

Raise your hand if you dread winter for one simple reason: that relentless, annoying itch that creeps up on your shins and other parts of your legs. You're not alone. Winter itch is a very common skin complaint when the cold months hit, and it's often caused by dry skin and disrupted skin barriers. If you've been scratching your shins into oblivion each winter without much relief, let's talk about what really works—and what's just fluff.



Why Do Shins Itch So Much in Winter?

To understand why winter itch happens, especially on your legs, it helps to know the differences between body skin and face skin. Our bodies aren't uniform canvases—different areas of skin have different properties and needs.

Body Skin vs. Face Skin: Key Differences

Feature	Face Skin	Body Skin (e.g., Shins)
Oil Gland Density	High density of sebaceous (oil) glands	Lower density of sebaceous glands
Thickness	Thinner (except for certain areas like palms)	Generally thicker, but shins have thinner skin compared to thighs or arms
Exposure	Frequently exposed; often moisturized deliberately	Sometimes neglected, especially lower legs

Your face benefits from natural oils made by lots of sebaceous glands. Your shins, on the other hand, have fewer oil glands, making them prone to dryness, especially when winter cuts down on humidity. Plus, the skin on your shins is relatively thin and prone to irritation, making it a top spot for itchiness when the barrier is compromised.

How Hot Showers Make Winter Itch Worse

I know — winter calls for cozy hot showers, but here's the skincare truth nobody wants to hear: hot showers are a culprit in stripping your skin's natural oils.

- **Oil Stripping:** Hot water melts and removes your skin's protective lipids, which keep moisture sealed in.
- **Barrier Disruption:** When oils are stripped away, the skin barrier weakens and becomes more sensitive to irritants.
- **Alkaline Soap Effects:** Soaps that are very alkaline increase the disruption. Your skin's natural pH is mildly acidic (~5.5), which helps keep microbes and irritants at bay. Using harsh alkaline soaps in hot water amplifies

dryness and itch.

What's the alternative? Lukewarm showers paired with a *syndet* or *pH-balanced non-soap body wash* will treat your skin much more gently. Syndet (synthetic detergent) cleansers maintain pH balance, avoid stripping oils, and lessen barrier damage.

Moisturizing: The Key to Fighting Winter Itch on Your Shins

After switching to lukewarm showers and gentle cleansers, the next step is <https://rumbie.co/the-body-skincare-routine-most-people-skip/> smart moisturizing—it's not just about slapping on body cream randomly.

When to Moisturize?

Apply your body cream for legs within **60 to 120 seconds** after your shower, while your skin is still damp. This window helps trap water in the skin and maximizes hydration.



Let's talk about moisturizing ingredients that actually work to counter winter itch:

Understanding Humectants, Emollients, and Occlusives

Ingredient Type What It Does **Examples**

Humectants	Attract and bind water from the environment or deeper skin layers to the surface	Glycerin, hyaluronic acid, urea, sorbitol
Emollients	Smooth and soften the skin by filling in cracks in the skin surface	Fatty acids, ceramides, squalane, plant oils
Occlusives	Create a barrier that locks moisture in and protects from external irritants	Petrolatum, dimethicone, beeswax, shea butter

Effective body creams combine these elements for real relief. For example, you might find something with glycerin for hydration, ceramides to rebuild the barrier, and petrolatum or natural butters to seal it in.

My Favorite for Winter Scratchy Legs: Joy Organics 1000mg CBD Cream

Here's a recommendation you might not expect from a skincare educator, but I'm a fan of Joy Organics 1000mg CBD Cream. Why?

- **CBD's anti-inflammatory benefits** can calm itch and soothe irritated skin naturally.
- The cream is rich in emollients and occlusive ingredients that help rebuild your skin's moisture barrier.

- Non-fragranced and gentle, making it suitable for irritated, dry winter legs.

Keep your body cream for legs by the sink or on your bedside table—wherever you'll actually remember to use it consistently. Trust me, out of sight often means out of skincare routine!

Additional Tips to Beat Winter Itch

1. **Skip the Scratchy Scrubs:** Harsh scrubbing, especially with scratchy body scrubs on elbows and heels, can worsen dryness and irritation on your shins too. Opt for gentle exfoliation if needed.
2. **Cover Up:** When outside, wear protective clothing that shields your shins from cold wind and drying air.
3. **Humidify Your Space:** Indoor heating dries out the air and your skin. Using a humidifier can keep moisture in the air and help your skin stay hydrated.
4. **Don't Neglect Sunscreen:** A face-only SPF routine is incomplete. Your shins get sun exposure too. Use a broad-spectrum SPF even in winter if your legs are exposed.

Wrapping It Up: How to Combat Winter Itch on Your Shins

Winter itch is no joke—but it's definitely manageable with the right approach:

- Step away from hot showers and alkaline soaps.
- Switch to lukewarm showers and syndet or pH-balanced body cleansers.
- Moisturize immediately on damp skin using multi-action products that combine humectants, emollients, and occlusives.
- Consider calming ingredients like CBD creams, such as Joy Organics 1000mg CBD Cream, for added anti-itch benefits.
- And remember, keep your products within reach so you actually use them.

No more scratching your shins into submission this winter. With a thoughtful routine, your skin barrier can thrive—and that pesky winter itch will become a thing of the past.