

Put your best face on your wedding day

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With guest lists, menu changes and other last-minute details, the months just before a wedding can find a bride frazzled and preoccupied. But don't forget that all eyes on that special day will be on one thing — the bride's face.

Procrastination and poor planning can lead to the bride's stress showing clearly — in blotches, acne or sloppy makeup. So make sure to plan ahead and set up a workable prewedding beauty routine, experts say.

That doesn't mean a facial the day before you walk down the aisle. In fact, skin-care specialists advise against doing anything traumatic to your delicate facial skin that close to a big event. Instead, start working on your face at least two months in advance.

You may even want to schedule a meeting with a dermatologist as soon as you get engaged to zap broken blood vessels on your face or work on clearing up chronic acne or other problems.

Another face-saver is exercise — it will tone and tighten and improve skin tone. Not to mention toning up your exposed arms and other body parts. If you're not exercising already, join a gym and get moving.

With your wedding still a few months off, choose a makeup artist or salon and try out your wedding-day look. Be frank about your needs and expectations. If you want a natural look or certain features highlighted, work with the makeup artist now to make sure you're getting your message across. Test your look under bright light or with practice photographs.

Hair is another crucial

element that needs time and planning to get right. If you're considering dramatic changes in color or cut, try them out at least three or four months before your wedding day so you have time to correct any mistakes. Give yourself a few months to check out new hairstylists and make sure you are comfortable with your choice.

Time is ticking away. With a month to go, consider these steps:

■ **Face:** Now is the time to get your first facial, and work on refining your makeup with makeovers from different salons or stores. Think about waxing and eyebrow shaping. Whiten your teeth with strips, dental treatments or special toothpastes.

■ **Tans:** Experiment with self-tanners or a tanning salon.

■ **Hair:** Try out your hairstyle with your veil or headpiece, plus your makeup. Does the whole look work? Does your hairstyle harmonize with your makeup and dress?

■ **Body:** Get into a routine of exfoliating and moisturizing any body parts that will be visible on the big day. Make appointments for bikini waxing, manicure and pedicure.

■ **Bonding:** Plan a day of beauty or a spa outing with your bridesmaids. Have fun, but also use the opportunity to try out new looks or beauty products.

■ **Diet:** Work on your diet to make sure both hair and skin are getting the nutrients they need to look their best.

Although a bride's face and hair are spotlighted, don't neglect the other parts of your body. Many brides rush to lose weight right before their weddings. But

don't forget that your dress is fitted months in advance. If you're set on dropping a size, do it well before final alterations are due on your dress. There are plenty of other things to stress about.

A few weeks before your wedding, confirm all appointments for hair, makeup and body care. Make sure your hair is healthy and ready for the final hairstyle. Keep up your exercise and healthy eating.

Now the wedding is only 24 hours away, and your beauty routine should be practiced and painless. Don't try anything new and radical — stick to products and people that you trust.

■ Burnish your skin with a gentle scrub.

■ Pack a small bag with concealer and other beauty first aid to bring with you to the ceremony.

■ Get lots of rest and drink plenty of water.

On the actual wedding day, your makeup will need to last with minimal touch-ups, and survive lots of kisses, tears and toasts. Make your look last with these simple

tips from www.weddingchannel.com:

■ Don't rush the process: Give moisturizer time to soak into your skin before applying makeup — 20 minutes or more.

■ Oil-based concealers and foundations will last longer and resist tears and liquids better.

■ A final coating of pow-

der will set your look and fight shine.

■ Use waterproof mascara and apply only to your top lashes if you expect to unleash the waterworks.

■ Use a lip stain for long-lasting color, and apply over a layer of foundation.

Relax. Remember, every bride is beautiful!

Got butterflies?

Top worries of brides-to-be while planning a wedding, according to a Bride's Magazine reader survey:

- Going over budget 65%
- Forgetting a crucial detail 50%
- Not having a fun reception 39%
- People not showing up 25%

A look at bridal planning behavior

- 48% wish they could take a leave of absence from work to be able to plan their wedding on a full-time basis.
- 53% find planning interfering with their work or studies.
- During an average 13 month engagement, eight hours a week is spent planning.

SOURCE: Association of Bridal Consultants from Bride's Magazine reader survey

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