



9 Terrible Things That Happen When You Use Dirty Makeup Brushes

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By now, you know that cleaning your makeup brushes is a pretty important part of your beauty routine. Of course, we all get a little lazy from time to time. But if you need a good wake-up call to keep you on your toes, here are a few really gross (and weird!) things that can happen when you skip washing those bristles.

1. Your pores can get clogged up.

It's great that you're not touching your face so much with your fingers when you apply makeup, but if your tools are filthy, you could still wind up breaking out. "If you don't wash your makeup brushes enough, you spread dirt and bacteria from your face, to your makeup, then back to your face," explains Laramie, pro makeup artist and founder of Book Your Look. "If you've been breaking out and you've tried or ruled out everything else, your makeup brushes could be at fault."

2. You could get a staph infection.

"Through daily use, makeup brushes can accumulate dead skin cells, dirt, oil, pollution, and bacteria," says Dr. Debbie Palmer, dermatologist and co-founder of Dermatology Associates of New York. "These includes staphylococcus, streptococcus, and e coli, fungus, and viruses." Think this sounds far-fetched? An Australian woman contracted a staph infection after sharing makeup brushes with a friend, leaving her paralyzed in the legs and arms.

3. Your makeup will look worse.

One of the biggest reasons to use makeup brushes in the first place is so your makeup goes on more smoothly than if you simply use your fingers. But if they're already caked up with last week's makeup, how can they apply today's properly?

4. You could get pink eye.

Conjunctivitis, also known as pink eye, can spread by sharing cosmetics, including makeup brushes. While it's a common and non-deadly infection, unlike that in number 2 above, pink eye is nevertheless something you probably want to avoid whenever possible.

5. Your skin can get irritated.

When all that gross bacteria and grime builds up, you could wind up with stiffer (read: not soft) bristles that can really aggravate your skin. And blemished skin just needs more makeup to even it out — not a cycle you want to get in.

6. You'll waste your money.

Brushes that are well-cared-for last longer, simple as that. So don't let your hard-earned cash go to waste — keep your tools clean!

7. You can pull your eyelashes out.

Curling your lashes makes a huge difference in your look, but imagine what would happen if your eyelash curler is full of sticky mascara from days past. Yeah, ouch. Even worse: Leftover mascara bits can create clumps and crumbles on your eyelashes.

8. You risk getting more wrinkles.

That's right — another bad habit that leads to wrinkles. "Dirty makeup brushes can expose the skin to oxidative stress from free radicals, which causes a breakdown of collagen and elastin and can result in premature aging" explains Dr. Palmer. Yikes!

9. You may attract bugs.

Yes, dear friends, if you don't pay attention to your tools, you could wind up like Stevie Miller, whose video of her makeup sponge containing bugs went viral earlier this year. If you ever needed a reason to clean your makeup brushes and sponges, let it be this.