

# Get a Glowing Tan by Drinking Your Vegetables



*By: Cherie Calbom, MS, CN*

Juicing is hot like the vibrant fashion colors for summer — lemon, raspberry, orange, lime and tomato. Making delicious fruit and veggie juices is great for your energy, immune system, and workout. But did you know the juices can also improve the color of your skin?

Many people wonder if they should use a self-tanning cream or slather on copious amounts of sunscreen so they can get a little color in the summer. There's another option you may never have heard about that can give your skin a healthy golden tan the safest way possible.

New research suggests that eating vegetables gives your skin a healthy golden tan color. A study led by Dr. Ian Stephen at the University of Nottingham revealed that eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables gives you more of a healthy golden glow than the sun, according to the journal *Evolution & Human Behavior*.

Instead of heading for the sun, which can irreversibly damage your skin, you can get your tan on by munching on or juicing up vegetables such as carrots, broccoli, spinach, and tomatoes. These can do double duty, depending on the ingredients you choose. In my newest book,

“The Juice Lady’s Big Book of Juices and Green Smoothies,” I share recipes for veggie combinations that soothe headaches, cleanse the liver, boost endorphins and help heal stomach ulcers, among other ailments. To think you can get all that and a beautiful tanned appearance!

“Our research shows that eating lots of fruit and vegetables is actually more effective” than getting a suntan, Dr. Stephen says.

Most people just don’t eat enough brightly colored vegetables and fruit to make a difference in their skin tone or their overall health. But people can juice a wide variety of produce in a short time. It’s easy to drink two servings in one 12-ounce glass. Have two glasses of freshly made veggie and fruit juice a day, and you’ve sipped four servings. That will make a difference in how you look.

Dr. Stephen and his team found that people who eat more portions of fruits and vegetables per day have an attractive golden skin color thanks to substances called carotenoids. These antioxidants help soak up toxins and damaging compounds produced by the stresses of everyday living, poor food choices, and environmental toxins, and are especially prevalent when the body is combating disease.

“We found that, given the choice between skin color caused by suntan and skin color caused by carotenoids, people preferred the carotenoid skin color,” Dr. Stephen said.

The study is especially important for single people, because individuals in search of a mate favor those who appear healthy, he says.

“This is something we share with many other species,” adds Professor David Perrett, director of Perception Lab, where the study was conducted. “For example, the bright yellow beaks and feathers of many birds can be thought of as advertises showing how healthy a male bird is. What’s more, females of these species prefer to mate with brighter,

more colorful males.”

So, rather than going to a tanning salon before suiting up for summer, why not head to the farmer’s market and load up on beautiful veggies and fruit? Not only will your skin improve — your body will thank you as well.