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## HOLIDAY PARTY BEAUTY EMERGENCIES



It's something every woman fears: waking up on the day before/of a big holiday party with an unsightly skincare emergency. While a cold sore or an eruption of cystic acne is not "life threatening," it can still feel like social-suicide. Don't fret, [Dr. Manish](#)

Shah, a Denver-based Board Certified Plastic Surgeon and father of daughters, sympathizes and shares some simple solutions.

### **Problem: Cold Sore**

**Solution:** Dr. Shah offers cortisone injections to patients who want to look better faster. “Very diluted cortisone into the cold sore, this can bring the inflammation down quite rapidly,” he says. If you are afraid of needles, he recommends calling your doctor for a prescription of Valtrex, Famvir, or Acyclovir or the over-the-counter drug, Abreva. If you are unable to make it to the pharmacy, you can try some old-fashioned remedies: Visine, a cold compress, and Tylenol or ibuprofen.

### **Problem: Allergic Reaction**

**Solution:** The first thing one should do is cease eating/using whatever is causing the allergic reaction. If the reaction happens a few days before an occasion, Dr. Shah recommends using hydrocortisone cream twice a day and taking Allegra, Claritin or Zyrtec which are longer-acting and less-sedating than Benadryl. Another option is a whole-milk compress for 10 minutes twice a day. However, “If this type of reaction is something you have never experienced before, go immediately to your dermatologist,” says Dr. Shah.

To conceal an allergic reaction, apply hydrocortisone cream and then cover up redness by canceling it out entirely. The opposite of red is green, so apply green-tinted concealer to the red area, which will create a flesh-toned hue. A good quality tinted moisturizer naturally has green/yellow undertones and also provides moisture to dry skin.

### **Problem: Cystic Acne Breakout**

**Warning:** Some people play doctor by using a lancet or small knife to cut into a cyst and fish out the clogged part of the pore. “Cutting open a cyst is extremely risky. You not only run the risk of getting an infection, but you also run the risk of scarring, as in a permanent skin indentation or protrusion,” cautions Dr. Shah. And what if you cut open a cyst but can’t squeeze out the root clog? You don’t know where the root is or how deep it resides inside your skin. If any remnants of the clog remain, the cyst is likely to get re-inflamed and come back even worse. “Attempting to extract a cyst at home only makes a bloody-mess, increases the chance of scarring, and prolongs the healing time,” he adds.

**Solution:** The tried-and-true steroid shot. Dr. Shah explains, “when we discuss treating acne with cortisone or ‘steroid’ shots, we are referring to the process of gently placing a very dilute quantity of a ‘glucocorticoid’ steroid into the cyst.” Glucocorticoids are a class of steroid molecules that are naturally produced by our bodies and have numerous functions including the regulation of human metabolism,

immunity, and inflammation. They have very potent anti-inflammatory effects, so they are often used to treat inflammatory diseases in medicine. “Within one or two days of injection into a cyst, the steroid will shrink the inflammation producing relief of pain and almost immediate cosmetic improvement.”

### **Problem: Puffy Eyes**

**Solution:** The key to reducing the puffiness of puffy eyes is having something cool applied to them. “A cool compress or cooled cucumber slices applied for 5 to 10 minutes can constrict blood and lymph vessels,” says Dr. Shah. You can also use cool tea bags, which contain tannins that will help reduce swelling. And since puffy eyes can be caused by a high salt diet or alcohol, try to cut out both before an important occasion.

### **Problem: Sunburn**

**Solution:** Take a cool bath or shower. “Set the water to a cool temperature that’s just below lukewarm and relax for 10 to 20 minutes,” Dr. Shah shares. “The temperature will ease the pain, and the water will stop your skin from becoming as irritated.” Repeat as often as needed, but he warns to avoid soaps, bath oils, or other detergents which are skin irritants. “If you have blisters forming on your skin, take a bath instead of showering to avoid a rupture, and do not rub the skin with a towel,” he adds. Simply air dry or gently pat and then apply a cold compresses to the skin and apply aloe vera to burned skin using the pads of your fingers. Dr. Shah suggests to leave it a bit goopy and moist on top of the burn – to prevent the skin’s drying out and becoming more irritated.

### **Problem: Too much filler**

**The Solution:** Dr. Shah recommends injecting fillers no sooner than 1 month before a big event to allow time for healing and touch ups. He prefers hyaluronic acid fillers such as Restylane, Juvederm and Perlane because they are easily reversed with the enzyme, Hyaluronidase. “It’s a great insurance policy when choosing a Board - Certified practitioner,” Dr. Shah says, “Make sure yours has it at his/her disposal because if an undesirable result occurs, your treatment provider should be able to discuss and carry out all of the treatment options.”

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