

RAZOR BURN

A SHAVE IS A SHAVE—BUT IT CAN BE SO MUCH MORE WITH THE RIGHT LUBE

BY ARI BENDERSKY

Let's face it, guys: We all hate shaving. How many times since you started shaving—when you actually thought it was cool to be able to grow stubble to slice off—have you manipulated your facial hair into a goatee, beard or longer side burns just to avoid shaving more than you have to? However you look at it, unless you get laser hair removal on your face (yowch!) you will have to continue with the centuries old ritual. As long as the hair keeps growing, you might as well try and enjoy the process. Besides shaving in the shower (it's the best time, since your skin is most alert and supple), use one of the following products to get great results—and remember to change your blade when it's dull—because otherwise you might as well use a shard of glass.

Bliss Homme Improvement Thermal Shaving Cream

Getting a barber's hot-towel treatment each time you need to shave might get costly, but this is the next best thing. The cream heats upon contact with your face, helping warm and prep your beard. The addition of essential oils like aloe vera, St. John's wort, sweet almond extract and marshmallow aid in cell reproduction and detoxification, soothing your skin and reducing razor burn. I love this stuff. Why? The burn, baby. The burn. Available at Blue Mercury (2208 N. Halsted, 773/327-6900) and blissworld.com, \$18.

Anthony Logistics Shave Cream

If your beard is a little coarse or wiry, this is a great product for you. It spreads on thick, but smooth, while it lubricates your face. The addition of eucalyptus oil, squalene (a natural moisturizer found in shark liver), aloe vera and a variety of vitamins will give you a slick shave and leave your face feeling softer—and silkier—than it has felt in a long time. Available at Chicago Male (3418 N. Halsted, 773/281-6005) and anthony.com, \$15.



Malin + Goetz Vitamin E Shaving Cream

The first time you use this product, it might surprise you how cold your face can feel in a hot shower. It contains menthol, which helps soothe your skin and protect it from irritating razor bumps. The vitamin E and cocoa butter moisturize your face, chamomile helps calm it, and glycerin hydrates and keeps your skin from drying. But I'll be damned if another shaving cream can help you feel this cool, literally. Available at Barneys New York (25 E. Oak, 312/587-1700) and malinandgoetz.com, \$22.

MenScience Advanced Shave Formula

Have issues with razor burn? This slick, semi-transparent shave lotion will help put out the fire. Because it goes on clear, you can actually see your razor in action—and avoid going over the same spot, where you just irritate the skin. The addition of salicylic acid and tea tree extract help temper ingrown hairs with their natural antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties. Available at Manifold (2850 N. Clark, 773/525-2929) and menscience.com, \$25.



Barbasol Shave Cream

This is the original “thick and rich” shaving cream—it's been around for decades. Your dad used it. Your grandpa used it. Hell, everyone has likely used Barbasol at one time or another. This is the classic shaving cream—and is perfect for the guys who can't be bothered with all the fancy, fussy ingredients of the other brands. It's a basic, foaming shaving cream that will do the job. Just ask your grandpa. Available at most grocery stores, Walgreens and CVS, about \$3.

eShave Alum Block

In the event that you do nick or cut yourself, this product is a miracle worker. No guy's bathroom should be without it—and it will last you years. Not only does it help close your pores, it stops bleeding almost immediately. I don't know what's in it, but this stuff is like a little block of mineral magic. Available at eshave.com, \$16.