# Canadian influencer sparks debate by ditching all skincare, risking skin health



# The Controversy Over Caveman Skincare: A Viral Trend and Its Risks

A recent TikTok video featuring Canadian influencer Tia Zakher has ignited heated discussions on social media regarding her adoption of what she calls a 'caveman skincare routine'. This trendy method involves completely abstaining from all skincare products and even eliminating water from her facial cleansing routine. Zakher’s video, which has garnered over 10 million views, sparked both curiosity and concern, prompting many to weigh in on the potential implications of such an unconventional approach to skincare.

In her video, Zakher addressed the concerning state of her skin, which appeared dry, flaky, and yellowish across her forehead, cheeks, and around her mouth. Responding to alarmed followers, she explained her choice to forgo conventional skincare methods, claiming that it allowed her skin barrier to "rebuild itself naturally." Zakher told FEMAIL, "My skin is basically just shedding all the damage and attempting to re-regulate itself." Despite her assertion of improvement in certain areas, dermatologists worldwide have been quick to criticise this method as lacking scientific credibility, with fears that it could encourage harmful imitations among her followers.

Dr Ryan De Cruz, an Australian dermatologist and founder of Southern Dermatology, described the caveman routine as "an extremist approach" with no scientific backing. He particularly highlighted the risks associated with abandoning basic hygiene practices, which can lead to a host of skin-related issues, including inflammation and infections. Dr De Cruz stated categorically, “To absolutely abandon all hygiene methods is extremist and has no scientific evidence.”

Other experts echo this sentiment. Dr Ginni Mansberg, a general practitioner and founder of ESK Skincare, emphasized that while irritating products should be identified, completely neglecting skincare is not advisable for most individuals. In their commentary, both Dr Mansberg and Dr Joshua Zeichner highlighted that there is no evidence supporting the idea that foregoing skincare prevents acne or promotes healthier skin. They warned that such neglect could exacerbate existing conditions or lead to new complications.

While some dermatologists acknowledge that reducing the use of harsh products can yield positive results—especially for individuals previously overusing cleansers—this should not be mistaken for a blanket endorsement of the caveman regimen. As Dr De Cruz notes, the human skin is capable of natural regeneration and turnover every 28 days, yet modern environmental factors, such as pollution and dietary changes, can hinder this process. Consequently, a well-curated routine that includes effective cleansers and moisturisers is invaluable for maintaining skin health.

In a bid for transparency, the influencer has indicated that she will begin reintroducing water and moisturisers into her regimen. Zakher cautioned her audience, stating that her experience should not be replicated without professional consultation. “I don’t believe this approach is appropriate for everyone,” she noted.

This nuanced view underscores a crucial point in skincare—while simplifying routines may offer benefits, abandoning all products can pose significant risks that many may not be prepared to manage. Dermatologists are unanimous in their advice for a balanced approach, advocating for a regimen that includes a gentle hydrating cleanser, moisturiser, and sun protection.

As social media continues to drive beauty trends, the case of Tia Zakher serves as a salient reminder of the importance of scientific backing in skincare practices, advocating for informed, cautious approaches that prioritise both safety and effectiveness in the pursuit of skin health.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14690327/Controversial-caveman-skin-girl-defends-flaky-face-dermatologist-says-unhygienic.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
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* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14690327/Controversial-caveman-skin-girl-defends-flaky-face-dermatologist-says-unhygienic.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/why-the-caveman-regimen-is-a-scary-example-of-beauty-advice-gone-wrong), [[4]](https://www.tiege.com/blogs/news/don-t-be-a-neanderthal-4-ways-the-caveman-regimen-is-a-bad-idea)
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* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.tiege.com/blogs/news/don-t-be-a-neanderthal-4-ways-the-caveman-regimen-is-a-bad-idea), [[5]](https://www.popsugar.com/beauty/caveman-regimen-skin-care-49092385)
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* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14690327/Controversial-caveman-skin-girl-defends-flaky-face-dermatologist-says-unhygienic.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.popsugar.com/beauty/caveman-regimen-skin-care-49092385)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14690327/Controversial-caveman-skin-girl-defends-flaky-face-dermatologist-says-unhygienic.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://metro.co.uk/2023/02/28/can-the-caveman-skincare-routine-really-reset-your-skin-18315038/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14690327/Controversial-caveman-skin-girl-defends-flaky-face-dermatologist-says-unhygienic.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://metro.co.uk/2023/02/28/can-the-caveman-skincare-routine-really-reset-your-skin-18315038/> - This article examines the 'caveman skincare routine,' which involves avoiding all skincare products to allow the skin to 'reset.' Dr. Ginni Mansberg, a GP and founder of ESK Skincare, states there is no scientific evidence supporting its effectiveness. She emphasizes that while some products may irritate the skin, completely avoiding all skincare products may not be suitable for everyone. Dr. Mansberg also highlights the importance of using appropriate skincare products tailored to individual skin needs.
3. <https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/why-the-caveman-regimen-is-a-scary-example-of-beauty-advice-gone-wrong> - This article discusses the 'caveman regimen,' a skincare trend where individuals avoid all skincare products, including cleansers and moisturizers, to purportedly prevent acne. Experts, including dermatologist Joshua Zeichner, M.D., argue that there is no evidence showing that not washing the face reduces acne. The article also highlights the risks of neglecting skincare, such as potential skin damage and infections, and emphasizes the importance of maintaining a proper skincare routine.
4. <https://www.tiege.com/blogs/news/don-t-be-a-neanderthal-4-ways-the-caveman-regimen-is-a-bad-idea> - This article critiques the 'caveman regimen,' a skincare trend where individuals stop using all skincare products to mimic ancient practices. The author points out that there is no scientific evidence supporting this approach and that it can lead to skin issues like breakouts and premature aging. The article advocates for a balanced skincare routine using appropriate products tailored to individual skin needs, emphasizing the importance of proper skincare for maintaining healthy skin.
5. <https://www.popsugar.com/beauty/caveman-regimen-skin-care-49092385> - This article explains the 'caveman regimen,' a skincare practice where individuals avoid all skincare products, including makeup and cleansers, to allow the skin to 'reset.' Dr. Karan Lal notes that while this approach can help identify products causing adverse reactions, it may not be suitable for everyone. The article also highlights the importance of sun protection, advising continued use of sunscreen during the regimen to prevent skin damage.
6. <https://www.thelist.com/1214143/can-the-caveman-regimen-revolutionize-your-skincare-routine/> - This article explores the 'caveman regimen,' a skincare trend where individuals avoid all skincare products to allow the skin to 'reset.' The article discusses potential benefits, such as identifying products causing adverse reactions, but also highlights risks like lack of sun protection and potential skin issues. Experts emphasize the importance of a balanced skincare routine and caution against extreme practices without scientific backing.
7. <https://zwivel.com/the-caveman-regimen/> - This article delves into the 'caveman regimen,' a skincare practice where individuals avoid all skincare products to allow the skin to 'reset.' The article discusses variations of the regimen, potential benefits, and risks, including the lack of sun protection. It emphasizes the importance of consulting with a dermatologist before adopting such practices and highlights the need for a balanced skincare routine tailored to individual needs.