

## Beauty Myths Debunked

It's easy to believe some common beauty "tips" or "advice" when you've heard everyone from your mom, your friends, and even acquaintances swear by them. We've all heard of the most popular ones like "Smiling causes crow's-feet," "hair loss is determined by your maternal grandfather," "a lack of sleep causes dark circles," and "you get varicose veins by crossing your legs too much." A lot of these beauty myths aren't 100 percent true, but genetics can play a big factor on some traits (like varicose veins). The phrase "I got it from my mama" can sometimes ring true. Think about when you were a kid, looking at old prom and wedding photos of your mom was

mesmerizing. You were getting not only a glimpse into her past but also a preview of how you might look when you grew up. As an adult, you still want to know: Will you age like your mother? You might, but it's all about starting and sticking to a healthy beauty routine. "If you've inherited your mother's ageless looks, you've won the genetic lottery. Adhere to a similar lifestyle and you've got a good chance of aging like she did," says dermatologist Whitney Bowe, MD. To get to the bottom of these questions, we asked the experts to reveal how your features are affected by your genes—and for the real truth about the most common beauty myths. Here, they debunk some beliefs and share the steps you can take today to look great for years to come. [See Less](#)

By Stacey Colino

### Your Legs

**The myth:** You get varicose veins or spider veins by crossing your legs too much.

**The science:** Doing so won't cause either problem, says Paul Jarrod Frank, MD, a cosmetic dermatologist in New York City. "Bulging blue varicose veins have an enormous genetic component," he says. "They have to do with an inherited weakness in the valves of the blood vessels." The smaller, squiggly purple spider veins are less attributable to genetics; sun damage to fair skin is a bigger factor, says Zeichner.

**Your best bets:** If your mom has bulging veins, you can lessen your risk of having as many by keeping your weight in a healthy range, staying physically active, and never smoking. Avoid sitting or standing for long periods; this causes blood pooling and increased pressure on the veins. "Elevate your legs when you can, and flex and point your feet when you're sitting at your desk to stimulate circulation," says Day. To prevent spider veins, slather legs with a broad-spectrum sunscreen, like Coola Body SPF 30 Body Unscented Moisturizer (\$32; [coolasuncare.com](http://coolasuncare.com)), every day they're exposed. If you're unhappy with spider veins or varicose veins, talk to a dermatologist or cosmetic surgeon about injections to minimize their appearance.