

tempting to use aggressive benzoyl-peroxide spot treatments, you may just aggravate already dry skin, warns Kimball. Acne medication, she adds, works better at preventing breakouts than healing them, so opt instead for a non-comedogenic moisturizer with salicylic acid, like Aveeno Clear Complexion (\$14; drugstores) or Clinique Total Turnaround cream (bottom photo on previous page, center, \$31; dept. stores). If both dryness and acne are severe and persist, see your dermatologist. Some prescription acne treatments like Differin (previous page, right) and Avita come in cream formulas designed for people with dry skin, says Katchen.

Q. Honestly, do lip plumpers really work?

For those of us not blessed with Angelina Jolie's naturally full pout, some lip plumpers can offer a subtle, temporary boost, says Santa Monica dermatologist Ava Shamban, though they can't provide the same effect as an injectable filler. Just like biting your lips, most plumpers work by causing swelling. Popular formulas like Duwop Lip Venom (Elisha Cuthbert is a fan) and Too Faced Lip Injection treatment (above, left, \$18.50; Sephora) contain irritants (like cinnamon or hot pepper) that make blood rush to the lips, explains dermatologist Cybele Fishman of N.Y.C. The result? A bee-stung look—and a bee-stung sensation. If you can't stand the tingling, try formulas like City Lips Collagen Plumping (center, in Barcelona, \$29; 800-413-2489) or Garden Botanika Volumizing lipsticks (right, in Black Raspberry, \$16; 800-968-7842). Though the jury is out on whether—or how well—they work, both products contain peptides, compounds



Elisha Cuthbert



(often found in skin-care products) that researchers believe may cause a modest increase in collagen production. It's possible lips may absorb peptides better than the skin on the face because skin on the lips is thinner, says Shamban. Keep in mind, however, you must use them daily for a few weeks before it's possible to see results.

Q. I wash my hands a lot. What can I do to keep them from cracking during the winter?

If you're germ-phobic during flu season and constantly dry out your hands by washing with soap, you might increase your germ exposure, says Mt. Kisco, N.Y., dermatologist David Bank. "Cracks in the skin are a common place for germs to set up shop," he says, so prevention is key. Replace harsh, drying soaps with milder cleansers like Cetaphil Gentle Cleansing bar (\$3; drugstores). After washing, while hands are slightly damp, apply moisturizer. Many people don't do this because it makes hands greasy, says Bank. Choose a light lotion, and reapply after washing hands.

He recommends formulas from Neutrogena or Lubriderm (both at drugstores). If your hands are already cracked try Nexcare Skin Crack Care or Band-Aid Liquid bandage (\$8 each; at drugstores), flexible waterproof coatings that seal in moisture and protect skin. —Sue Chung

Please send your questions to *In Style*, Beauty You Asked, 18-47B, 1271 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020, or e-mail us at youasked@instylemag.com.