

17 Ways to Get Rid of Bags Under Your Eyes

What you can do

Although there are countless products on the market which claim to help de-puff and lighten the area under the eyes, they don't always work.

Drinking more water and applying a cold compress can help shrink eye bags quickly, but the only way to reduce their appearance in the long term is to make a few lifestyle changes. This is especially true if your eye bags and dark circles are genetically inherited.

Other common causes include:

- allergies
- [eczema](#)
- [chronic fatigue](#)
- pigmentation issues
- sun exposure
- aging

Keep reading to learn how you can get rid of your under-eye bags for good.

1. Apply tea bags

Tea isn't just for sipping. You can actually use caffeinated tea bags under your eyes to help with dark circles and bags.

The caffeine in the tea contains powerful antioxidants and may increase blood flow to your skin. It's also said to protect against UV rays and potentially slow the aging process.

[Green tea](#), in particular, has been touted by researchers for its potential anti-inflammatory effects, as shown in [one study](#)[Trusted Source](#)[Trusted Source](#).

To do this:

1. Steep two tea bags for 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Let the tea bags chill in the refrigerator for 20 minutes.
3. Then, squeeze out the extra liquid and apply to your under-eye area.
4. Leave the tea bags on for 15 to 30 minutes.

2. Use a cold compress

Toss out those pricey creams. Relief from dark circles may be as simple as using a cold compress you make using materials you already own. Applying cold to the area can help the blood vessels constrict quickly for some temporary relief.

Although you can purchase a cold compress at the store, [do-it-yourself methods](#) can work just as well.

Some DIY options include a:

- chilled teaspoon
- cool cucumber
- wet washcloth
- bag of frozen veggies

Before applying, wrap your compress with a soft cloth to protect your skin from getting [too frosty](#). You only need to apply the compress for a [few minutes](#) to see results.

3. Clear out your sinuses with a neti pot

Some people swear that using a neti pot can help remove your under-eye bags and dark circles. A neti pot is a device you fill with a saltwater (normal saline) solution. You place the spout in your nose and [irrigate your sinuses](#), removing mucus and other debris.

To do this:

1. Fill your neti pot with a saltwater solution — 1/2 teaspoon of salt into 1 cup of water. Heat the water to dissolve, then cool to body temperature before use. Warm or lukewarm is best for comfort.
2. Tilt your head sideways over the sink. Place the spout of the pot in the upper nostril, the one now closer to the ceiling.
3. Breathe through your mouth as you gently pour the solution into the nostril. The solution should drain through the other nostril.
4. Repeat this process with your head tilted the other way.
5. Rinse your pot after use with filtered, distilled, or otherwise sterile water.
6. Let the pot air dry before storing.

[You can find inexpensive neti pots online.](#) If you choose to try this method at home, be sure to use distilled or sterilized water to create your saltwater solution. You may also use boiled tap water that has cooled to a safe temperature.

4. Stay hydrated

Water makes up about [60 percent](#) of your body weight. Given this, it may not be surprising that dehydration can contribute to under-eye bags. Upping your water intake should help.

[How much is enough?](#) Experts [recommend](#) drinking around 13 cups of fluids a day for men, and about 9 cups of fluids for women, per day.

Don't like water? The good news is that all fluids count toward your daily total. Still, water is a low-calorie option. Try sparkling waters, flavored waters, or [even water infused with fruit](#). Hot or cold herbal decaffeinated tea is another good choice.

5. Take an antihistamine

[Allergies](#) can cause puffy, dark circles under your eyes. You may also experience redness or watery, itchy eyes. This reaction is caused by your immune system's response to something that irritates it, or allergens.

If you feel your under-eye bags might be allergy related, ask your doctor about taking [over-the-counter \(OTC\) allergy medications](#). Some brands include:

- Benadryl
- [Zyrtec](#)
- Claritin

It's also a good idea to avoid potential allergens whenever possible.

Certain personal care products, like soaps, makeup, or hair dyes, may be allergens. If you're having trouble identifying the cause, consider keeping a

diary to see what substances or other things cause the most reaction. If this is a chronic problem talk to your doctor about [allergy testing](#).

