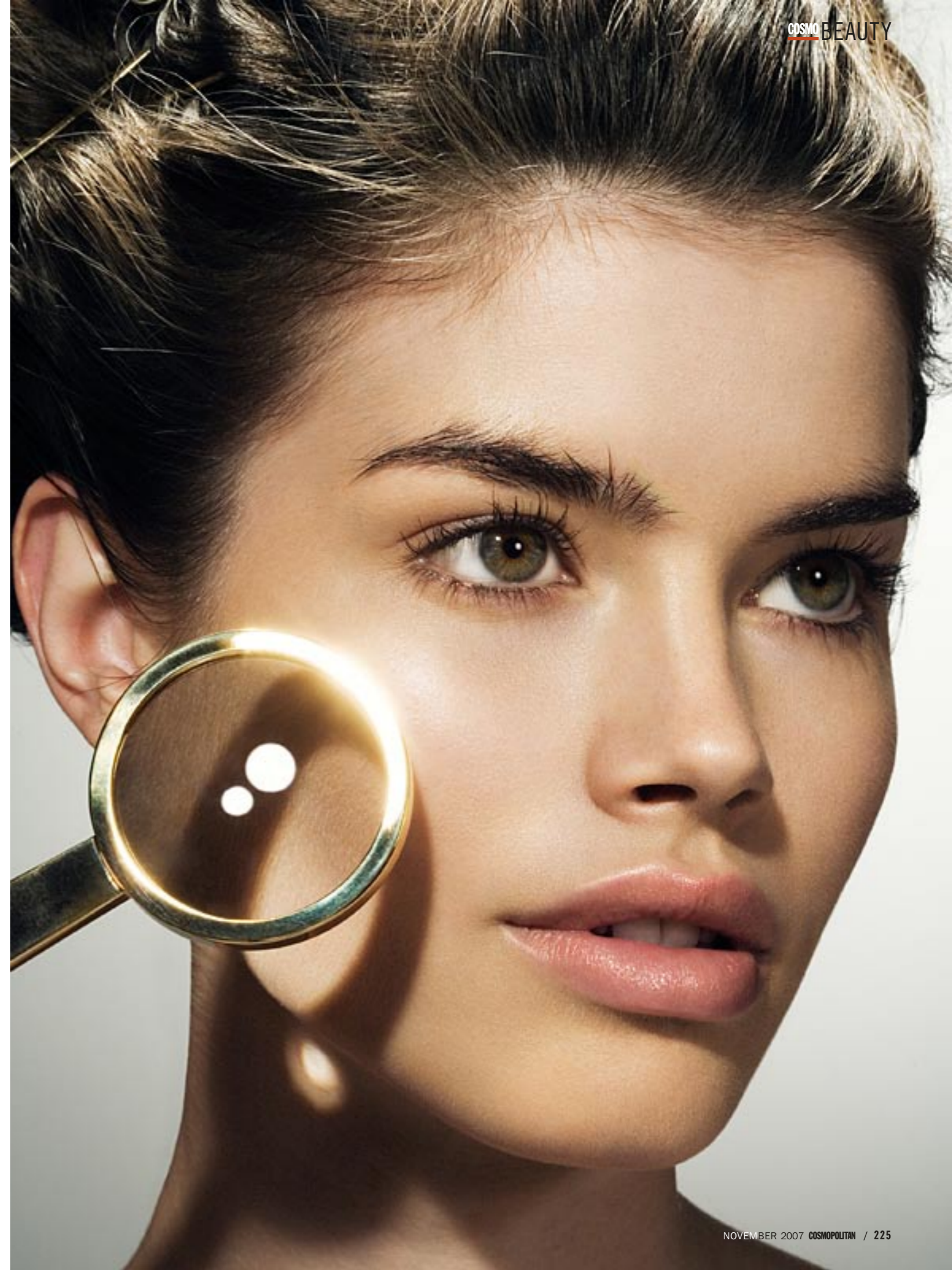
Institute. Now the good news: all the experts we spoke to agreed that, armed with the right products, you can transform your skin. So read on for your personal prescription...

YOUR SKIN GRIPE

OCCASIONAL FLARE-UPS

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: You generally have great skin but about twice a month you get the odd big, red spot, or a cluster breakout along your chin or jawline.

THE CAUSE: "These breakouts tend to be linked to hormonal fluctuations," says Sally. It's common to get them two to three days before your period, due to surges in oestrogen and progesterone that cause your skin to pump out more oil. "Stress is another major cause of flare-ups," says Ginny Hubbard, Olay's skin expert. "A few >





It takes 21 days for your skin to renew itself, so keep trying a new regime for at least six weeks before judging whether or not it's working

late nights combined with the demands of a stressful job mean your skin will react by releasing the stress hormone cortisol. This can stimulate sebum production and lead to blocked pores."

