

# THE FLO GUIDE TO GLOWING SKIN

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Your skin reflects what is going on inside your body. For example, did you know that breakouts at different times of the month indicate estrogen overload, testosterone sensitivity, and cortisol imbalance?

What does that mean for your skin care routine? It means that as your hormones shift and change during each phase of your 28-day hormone cycle, your skin care routine needs to shift and change, too. Your skin is not the same from week to week — the natural hormone fluctuations you experience as part of your cycle impact the skin's texture, thickness, and clarity — so how you take care of your skin should not be the same either.

By learning more about the four phases of your cycle and understanding the physiology of each phase (if you're just getting started tracking your cycle, the [MyFlo app](#) can help), you will be able to keep your skin looking its dewy best.

# HOW YOUR HORMONES AFFECT YOUR SKIN

Estrogen and progesterone levels affect the thickness of the skin in each phase of your cycle. During the follicular phase, and especially during ovulation, high levels of estrogen boost collagen, make the skin thicker, and improve elasticity. You can thank the estrogen during this phase for that famed 'ovulation glow'.

Testosterone levels rise during the luteal phase and that helps keep skin thick. But testosterone is a double-edged sword when it comes to skin. Studies show a link between spikes in this hormone and acne. So this is the crucial point in your cycle when you either become vulnerable to breakouts or go through the second half of your cycle with clear skin.

What causes some women to break out while others barely notice a blemish? The difference is in the body's ability to efficiently process and eliminate the excess estrogen and testosterone in the system as levels rise. If your body isn't processing hormones properly during your luteal phase, excess estrogen and excess testosterone accumulate and fuel acne. This happens in two ways: the excess estrogen causes estrogen dominance and skin inflammation, and the extra testosterone triggers the sebaceous glands to produce more oil.

Premenstrually and during your period, estrogen drops and your skin gets thinner, retains less moisture, and produces less collagen. Progesterone is rising and falling in the luteal phase and that can make skin conditions even worse. This is what makes the week before your period and the week of your period such a sensitive time for your skin.

The Cycle Syncing Method® helps balance these natural hormone fluctuations and supports the body's detox system with food, supplements, and lifestyle. The Cycle Syncing Method® can also be used to tailor your skincare routine to your skin's unique needs in each phase of your cycle. Specifically, here is what I recommend for the different phases of your cycle:

**In the follicular phase:** Rising levels of estrogen thickens the epidermis by boosting collagen production. Chemical exfoliators are best during this phase like Lactic Acid. Try aloe vera gel; it's a natural exfoliator that has anti-inflammatory properties, and it keeps moisture sealed into your skin. This is also a great time to go for a facial and get any extractions done.

**In the ovulatory phase:** Estrogen and testosterone peak during this phase and if your endocrine system is functioning optimally, these hormone spikes don't cause a lot of problems. But if your body isn't eliminating excess hormones properly, the extra estrogen and testosterone accumulate and result in acne. Opt for a gentle toner. It's still okay to get a facial during this phase, but skip the extractions and try a clarifying mask instead. To help eliminate excess estrogen via the lymphatic system, try dry brushing.

**Luteal:** During the second half of your cycle, you naturally produce more sebum and experience more inflammation. Plummeting progesterone levels during this time can make skin conditions worse. During this phase, try oil serums and masks with fruit acids to promote skin renewal and regeneration, add hydration, and stimulate collagen production.

**Menstrual:** In the few days leading up to your period and during your bleed, estrogen drops and your skin gets thinner, retains less moisture, and produces less collagen. This is the time to use soothing hydrating masks to calm any inflammation.

## IN THE FLO: SKIN CARE REFERENCE CHART

PHASE	WHAT'S HAPPENING	PHASE-SPECIFIC SKIN CARE
FOLLICULAR	Estrogen is on the rise, making the skin thicker and more elastic	Any intense exfoliation should happen during this phase  Any extractions should happen during this phase  <b>Try:</b> Aloe vera gel. It is a natural moisturizer and exfoliant with anti-inflammatory properties
OVULATION	Estrogen and testosterone peak during this phase. If these hormones aren't detoxed properly, the result is acne.	Facials are still okay during this phase, but no extractions. Opt for a clarifying mask instead.  <b>Try:</b> A gentle toner; dry brushing
LUTEAL	Increased sebum production, Increased inflammation, lower progesterone	<b>Try:</b> Oil serums and masks with fruit acids
MENSTRUATION	Estrogen drops, making skin thinner and less elastic	<b>Try:</b> Hydrating masks and Vit C serums

# SUPPLEMENTS FOR CLEAR SKIN

Targeted supplements also help support clear skin. Here are the five key supplements I recommend for addressing skin issues from the inside out:

**Magnesium + Calcium.** Magnesium is an important nutrient for fighting inflammation (acne is inflammatory). Calcium is part of the body's tissue matrix—comprising bones, cells, and skin—and is important for skin cell renewal. Taking a combined magnesium-calcium supplement can reduce inflammation and acne.

**Omega-3s.** Getting enough omega-3 fatty acids from fish or flax oil can improve skin significantly. With fish oil, many women see clearer, softer, smoother skin (as well as stronger hair and nails) in just a few days.

**Zinc.** Zinc deficiency is a common issue for many women. When we are deficient in zinc, our pores become easily irritated by bacteria and show redness. Research has shown that zinc supplementation can be very effective in easing acne even when compared to commonly prescribed antibiotics.

**Probiotics.** We need probiotics for a healthy gut. A common symptom of a damaged and depleted microbiome is acne and other skin issues like rosacea. It's particularly important with hormonal acne as your microbiome assists your body in processing and eliminating excess estrogen. If you've been on the pill or antibiotics for any length of time, probiotics could be key to getting your skin back on track.

**B Vitamins.** Your skin needs B-vitamins to regenerate and renew as they provide the energy your cells need for fuel. Taking a good B-complex every day that includes a high level of B6 will target hormonal or premenstrual acne. B6 prevents skin inflammation and overproduction of sebum (the oil your skin produces that can create acne issues).

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