

The Skinny On Sensitive Skin

(NAPSA)—Here are surprising facts about the skin you're in.

Does your skin ever feel like it's burning, stinging or tight? Do you sometimes even see redness and flaking? If the answer is yes, you probably think you have sensitive skin, right? Not necessarily. While studies indicate that as many as 50 percent of people in the U.S., Europe and Japan believe they have sensitive skin, surprisingly, only 14 percent actually do.

The only way to truly diagnose sensitive skin is to make an appointment with your dermatologist and begin, through a process of elimination, to rule out potential causes.

According to New York dermatologist Dr. Rhonda Pomerantz, people with truly sensitive skin experience either reduced tolerance or heightened sensitivity to external irritants all the time.

"Certain things may trigger reactions in patients with sensitive skin but whether the diagnosis is sensitive skin or not, a lot of people still feel their skin is 'touchy.'" Dr. Pomerantz says these perceptions may be attributed to one of three things:

- **Allergic reactions** are commonly mistaken for sensitive skin. They are the skin's response to ingredients that it cannot tolerate. Many people may find they are allergic to fragrances or preservatives found in certain cosmetic or skincare products. If this is the case, choose skincare products formulated to be especially mild.

"Look for key words on packaging," says Dr. Pomerantz, "words like hypo-allergenic, dermatologist tested, fragrance-free, color-free and non-comedogenic (meaning, doesn't clog up pores) can indicate products that are mild and most likely will not cause irritation." Examples of such skincare



products include gentle cleansers like Olay Daily Facials Sensitive Skin and mild moisturizers such as Olay Active Hydrating Beauty Fluid or Cream for Sensitive Skin.

- Rosacea, eczema and seborrhea are common medical skin conditions that are often mistaken for sensitive skin because they exhibit some of the same symptoms: stinging, burning, flaking and redness. Consult a physician if you sense that you may have one of these conditions. You may also benefit from using a gentle cleanser if this is the case. Try Olay Complete Body Wash Sensitive Skin formula for personal cleansing.

- Dry skin is commonly associated with sensitive skin since it is, in fact, more prone to external irritants. When skin is dry, the skin barrier is altered to such a point that it no longer protects the skin from certain irritants. Avoid harsh soaps that tend to further damage the skin barrier. Instead, opt for a gentle body cleanser like Olay Complete Body Wash Dry Skin formula and hydrate both face and body regularly with a sensitive skin moisturizer.

For more information on products for sensitive skin, visit www.oly.com.