THE TREATMENT: "Try to understand why these outbreaks happen, then switch to blemish-busting skincare as a preventative measure two to three days before you expect pimples to appear – or as soon as you feel stressed," says Sally. Use mild anti-acne products that contain salicylic acid or tea tree oil over your whole face. Then, the minute you feel the slightest bump, apply a super-strength spot-buster containing benzoyl peroxide or get hold of a Zeno, a brilliant gadget that uses low-level heat to kill acne bacteria.

YOUR SKIN PRESCRIPTION:

1. Olay Daily Facials Clarify Lathering Cleanser, £4.49. This non-drying face wash contains hydroxy-acid extracts to keep imperfections at bay. >

- 2. **Bye Bye Blemish Clarifying Gel, £9.99**, is a deeply exfoliating serum that's gentle enough to be used all over the face.
- 3. **Ole Henriksen Roll On Blemish Attack, £20**, is so effective that it can only be used at night, as it may bleach skin in strong sunlight.
- 4. **Zeno, £129**, is safe, painless and proven to clear 90% of blemishes in 24 hours.
- 5. **The Organic Pharmacy Clear Skin Tincture, £10.99**. A few drops a day in water can help balance hormones and prevent stress breakouts.

YOUR SKIN GRIPE

MILD BUT REGULAR ACNE

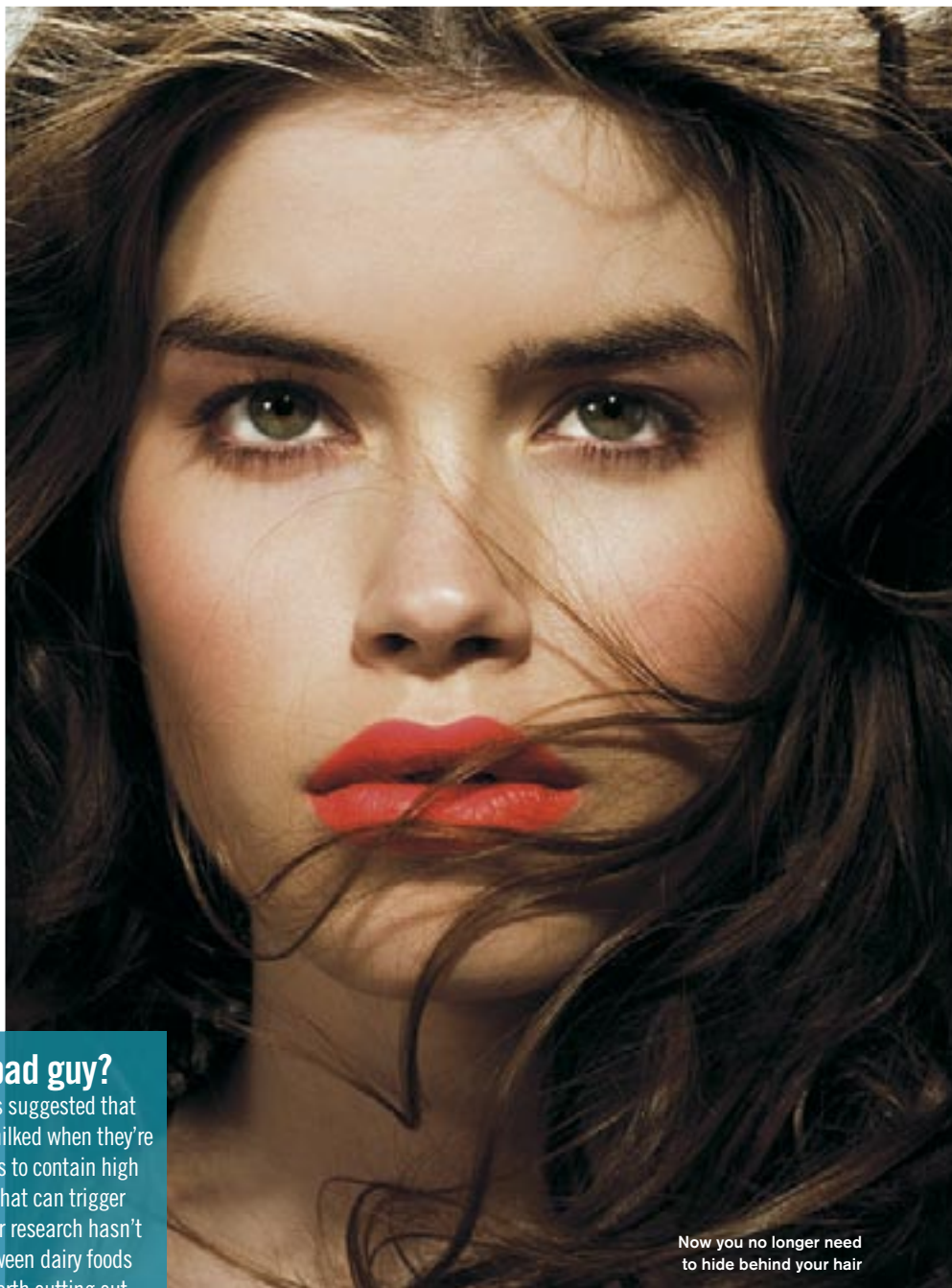
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: You're not confident going barefaced, as you seem to have a regular assortment of whiteheads, blackheads and red bumps, especially on your chin, forehead and jawline.

