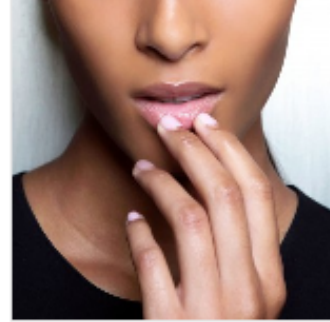


## Help! My Lips Are Always Peeling and Cracked

SKIN | 07.13.15 by [Deven Hopp](#)

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Imaxtree

I'm not sure if chronic dry lips is a medically recognized condition, but whether it is or not, I certainly have it. Nothing I use, do, or try works for more than a day or two. And I try *a lot*. Name a lip product, and I've tried it. Lip scrubs? Check. Medicated balms? Check. Masks? Check. Rather than accept defeat, I decided to consult two experts—professional estheticians [Susan Ciminelli](#) and Natarsha Bimson of [Spa Sophia](#)—and get answers.

**Scroll through to see what they have to say!**

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### Your Lips

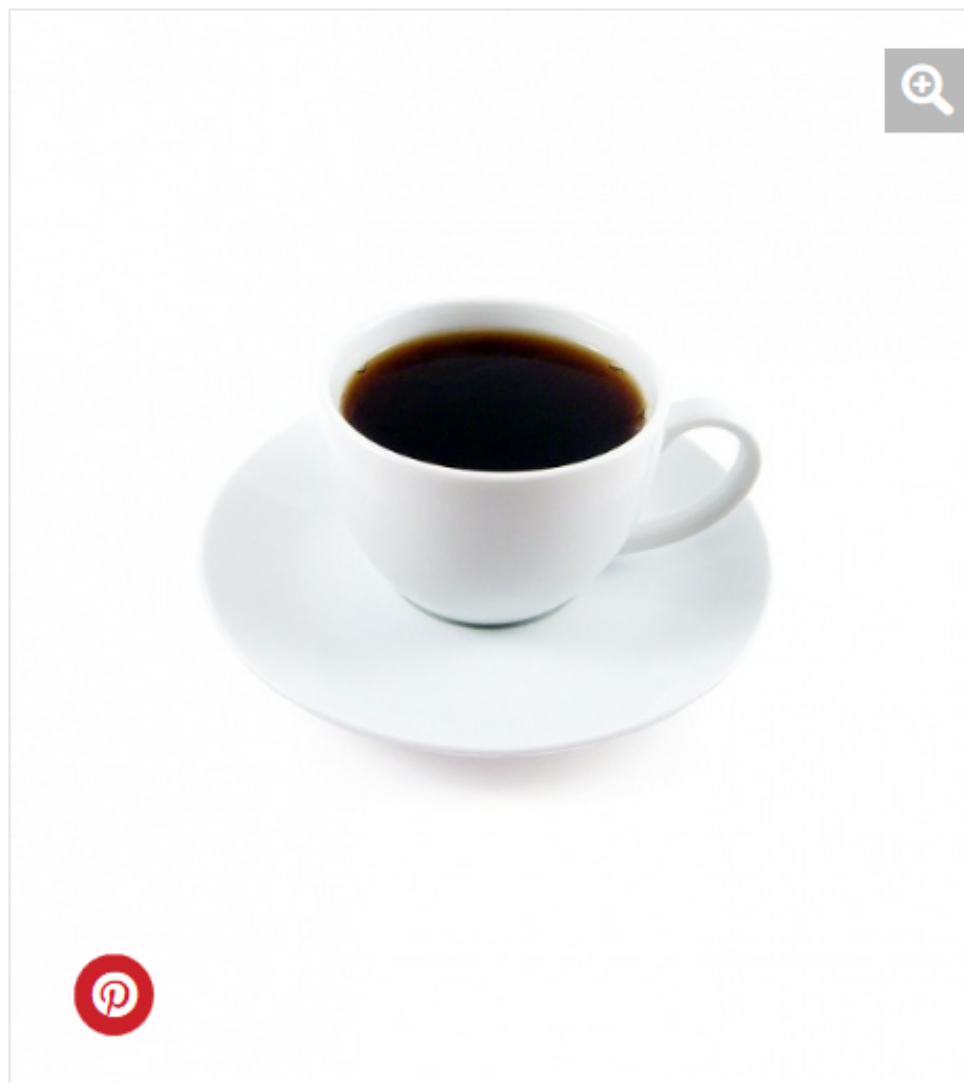


PHOTO: Imaxtree

The first step to correcting a problem is to understand it. “The skin of your lips, like the skin around your eye area, is different from the rest of your skin because it doesn't have oil glands,” Bimson says. “Unlike the eye area, which draws the oil from your face in, the lips do not.” That partially explains why lips get dry, but hardly tackles the peeling and cracked condition. Bimson attributes that to a combination of lip licking and mouth breathing. “Excessive lip licking can cause a form of dermatitis (skin inflammation) commonly referred to as ‘windburn,’ which is inflamed, sore, extremely chapped lips.” Even if you don't consider your lip licking “excessive,” Ciminelli says adding weather conditions like harsh winds and the sun's drying rays creates a recipe for disaster.

