

# 3 months to radiant skin

By Lisa Evans

You spent hours trying on racks of dresses until you found “the one.” You’ve selected a hairstyle and already scheduled an appointment with your favourite stylist. The flowers you’ve chosen complement your skin tone and the photographer you’ve hired will capture every moment of your perfect day.

But wait! Is that a zit? Skin discolouration from too many hours spent in the sun over the summer? Acne scars from those horrible teenage years? Preparing your skin for your wedding-day close-up should begin at least three months prior to the big day, as a combination of cosmetic treatments and dietary changes can help ensure your skin looks its very best.

## THREE MONTHS OR EARLIER

**Find a Dermatologist:** If you don't already have a dermatologist, look for one now. Dr. Benjamin Barankin, Medical Director of the Toronto Dermatology Centre, says having a dermatologist you trust is crucial when it comes to preparing your skin for the big day and treating last-minute flare-ups.

**Get a Chemical Peel:** A chemical peel helps treat discolouration, wrinkles, some types of acne, and can improve the appearance of mild scars and the overall tone and texture of your skin. In this treatment, a chemical solution is applied to the skin, which makes it blister and eventually peel to reveal smoother, softer skin. Dr. Barankin recommends three to six peels, performed every three or four weeks. “The last peel can be done no closer than two weeks to the wedding,” he says. Depending on the strength of the peel, skin can take up to a week to recover.

## TWO TO THREE MONTHS

**Brush Away Dead Skin:** Holistic nutritionist Joy McCarthy advocates dry skin brushing to rejuvenate the skin, remove rough patches and even prevent cellulite. Use a dry skin brush with dense stiff bristles made of natural fibres and apply light pressure in a circular motion before showering. “Dry skin brushing helps to slough off dead skin cells so it helps skin glow,” she explains. Exfoliation once or twice a week also rids skin of dead cells, revealing smooth, radiant skin. It's essential if you plan on getting a spray tan prior to your wedding, as the new layer of skin helps hold the colour longer.

## FOUR TO SIX WEEKS

**Treat Wrinkles:** “Botox and fillers like Juvederm or Restylane are terrific treatments for many brides to reduce frown lines, crow's feet and to fill in areas under the eyes or plump up cheek bones or lips,” says Dr. Barankin. Get treatments no closer than one month before the big day to ensure redness and inflammation subsides. >>



### THREE TO FOUR WEEKS

**Get a Healthy Glow:** A golden skin tone looks beautiful against a white wedding dress but hours in the sun can create other problems, including sunspots, freckles and inflammation – not to mention an increased risk of skin cancer. Dr. Barankin says the safest way to achieve a golden glow is a spray tan. Get a trial tan a month away from your wedding day to ensure you achieve the colour you want and arrange your wedding spray tan two or three days prior to the big day. It takes up to 10 hours for the colour to settle into the skin and usually looks best the second day.

### ONE TO TWO WEEKS

**Get an Oxygen Facial:** Plump up your skin with an oxygen facial. "An oxygen facial infuses hyperbaric oxygen during a regular facial with a special device to hydrate the skin, make it glow and reduce fine lines," says Dr. Barankin.

**Avoid Intense Cosmetic Treatments:** Avoid peels, microdermabrasion, lasers, Botox and fillers within one week of your big day to avoid the risk of redness and inflammation.

### ONE TO TWO DAYS

**Last-Minute Zits:** If a pimple rears its ugly head close to your big day, Dr. Barankin recommends using toothpaste or benzoyl peroxide, applied two to three times a day, to dry out the pimple quickly. "For a big honker of a pimple, your dermatologist can inject it with cortisone to bring it down quickly," he notes.

**Get Enough Rest:** Stress shows up on your face. Avoid anything that makes you anxious before your big day. Arrange to take a yoga class or get a relaxing massage before the big day. Get eight hours of sleep to brighten eyes and give your face a pink flush. ✨