

WHY MEN HAVE BAD LIPS

'Lips are such an integral part of a man's intimacy, I don't understand why they're not more concerned about them,' says Poppy King, an Australian expert who is planning to launch a male lipcare product next year. 'Men only do something with their lips when it's got bad, rather than taking preventative care.' King says that men need more moisturising on their lips than most relied-upon products allow.

'It's about hydrating your lips,' she says, 'just putting a little bit of moisturiser on them before you go out and about.' King states that lips are the same as the face, and thus can be treated with the same products we use day in, day out. 'It really just traps some moisture in there. Chapstick is more topical. The point is: lips are just skin.'

As with hydrating the skin on the face, drinking water is essential. 'Whatever amount of water men think they need, they should double it,' says King. 'One of the worst things for lips is dehydration. I've been shocked by how little water every male friend of mine thinks he needs to drink. And you should avoid constantly licking your lips. It's like dropping water on hot, dry sand; moisture dries skin out when it comes from the outside.'

If the lips have been left to dry so badly they peel, King says the instinct to rip off the skin should be avoided. 'One of the best ways to remove dead skin is to get a spare toothbrush and exfoliate the top layer, using a circular motion,' she says. 'Try not to pull it off. The skin on the lips is very fragile.'

King's product for men will be the first time she's created something that is purely preventative and healing – previously her mainstay has been lipstick. This points to a crucial distinction: women have less trouble with their lips, because they are used to caring for them as a natural part of their beauty regime. 'We know women already look after the health and preventative care of the lips,' she says. 'For men, it's time to look at both.'

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