

A full-page photograph of Oprah Winfrey. She is smiling warmly at the camera, her hands are busy wrapping a gift in gold and white striped paper. She is wearing a white long-sleeved top, large gold hoop earrings, a gold watch on her left wrist, and a gold bracelet on her right. The background is a soft, warm yellow.

O

THE OPRAH
MAGAZINE

YOUR BEST LIFE

PAGES OF

COMFORT & JOY!

LARGEST "O LIST" EVER
GORGEOUS GIFTS, FROM \$13
NEW TRADITIONS, NEW MEMORIES

YOUR HOLIDAYS
JUST GOT HAPPIER

24 SHORTCUTS!

DO EVERYTHING FASTER,
BETTER, EASIER

WHAT TO EAT

SO YOU'LL NEVER BE
HUNGRY AGAIN

SCREWING UP

HOW TO TURN EVERY
FLOP INTO A TRIUMPH

PEACE, NOW!

BROUGHT TO YOU BY...
RICHARD BRANSON?
THE O INTERVIEW

**DOES YOUR DOCTOR
THINK HE'S GOD?**

HOW TO GET HIM (OR HER!)
TO TREAT YOU RIGHT

O'S PARTY KIT

GOOD NEWS FOR
THE RELUCTANT HOSTESS

DECEMBER 2007 \$4.50



\$4.50 US/\$5.75 Canada/Foreign

OPRAH.COM

Q | How can I avoid getting nasty bumps under my arms when I shave?

I suppose you don't want to consider *not* shaving under your arms, and this being the United States in the 21st century—instead of France during the Belle Epoque, when some considered women's underarm hair erotic—that's probably a good idea. (I'm all for liberation from annoying conventions, but I saw a photo of myself taken at a friend's wedding in the mid-1970s that convinced me some annoying conventions are worth the trouble. I wore a bridesmaid's gown—pink, rayon, sleeveless—and the prominent tufts of hair on either side of my bodice were more King Kong than Colette.) So: how to avoid those nasty bumps.

Start with a supersharp razor, says Debra Wattenberg, MD, assistant professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. Wet your underarms with warm water and apply a moisturizing cleanser (like Olay Ribbons Body Wash, \$4) or a moisturizing shave cream (like Aveeno Positively Smooth Shower & Shave Cream, \$7). Don't press very hard on the razor, because it can force bacteria from the skin into the hair follicles, causing pimples or bumps. If you're still getting irritation, apply a little over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream postshave, says Wattenberg.

BOTTOM LINE: Try shaving in the evening before bed, since sweating can increase irritation, and wait until morning to apply deodorant or antiperspirant.

Val Asks You

What's the best (and worst) beauty advice anyone ever gave you? (The best I ever got: Grow in your eyebrows. The worst: Get a perm.) Some of your responses will be posted on Val Asks You on oprah.com.

To respond, or if you have a question about makeup, skincare, or haircare, go to oprah.com/omagazine_talk. For details see Shop Guide.



Ask Val

You've got questions?
Our beauty director, VALERIE MONROE, has answers.

Q | I've tried everything short of surgery, but I can't get rid of the bags under my eyes. Can you help?

If the swelling under your eyes is due to hereditary fat pads, you probably have them all the time (not just during allergy season or when you wake up in the morning). In that case, the fat can be dissolved with phosphatidylcholine injections (instead of extracting it through surgery), says Cheryl M. Burgess, MD, medical director at the Center for Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery in Washington, D.C. Do allergies bring on

your puffiness? Try an antihistamine to reduce inflammation. Inadequate lymphatic drainage can also cause puffiness, most noticeable when you wake up, says Burgess. Try sleeping with your head elevated to discourage fluid pooling under your eyes. Never use a concealer lighter than your skin tone on undereye bags; you'll accentuate them, says Renato Almeida, makeup artist for Shiseido. Instead, try a concealer as close as possible to your skin tone, and dab a little highlighter on the inner corners of your eyes to brighten them and draw attention to your irises rather than your puffiness.

BOTTOM LINE: In order to treat undereye bags effectively, you first have to figure out what's causing them.

Q | What's the best way to treat my Sahara-dry legs?

Though your parched legs could be the result of any number of things, including too many hot showers, harsh soaps, atopic dermatitis, or, rarely, kidney disease or a thyroid condition, the most common cause is a combination of chronological and sun-induced aging, says Joshua Wieder, MD, associate clinical professor of dermatology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. As we get older, our oil glands don't function as well as they used to, and coupled with sun damage, skin becomes dehydrated (which can be exacerbated by winter weather). Avoid overcleansing, and apply a rich moisturizer after you shower while your skin is damp. The over-the-counter lotion AmLactin XL, with 12 percent lactic acid, is very effective, says Wieder. If you've tried all the above and your legs are still reptilian, see a dermatologist.

BOTTOM LINE: You know the drill. No long, hot showers or harsh soaps. And try a body lotion with alpha hydroxy acids, to peel off dry skin and allow moisturizers to penetrate more deeply. **D**