



Beauty 911 by Debbie Madsen

You ask... the experts answer

Q Will makeup get contaminated if you put your fingers into it? Should you use a Q-tip or a spatula instead? **Kerri, Toronto** Lucky for us, much of today's makeup can be applied quickly and easily by fingertip. But, according to Julie Wong, supervisor at the Shiseido Beauty Institute in Toronto, even if you dipped a just-washed finger into a bottle of foundation, you may be contaminating the product, leaving you susceptible to rashes, bumps, redness or breakouts. But a solid-powder product, such as eyeshadow, poses little threat: "Eyeshadow doesn't have the oil content as, say, a foundation does, [which is more prone to bacteria]. It's the emollient-type products that contaminate more easily." For more liquid or creamy products, Wong suggests using something disposable, like a Q-tip, and advises, if using a spatula, to clean it with alcohol and put it where it's not exposed to air, bacteria or dust.

Q I'm a 23-year-old flight attendant who exercises regularly. Should I be suffering from varicose veins at such a young age? I'd like to avoid surgery, so are there other ways to get rid of them? **Renee, via email** Unfortunately, one can develop varicose veins at any age (in some cases, it's hereditary), but being on your feet all day long may contribute to the problem—and exercise won't help, says Dr. Trevor Born of the Toronto Institute of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery: "The veins have an inherent structure, and once they start appearing, there's nothing other than some type of treatment that causes injury to the vein that will rid of them." A varicose vein occurs when one of the valves from the deep venous system is incompetent. "You will have all that pressure from the heart down to that point in the leg that pushes against that vein and causes it to dilate and fill up," he explains. There are a number of possible causes, including congenital breakdown of the valve, certain prescription drugs—and, yes, crossing your legs. The most common way to treat veins is sclerotherapy (which involves a solution injected into the vein). It has a high success rate but usually requires repeat treatments. Cost: about \$75-250/treatment. There are also lasers that are effective. Cost: about \$150-250/treatment. Dr. Born also recommends compression stockings (ask your doctor about a prescription) to compress the legs, collapse the veins and keep the blood circulation going. Finally, even though you may not want to consider surgical stripping of the vein, Dr. Born says "if they're painful, it's reasonable to consider removing them." ■

win!
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The beauty editor will select the winning question—if you penned it, the cosmetics are yours! For contest rules, see Fashion Site.

de la Renta prize for asking: If you rinse your hair with cool water, will it lock in the moisture from your conditioner? All along the hair shaft are scales, sort of like on a fish. This is the hair's cuticle. When you wash your hair, the cuticle expands (the scales lift). What a conditioner does is flatten those scales again. Rinsing with cool water is thought, by some, to help tighten those scales further, trapping moisture underneath. But, according to Brian Thompson of the Philip Kingsley Trichological Centre of New York, any benefits from a cool rinse are fleeting: "Cold water will close the cuticle slightly, but any moisture will evaporate quite quickly. [As soon as the cuticle] gets to room temperature, it's going to revert to type." Instead, Thompson suggests you look in the benefits of your conditioner with a weak organic-acid rinse (mix one teaspoon of white vinegar or lemon juice in half a litre of water): "As the pH goes down, the hair shrinks and the cuticle closes, also improving sheen because you get better light reflection."

ancy Stoble of Saskatoon wins December's Oscar

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ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS

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