I stopped cleansing in the morning and my skin has never looked so good

It may be controversial, but beauty editor Fiona Embleton has simplified her routine and is obsessed with her new-found glow.

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Ever since my late teens, **cleansing** has taken centre stage in my skincare routine. Squinting in the early morning light, I relished the watery wake-up call of a cleansing gel lathered over damp skin. Once a week, that format would change to a face wash laced with exfoliating acids to buff away clingy dead skin cells. Then, at night, I'd take the story up a notch with a carefully choreographed double cleanse. So. Much. Cleansing.

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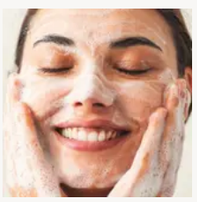

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But for the past six months, I've done something that will leave fans of a three-step routine reaching for their smelling salts. Egged on by dermatologists' chatter around the importance of keeping the skin barrier strong, I've skipped my morning cleanser in favour of just a few splashes of lukewarm water or a spritz of face mist. In other words, I'm *rinsing* rather than *cleansing* my skin – and the results have been surprising.

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What about cleansing at night?

The night cleanser? Non-negotiable

My night-time cleanse is non-negotiable. Water alone won't remove the grime, sunscreen and makeup that has built up on my face throughout the day. What's more, skin goes into repair mode overnight, so you want a supremely clean canvas for the serums and moisturisers that follow to sink in and work their magic on your skin cells.

Dr Wu suggests two of his favorite options, something he does for years, starting with a cleansing oil or a balm as battery you could pull a knife through it. "This helps to break down film-forming makeup and SPF," says Dr Wung. I don't believe that you have to spend a fortune on a cleanser. He is too, and he loves the Aussie brand Australian Gold's Cleansing Oil (approx. £15, £1.40 cents minute cleanse. It does the job of lifting the day away but still feels indulgent. If I'm reaching for a cleansing balm, **Byoma's Melting Balm Cleanser** is my go-to. The balm is infused with a probiotic of the botanic type consumers, including balancing niacinamide and lipids.

Byoma Melting Balm Cleanser

"The second cleanse should be your water-based or gel cleanser - this addresses any remaining residue, debris and impurities," adds Dr Wung. I love the Dermalogica Special Cleansing Gel (£19.50) or **Dermalogica Daily Cleansing Gel**. Kim back in December. My that only some gel cleansers are rarely moisturising but this one takes a hydration first approach with a cocktail of ingredients that draw moisture into the skin and one of the milder surfactants I've come across.

Would you skip your morning cleanse?

Yes | No

At first it feels like a giant leap of faith not to cleanse in the morning when it's ingrained in our routines to start the day with a lather and rinse. But I'm at an age now when I have to listen to what my skin actually needs rather than what I think it needs. Hydration is paramount for me, and I've noticed my skin feels less dry. It looks smoother and more brighter. Plus, a paired back morning routine gives me precious snooze time while my evening cleanse incorporates a more mindful ritual that promotes clear pores and deep relaxation.

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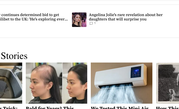

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