6. Add retinol cream to your routine

You may have used creams in the past, but concentrating on specific ingredients is key. Retinol creams have been used for a variety of skin issues, including:

- [acne](#)
- [psoriasis](#)
- aging
- certain cancers

This ingredient is related to vitamin A and it comes in cream, gel, or liquid form.

How does retinol help with eye bags? When applied to the skin, this ingredient can improve [collagen](#) deficiency. You may find lower concentrations of retinol in different OTC products, but stronger creams require a prescription from your dermatologist.

Retinol is generally applied to skin [once a day](#), about a half hour after washing your face. Don't use retinol creams or take extra vitamin A if you're pregnant.

7. Use lightening products

Skin lightening creams contain an ingredient called hydroquinone. This ingredient interferes with the production of melanin in the skin. This can help reduce the appearance of dark bags or under-eye circles.

Many creams, gels, and lotions you'll find over the counter contain [2 percent](#) of hydroquinone. You can get higher concentrations by prescription from your dermatologist. You'll need to use these products regularly to see lasting results.

It's important to note that the positive effects of hydroquinone are reversed when skin is exposed to sunlight, so you should only apply at night. Some people also experience dryness, irritation, and other mild skin issues while using skin lightening products. Discontinue use if you have a reaction.

8. Wear sunscreen every day

Protecting your skin against the sun's rays can help with a number of dermatological issues, like:

- premature aging
- skin cancer
- discoloration

As a result, wearing sunscreen may also help with your under-eye bags and dark circles.

The [American Academy of Dermatology](#) suggests that all people wear sunscreen. Broad-spectrum protection against UVA and UVB rays is important. So is choosing a formula that is SPF 30 or higher and water-resistant. Reapply as necessary or directed on the package instructions. Choose a daily face moisturizer that's also SPF 30 or higher.

[Here's a selection of sunscreens with high SPF.](#)

You can also avoid the sun's harmful rays by:

- sitting in the shade

- wearing protective clothing
- avoiding tanning beds

9. See your dermatologist about microneedling

[Microneedling](#) is also known as collagen induction therapy. Proponents say it reduces wrinkles, scarring, and even pigment issues, like dark circles and under-eye bags.

The procedure involves fine needles that are used to puncture the skin. This creates a controlled injury of sorts that, in turn, rejuvenates the skin being treated.

This procedure isn't for those who want instant gratification. It's usually performed over the course of six sessions spaced a month or so apart. Microneedling costs less than more traditional laser procedures.

There are also some risks, though the recovery time is relatively fast. People may run into issues like:

- bleeding
- bruising
- infection
- scarring

Dermatologists don't recommend the at-home kits as they're less effective and there's some danger of infection transmission. Don't share needles with other people to prevent disease transmission. This approach isn't a good choice for people who have a history of keloids or who easily scar.

10. Take your makeup off before bed

Improving your nightly routine may also help you avoid bags under your eyes. In particular, it's important to wash your face before bed each night.

There are several reasons why you shouldn't sleep in makeup. First, if you sleep with mascara or other eye makeup on your eyes, you may:

- irritate them
- experience an allergic reaction
- develop an infection that creates redness, puffiness, or other symptoms

Some say forgetting to wash your face may cause wrinkles or damage the skin in other ways. How exactly? When you sleep in makeup, you're exposing your skin to free radicals. This has the potential to create what's called oxidative stress, which [may prematurely age](#) your skin.

11. Stay elevated while you sleep

Try elevating your head with extra pillows while you sleep. Using [two or more](#) pillows should do the trick. [You may even consider purchasing a special wedge pillow.](#) How does this work? Elevating your head helps to prevent the pooling of fluid in your lower eyelids that creates puffiness while you sleep.

If propping up your head hurts your neck or you can't fall asleep, you may also consider elevating the entire top end of your bed by a few inches. You can use bricks under the bed posts or [buy special bed risers](#) that are specifically made for this purpose.

12. If you can, get at least eight hours of sleep

Beyond how you sleep, *how much* you sleep is also a factor. Although limited sleep may not actually cause under-eye circles, getting [little sleep](#) may make your complexion paler. Any shadows or dark circles you have may be more obvious as a result.

Most adults should aim to get between [seven and eight hours](#) of sleep each night.

