

EXFOLIATION

What is it?

Exfoliation involves the removal of the oldest dead [skin](#) cells on the skin's outermost surface, and has been used for many years to help maintain healthy skin. Exfoliation can be achieved through mechanical or chemical means.

How is it done?

Mechanical

This process involves physically scrubbing the skin with an abrasive. Mechanical exfoliates include microfiber cloths, adhesive exfoliate sheets, micro-bead facial scrubs, crepe paper, crushed apricot kernel or almond shells, sugar or salt crystals, pumice, and abrasive materials such as sponges, loofahs, brushes, and simply fingernails. Facial scrubs are available in over-the-counter products for application by the user. People with dry skin should avoid exfoliation which include a significant portion of pumice, or crushed volcanic rock. Pumice is considered a good material to exfoliate the skin of the feet.

Chemical

Chemical exfoliates include scrubs containing salicylic acid, glycolic acid, fruit enzymes, citric acid, or malic acid which may be applied in high concentrations by a dermatologist, or in lower concentrations in over-the-counter products. Chemical exfoliation may involve the use of products that contain alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) or beta hydroxy acids (BHAs), or enzymes that act to loosen the glue-like substance that holds the cells together, allowing them to ease away. This type of exfoliation is recommended for people treating acne.



Mechanical Exfoliation



Chemical Exfoliation