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FOUR WAYS TO DEVELOP empathy

The ability to empathize with those around you is essential to healthy relationships. Empathy is essentially the act of understanding and sharing someone else's feelings.

The more you can empathize, the easier it is to connect with other people.

While empathy may come naturally to some people, for others, it is more difficult. Thankfully, there are ways you can practice empathy and get better at seeing the world from another's point of view.

- **Be curious about others.** Get in the habit of asking questions and really trying to understand what someone else is experiencing.
- **Learn to listen.** If you want to share the feelings of others, you first have to truly hear what they are saying.
- **Practice acts of kindness.** When you do something kind for another person, it creates an opportunity to imagine what their life is like.
- **Step out of your comfort zone.** Experiences like traveling or meeting new people let you see the world in a new way.

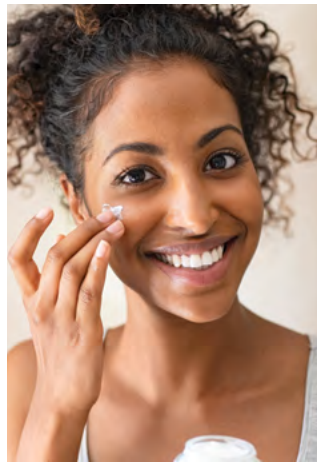
Say goodbye to winter rash

Winter weather can create havoc for your skin. Cold air, low humidity, and the use of central heating all contribute to skin becoming dry, red, and itchy.

A winter rash is a common skin condition that develops in the cool months.

In addition, cool temperatures and dry air create a condition ripe for flair-ups for people who have skin conditions. This includes eczema or psoriasis.

If you are prone to winter rashes, there are simple steps you can take to protect your skin and keep you comfortable all winter long.



KEEP YOUR SKIN MOISTURIZED

A thick, cream-based moisturizer is often a good choice in the winter. Because winter rashes are usually caused by dryness of the skin, find a lotion or cream that keeps your skin soft and smooth.

Moisturize right after you bathe while your skin is still damp. For patches of skin that are dry, red, or itchy, you can apply lotion as often as needed.



AVOID HOT SHOWERS OR BATHS

Soaking in a steaming hot bath or shower might sound nice, but all that hot water can dry out your skin. When you bathe or shower, keep the water warm and limit your time to five or ten minutes.

For some people, bathing every other day can aid in keeping the skin moisturized by allowing the skin's natural oils to accumulate.



USE A HUMIDIFIER

In cooler months, the air is cold and it also contains less water. If your home heating system does not have built-in humidity control, you may choose to purchase a humidifier to add moisture to the air.

Ideal indoor air humidity should be between 30-50%. If you are using a humidifier, aim to stay in that range to prevent dryness.



WHEN TO SEEK TREATMENT FOR A RASH

Call your doctor if you have any of these symptoms:

- You develop open cuts or sores
- Your dry skin keeps you from sleeping
- You have itching without a visible rash
- Your self-care efforts do not relieve your dry skin

Stay fit for life by getting flexible

FLEXIBILITY IS YOUR RANGE OF MOTION THROUGHOUT THE JOINTS OF YOUR BODY. A RIGID JOINT MAY NOT FUNCTION WELL AND CAN LIMIT YOUR ABILITY TO MOVE WITH EASE.



A healthy range of motion allows you to bend down to tie your shoes or reach up high to get something out of a cabinet. If you want to move well, you need to be flexible!

TIPS TO IMPROVE FLEXIBILITY

- Stretch your muscles daily.
- Take regular stretch breaks, especially after long periods of inactivity.
- Make time to stretch after you exercise when your muscles are warm.
- Hold each stretch for about 90 seconds.
- Only stretch to the point of “comfortable discomfort,” never pain.
- Breathe deeply and relax while stretching.

Why you need a vacation

If your time off is accruing year after year, you might be missing out on one of the secrets to being a good employee.

It's time to take a vacation!

While many people are reluctant to be away from their jobs, a vacation can make you a better employee.



VACATIONS ARE REFRESHING

A week off can leave you feeling rested and energized. You'll be ready to dive into work with renewed vigor.

GOOD FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Taking a break from your daily routine allows your mind to let go of stress and anxiety. When you return to work, you might find you have a better mental outlook.

INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

Studies have shown that people who take regular vacations are more productive when they return. Time away might be just what you need to become even better at your job.

Source: American Psychological Association