

# SO IT AIN'T pretty!

BRUISES, BURNS, SPRAINS... TALK ABOUT GLAMOUR KILLERS. HERE'S HOW TO GET THOSE NASTIES HEALED - FAST!



## SPRAINS

'A sprain is very similar to a bruise but with a joint where the damage done by twisting and damaging, either in the muscles or tendons, has caused inflammation,' says Milak Rahman, Boots pharmacy manager in Cheltenham, Glos. If you can't move your wrist or your ankle, it is almost certainly a sprain. Always get something like this checked out by your GP.

A lot of the treatment will involve resting and the use of ibuprofen-based painkillers such as Nurofen, which also act as an anti-inflammatory. Applying warmth can also help to relieve pain, so try a formula like Deep Heat (£4.99; boots.com). A sprained ankle will benefit from an ankle support too. The easiest way to remember how to treat strains and sprains is the RICE method:

- 1 **REST** - trying to use an injured limb may cause more damage.
- 2 **ICE** - as with bruises, you can reduce pain and swelling by applying a cold compress, or ice, as soon as possible. A bag of frozen peas is perfect!
- 3 **COMPRESSION** - a firm support bandage on the affected area will also reduce swelling, but ensure it isn't so tight that it restricts

## BRUISES

Red and yellow and pink and green, orange and purple and blue; whatever the changing hues of a bruise, there's little denying that they're obvious and unsightly.

And it's not just the odd encounter with a table while slightly inebriated that can leave you looking rather more colourful than you would wish. If you are having treatments such as Botox, fillers or cosmetic surgery, you may well get some bruising. Sure, it shouldn't happen but it does and is one of the potential side effects you should be warned about with almost any procedure. So what is the cause and what can you do about it?

'Bruising is simply caused by broken-down capillaries that result in bleeding under the skin,' explains Dr Jean-Louis Sebagh, a cosmetic doctor. On average a bruise will last from seven to 10 days whilst you sit it out. 'Sometimes the iron from blood is deposited near the surface of the skin when a bruise is caused, and this can create a longer pigmentation,' he adds.

If you are going for a nip and tuck or just a bit of 'facial refreshment', avoid taking extra vitamin supplements, especially vitamin D, omega 3 and evening primrose oil, suggests Dr Sebagh. Why? 'All these act as blood thinners, as do aspirin and ibuprofen. Thinned blood makes the skin much more prone to bruising. I can see immediately when treating patients if they have been taking supplements or ibuprofen, and they rarely realise that these affect their blood.'

The sauce won't help either. 'Patients should stay off alcohol for three weeks before plastic surgery,' says world-renowned plastic surgeon Professor Laurence Kirwan ([drklrwan.com](http://drklrwan.com)). 'And older patients with more fragile blood vessels will get more bruising.'

## AVING ARNICA?

Homeopaths swear by arnica, and it has made its way into the world of conventional medicine. 'All my patients get a tablet of arnica under their tongue before an injection,' says Professor Kirwan. 'I also encourage them to take one tablet three times a day for three days after surgery. Arnica creams and gels work well too.'

Choose your arnica wisely. 'Homeopaths have strong views about how it works but the details can be difficult to get one's Botoxed brow around. 'Explaining this could take 10 years,' confesses David Needleman, pharmacist and homeopath at Ainsworths Homeopathic Pharmacy, where Professor Kirwan buys his arnica (30c strength, £4.95; [ainsworths.com](http://ainsworths.com)). 'It's a bit like a computer; it doesn't matter how it functions so long as it works. There are lots of theories but the most important thing is that we do know it speeds up recovery from bruising.' One idea is that it speeds up the energy of the body, which then in turn speeds up the healing process.

If your bruising is bad after a treatment, you could try Auriderm XO (only sold to aesthetic practitioners), a vitamin K oxide emulsion gel →



formulated to help bruises look better faster. Tiny particles called nanosomes encapsulate the vitamin K to deliver it right down through the layers of the skin in order to kick-start the healing process.

### POST-PROCEDURE PRODUCTS

A new category in the market has opened up with products that are perfect post-procedure and promise to get you looking healed and well more quickly than ever.

Heal was created following surgery but has additional benefits in helping sunburn, bruises, scars and sprains – the panacea of creams! It contains arnica and uses nanotechnology (miniscule particles) to penetrate the skin. Lycogel is a camouflaging product that also seals in oxygen, thus speeding up recovery time – a two-in-one favourite for post-cosmetic surgery scars, burns and wounds. Dr Zein Obagi, top Beverly Hills plastic surgeon and creator of ZO Skin Health products suggests that you try ZO Body Emulsion for soothing post-surgery scars on the body.

### BURNS

So the kettle has been naughty, but what were you thinking pouring hot water on your arm – even if you were juggling a stroppy child demanding lunch and a pan of dry pasta? The old advice to run the burned part of your body under the cold tap for as long as you can bear it still rings true. But if it is bad, or the skin has broken, visit your pharmacist or doctor. As a medicine kit staple, keep Savlon Healing Gel handy for minor burns or wounds.

Obviously you should never suffer a burn in a medical practitioner's office, but there are ways to heal the skin when it has been correctly upset (the term wound healing means that the skin is sufficiently damaged to produce new, younger skin, which can be deliberate in a cosmetic procedure). If you are planning a shopping trip to America (or know someone who is), Professor Kirwan recommends Nia 24 Intensive Recovery Complex (\$110; nia24.com), which is a specialist vitamin B3 derivative that helps the skin to heal and reduce redness.

DID YOU KNOW  
Skin usually swells  
after suffering  
a burn so it is  
important to  
remove jewellery  
soon as possible

**SAVLON ADVANCED HEALING GEL**

£3.99; 01403 218111

A bathroom-cabinet essential for the treatment of all minor burns or wounds



**LYCOGEL CAMOUFLAGE**

£49.50; BIODERMLTD.CO.UK

This dual-purpose post-cosmetic surgery cream with SPF30 camouflages and aids healing of scars, burns and wounds



**THE FIRM'S HEAL**

£28; HEALGEL.COM

Developed by five plastic surgeons with 10 active ingredients to treat bruises, sprains, red or lumpy scars, and damaged skin



**NUROFEN MAXIMUM STRENGTH GEL**

£2.99; BOOTS.COM

Apply to sprains for near-instant relief from pain and to ease the inflammation



**FLEXITOL NATURALS SKIN NOURISHING OIL**

£7.99; FLEXITOL.CO.UK

A blend of herbal extracts and essential oils to promote new, healthy cell growth



**AURIDERM XO**

£27.50; AESTHETICARE.CO.UK

This clever emulsion gel is formulated to consistently deliver healing vitamin K oxide through the skin to the site of bruising



**THREE WAYS TO MAINTAIN HEALTHY PRE-SURGERY SKIN**

**FOLLOW PLASTIC SURGEON DR ZEIN OBAGI'S THREE-POINT CHECKLIST:**

**1** Have surgery only when necessary, and only as a last choice when you have explored all other methods to attain the results.

**2** If your skin is healthy before the procedure, it will heal faster. Be sure to activate, stimulate and nourish your skin for at least six weeks prior to surgery.

**3** Before your surgery, eat a diet rich in antioxidants – including plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables – and take arnica to help reduce swelling.