THE CAUSE: "There are four key factors that lead to blemishes: pore-clogging dead surface cells, increased oil production, a build-up of impurities and irritation," says Dr Tom Mammone of Clinique. "Even pollution has been linked to a bad complexion." Skincare guru Ole Henriksen suffered acne for years and is convinced that diet is crucial. "Too much sugar and fat can send insulin levels soaring, which stimulates excess sebum production," he says.

THE TREATMENT: "It's important to follow a regime focused on reducing inflammation, rather than applying just one product," says Pat Peterson, director of research at Aveda. Most experts suggest using a gentle cleanser with soothing qualities and introducing more powerful anti-acne ingredients into your moisturiser and/or serum. Regular exfoliation will help too, but gently does it. "Avoid grainy scrubs, as these can aggravate and burst pimples," says Sally. Your moisturiser should be oil-free, with antiseptic properties. The best ones contain hydroxy or salicylic acids, which are gentle but powerful pimple-fighters. "And avoiding high-GI foods transformed my skin," adds Ole. "I recommend cutting out all junk and refined foods, white sugar, honey, fizzy drinks and fruit juices."

Is milk the bad guy?

Recent research has suggested that because cows are milked when they're pregnant, milk tends to contain high levels of hormones that can trigger skin problems. Other research hasn't found any links between dairy foods and acne, but it's worth cutting out milk for a month to see if it helps your skin. For more information, visit www.acnemilk.com.



Now you no longer need to hide behind your hair

YOUR SKIN PRESCRIPTION:

- 1. **The Sanctuary Spa Cleansing Facial Wash, £5.95**, with healing vitamin E, chamomile and cucumber to gently dissolve grime.
- 2. **Aveda Outer Peace Blemish Relief Pads, £15**. These exfoliating pads contain pure plant extracts that calm redness.
- 3. **The Body Shop Tea Tree Oil Blemish Fade Night Lotion, £7.50**, contains tea tree oil and Tamanu oil to speed up healing while you snooze.
- 4. **DermaDoctor Ain't Misbehavin' Medicated Acne Control Serum, £32**, is a powerhouse of salicylic acid, hydroxyl

acid, tea tree oil and antioxidants to fight all causes of acne.

- 5. **Clinique Anti-Blemish Solutions Clearing Moisturizer, £15**, helps control oil and minimises the dryness and peeling you may get from using anti-acne treatments.

YOUR SKIN GRIPE

SEVERE AND PERSISTENT ACNE

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: You've suffered from spots since your teens and have never had a completely clear complexion. Your skin tends to erupt frequently and heal slowly.

THE CAUSE: "No one is entirely sure but full-blown acne is considered a genetically >

inherited disease that needs long-term treatment," says Sally.

THE TREATMENT: "You need to see your GP, rather than trying to tackle the problem yourself," says consultant dermatologist Dr Nick Lowe. "Your doctor will typically prescribe a combination of topical antibiotics, a Retin-A cream and an oral contraceptive, like Yasmin. Although it's controversial, a low dose of Roaccutane, such as ¼ of the normal dose, is unbeatable if you've suffered from recurring acne for years. It's the closest thing we have to a cure."

YOUR SKIN GRIPE

OILY SKIN WITH LARGE PORES

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: Despite your best efforts, by lunchtime you always look like you've been basted in oil. As well as having a shiny T-zone, your pores seem so big it feels like they're visible from space.

THE CAUSE: "If you naturally produce too much of the male hormone DHT, your sebaceous glands will pump out more sebum than your skin knows how to handle," says Dr Audrey Kunin, founder of Dermadoctor. Too much sebum also clogs your pores, giving them a 'jammed open' appearance, and because they don't contain muscle, pores can't quickly close again.

THE TREATMENT: The temptation is to strip away all the excess oil, but this can trick your body into producing more. "The gentle approach seems to allow your skin to rebalance itself naturally," confirms Sally. Avoid harsh toners and stick to a daily clay-based or foaming face wash, plus a 'non-comedogenic' (non pore-blocking) moisturiser with oil-absorbing properties. Use moisturiser sparingly on your largest pores and they'll become less visible. "A weekly clay-based mask helps pores contract and cleans out debris – plus, home microdermabrasion kits are great for reducing pore size," adds Wendy Lewis, author of *Complexion Perfection*.