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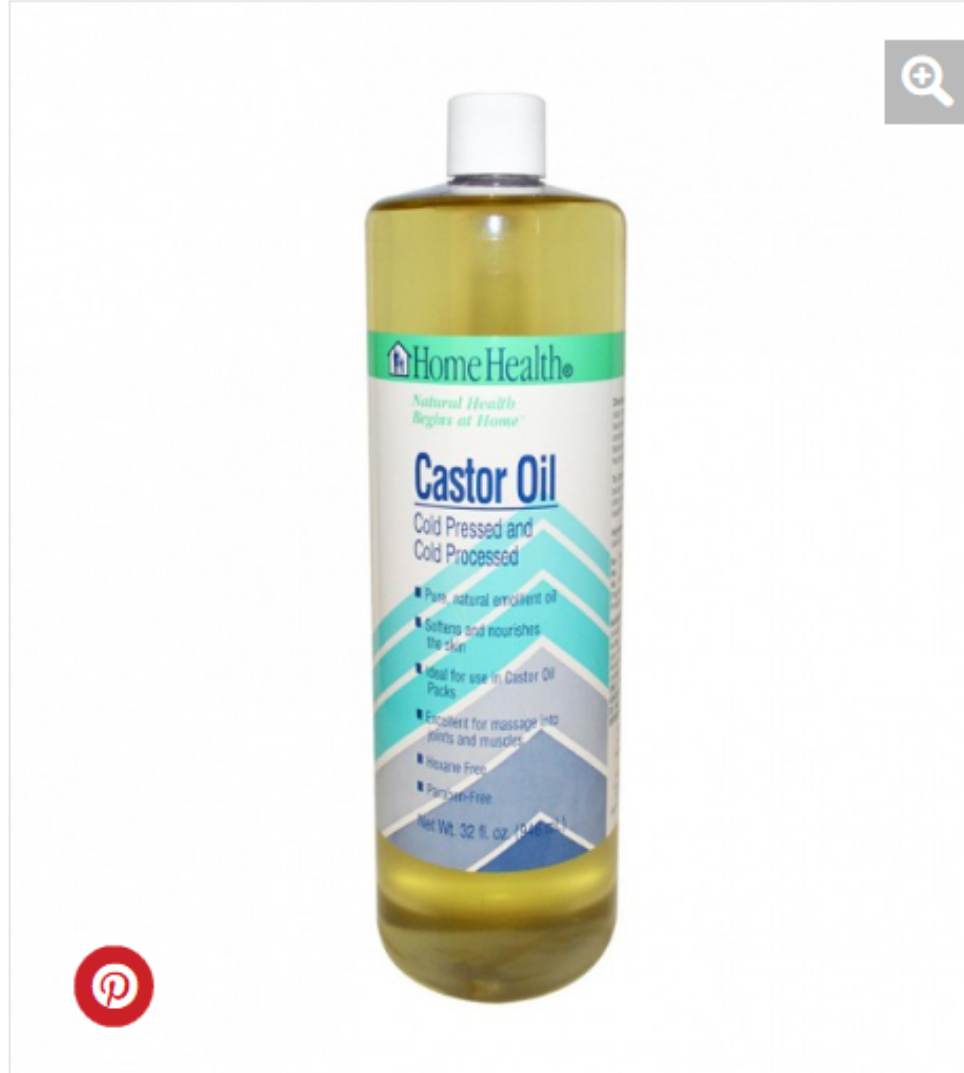
### Lip Irritants



Here's an easy tip I can get on board with—use a straw. “Alcoholic beverages and coffee dehydrate the skin,” Ciminelli says, “so don't let artificial ingredients from food or beverage ever touch your lips.” Just like the rest of your skin, your lips react to the chemicals. But since the skin on your lips is more delicate than the skin on your face and body, dehydrating chemicals affect your lips faster.

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### The Ingredients List



One of the most common ingredients in lip products is petroleum. This is fine if your lips are soft, smooth, and supple but not ideal if they're chapped. “Petrochemical lip products are great at *preventing* moisture loss, but not so great at moisturizing lips that are already dry,” Bimson says. “Castor oil is another ingredient commonly used in lip products (especially lipstick) that's great at drawing oil, so it can also have a drying effect.” Check the ingredients list before you apply anything to your lips. Ciminelli recommends finding products that are loaded with skin-nourishing vitamins, minerals, and essential oils. She says you can even use the skincare products you use on your face right over your lips, but only the ones that contain soothing ingredients.

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### What You Can Do



Let's summarize. If you want to put an end to peeling and cracked lips, avoid licking your lips and mouth breathing, sip through straws, and be aware of what ingredients you put on your lips. Bimson also recommends exfoliating once a week, using a lip balm with SPF during the day, and applying a thicker formula for night. She likes Fresh's [Sugar Lip Treatment](#) (\$23). Ciminelli is a fan of Blistex [Medicated Lip Ointment](#) (\$3). “It works very quickly to heal chapped lips—there's nothing like it on the market,” she says.