According to [Mayo Clinic](#), if you're having trouble settling down to rest, try these tricks:

- Try creating a sleep schedule, or a regular bedtime and wake-time.
- Avoid caffeinated beverages and foods 6 to 12 hours before your bedtime.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages around bedtime.
- Finish all meals and snacks two hours before bedtime.
- Finish all strenuous exercise a few hours before bedtime.
- Turn off televisions, cell phones, and other electronic devices one hour before bedtime.

13. Eat more collagen-rich foods

As you get older, the muscles and tissues that support your eyelids weaken. This means that your skin may begin to sag, including the fat that's usually around your eyes.

Upping your intake of [vitamin C](#) can help your body absorb more [hyaluronic acid](#). This essential acid is naturally found in the body, but the amount stored decreases with age.

Foods rich in vitamin C and amino acids can also help with [collagen production](#) through boosting your levels of hyaluronic acid, creating healthier skin.

Good sources of vitamin C include:

- oranges
- red peppers
- kale
- Brussels sprouts
- broccoli
- strawberries

14. Eat more iron-rich foods, too

[Iron deficiency anemia](#) is a condition where the blood is lacking red blood cells. These cells are responsible for carrying oxygen to tissues in the body. Iron deficiency can cause dark circles under the eyes and even pale skin.

Other symptoms include things like:

- extreme fatigue
- cold hands and feet
- brittle nails

If you suspect you may be anemic, it's a good idea to visit your doctor. Your doctor will check this with a simple blood test. You may need special [iron](#)

[supplements](#) to get back on track. For mild cases, increasing your dietary intake of iron may help.

Iron-rich foods include:

- red meat, pork, and poultry
- seafood
- beans
- leafy green veggies, like kale and spinach
- raisins, apricots, and other dried fruits
- iron-fortified foods, like cereals, breads, and pastas
- peas

15. Cut back on salty foods

Eating too many salty foods may be at the root of your under-eye bags. Salt contributes to your body's fluid retention and can make you puffy overall. It may also lead to other health issues, like [heart disease](#) and [stroke](#).

The American Heart Association recommends consuming [2,300 milligrams \(mg\)](#) or less of salt each day. Ideally, adults should consume no more than 1,500 mg of salt each day.

As a guide, here's how many milligrams are in different teaspoon (tsp) measurements of salt:

- 1/4 tsp = 575 mg sodium
- 1/2 tsp = 1,150 mg sodium
- 3/4 tsp = 1,725 mg sodium
- 1 tsp = 2,300 mg sodium

[Read packages carefully](#) to see how much salt is in your favorite snacks. One way to immediately lower the salt in your diet is to avoid eating packaged, processed foods. Instead, try eating a diet based more on whole foods — fresh fruits and veggies — where you can control the salt content.

16. Cut back on alcohol

You may consider also cutting back on alcohol to see relief. Why does this work? It's a similar idea to drinking more water. [Drinking alcohol](#) contributes to dehydration, and dehydration may lead to bags and dark circles under your eyes.

If you're craving a special drink, try grabbing a flavored sparkling water or infusing regular water with fruit.

17. Quit smoking

[Smoking](#) depletes your body's stores of vitamin C, which is the vitamin responsible for creating healthy collagen in your skin. If you smoke, you may deal with issues like wrinkles, discoloration, and even under-eye bags and dark circles.

[Quitting smoking](#) also helps with a host of other health issues. You can [add years](#) to your life, get rid of stained teeth, and reduce your chances of developing [diabetes](#), [cardiovascular disease](#), and certain cancers.

You may experience [nicotine withdrawal](#) symptoms in the first couple weeks after quitting cold turkey. These symptoms should fade within [10 to 14 days](#).

For support in quitting smoking, visit [Smokefree.gov](#).

When to see your doctor

Many causes of swelling and discoloration under the eyes aren't serious and may respond well to at-home treatment. That said, if you notice these symptoms under just one eye or if they get worse over time, it's a good idea to visit your doctor.

Some cases of under-eye bags may be the result of an infection or other medical issue that needs special attention.

You should also see your doctor if your swelling is:

- severe and long-lasting
- joined by redness, pain, or itching
- affecting other parts of your body, like your legs

Your doctor may offer some long-term solutions, like prescription creams or other treatments that work to reduce swelling and discoloration. Options include:

- laser therapy
- chemical peels
- injectable fillers to treat puffy eyelids

These treatments may need to be repeated for the best results.