YOUR SKIN PRESCRIPTION:

1. **Dr Sebagh Breakout Foaming Cleanser, £22**, gently restricts the production of sebum.
2. **Lancôme Pure Focus Moisturising Lotion, £28**. This oil-free fluid absorbs instantly, reduces surface bacteria and leaves a power-matt finish.
3. **Clarins Pore Minimizing Serum, £18.50**, prevents open pores by reducing the number of sebum-producing cells.
4. **Matis Purifying Mask, £23**. A blend

of kaolin clay and marine algae that's great for deeply congested skin.

5. **L'Oréal Paris Dermo Expertise Refinish Home Microdermabrasion Kit, £12.49**, is formulated with the same aluminium oxide micro-crystals used by dermatologists.

YOUR SKIN GRIPE

SMALL BUMPS UNDER THE SKIN'S SURFACE

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: Your skin is rough to the touch and covered with lots of pesky white spots that feel more like bumps and tend not to come to the surface.

THE CAUSE: This isn't acne but a condition known as 'milia' – tiny white cysts that form when skin cells become trapped rather than being exfoliated naturally. "Some people are more prone to milia," says Audrey, "although it's usually the result of smothering your skin in heavy creams and makeup that traps dirt in the follicles."

THE TREATMENT: "Milia on the cheeks is often a build-up of red dye from your blusher," says Sally, "so switch brands or ease up for a few weeks. Similarly, milia around the eyes could mean you're using an eye cream rich in mineral oils or petroleum jelly that can block pores in high concentrations." Once you've ditched the suspect products, use a gentle daily exfoliator to help keep the epidermis smooth. A daily facial sauna will loosen debris from your skin – soak a flannel in hot water laced with a purifying essential oil like eucalyptus and hold over your face for two minutes. If your milia still won't budge, don't attack your face with a needle – book in with a facialist instead, who'll lance them without any drama.

YOUR SKIN PRESCRIPTION:

1. **Dermalogica Daily Microfoliant, £29.40**. This clever powder foams with water to buff away dead cells every day.
2. **Clean & Clear Exfoliating Daily Wash, £2.96**, contains soft grains and antibacterial agents to help blitz bacteria.
3. **Ren Active 7 Radiant Eye Maintenance Gel, £18**, is a cutting-edge eye gel that de-puffs and firms without the use of any mineral oils.
4. **Ole Henriksen Skin Inhalation Therapy, £25**. Peppermint, eucalyptus and tangerine are a perfect uplifting and purifying combination.
5. **Neal's Yard Remedies Eucalyptus Globulus Organic Essential Oil, £4**.

YOU SHARE YOUR SKIN SOLUTIONS

The beauty channels at www.cosmopolitan.co.uk have been buzzing with your skin woes – and your super-skin solutions, too!

"I used to get depressed about my skin, but I had a **Dermalogica** facial and they show you what you're doing right or wrong. I'm so happy with my skin now, I can't believe it!" **Cutegal**

"Although my skin is really greasy, I've found that **Neutrogena Visibly Clear Gentle Exfoliating Wash [£3.83]** is very good, as well as tea tree oil." **Jughead**

"I have oily skin and used to get lots of spots – now I swear by **St Ives Blemish Control Apricot Scrub [£3.99]** and **Witch Doctor Gel [£3.29]**." **LisaYOx**

"I swear by **Chanel Oil Control Tissues [£15]**, which soak up oil but not your makeup." **QueenBee**

SHOULD I SEE A FACIALIST?

"Seeing a facialist can reduce your problem-skin symptoms and give you moral support, too," says Sally. "It'll also save you money by helping you buy the right skin products." Find a good facialist by asking friends for recommendations or by visiting www.dermalogica.com.

IS IT ACNE OR ROSACEA?

Rosacea is easily confused with adult acne, so how do you know which one you're suffering from?

"Rosacea is very rare under the age of 35," says Sally. "But if you have a combination of the following symptoms, it's worth asking your GP for a diagnosis – flushed skin, spider veins, oiliness, blemishes and super-sensitivity." Your doctor can advise on the right products, or try **Dermadoctor Cool, Calm & Corrected 2in1 Rosacea Treatment, £60**, which sorts out bacteria and irritation at the same time. 📌

BY KATE TURNER, STYLING INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN, PHOTOGRAPHS ANNA WATSON; HAIR DON BIRCHALL AT WOOD ASSOCIATES; USING PAUL MITCHELL MAKEUP ANGELA HAMILTON-DALEY USING BOBBI BROWN AND DERMALOGICA; MODEL CLAUDIA COOPER AT MODELS 1; IMAGINIFY GLASS; SWYTHSON; COMPLEXION PERFECTION; THE LOWDOWN ON ACNE/INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN