

Can Eating Right Give You Healthy Skin?

Simply opting for healthier foods could help you fight pimples, wrinkles, and other common skin concerns.



I won't keep you in the dark any longer... Yes, eating healthy DOES give you healthy skin. Vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients found in food can benefit the skin just like any other organ in the body. When you're eating healthy, you get healthy and this shows outwardly through a clear complexion, luxurious locks, and strong fingernails. Sure, you can add all the topical vitamin-rich treatments you want to your skin, hair and nails, but "you are what you eat" when it comes to looking good.

Feeling good about that? Awesome! Not feeling so good about that? Put down the Cheetos and pay attention. Human skin takes its nutrients from the food we eat, so load up on the right foods to solve common beauty problems like acne, limp hair, split nails, and wrinkles.

Try a Clear Skin Diet

Eating potato chips won't necessarily cause acne, but a poor diet can definitely be to blame for acne-riddled skin. Not because you're eating food that's oily and yucky, but because you're usually not eating the right vitamins your skin needs to help stay clean, clear, and happy. Instead of eliminating things from your diet, start first by adding the missing pieces back in to your daily intake:

- Strawberries and citrus fruits, red peppers, and broccoli are loaded with vitamin C to boost collagen production and give you smooth skin.
- Sunflower seeds and almonds contain vitamin E and antioxidants, perfect for protecting the skin against damaging free radicals and UV rays.
- Dark orange, leafy green, and red vegetables are packed with beta-carotene (vitamin A to the body), which will work to freshen up your complexion.
- Fortified cereal, lean meats and poultry, and oysters will give you a youthful glow, thanks to all that zinc and iron. They'll keep dullness away and improve oxygenation to the skin cells.
- For more thorough instruction, try [The Great Skin Diet](#) plan from Model Diet Plan online. It's a great starting point for turning your complexion around with healthy eating habits!

Cure Skin Ailments

If your skin expresses its vitamin-deficiency in other ways, you should give it what it needs to stay happy. This will solve common skin problems, such as these:

- For dry skin, try vitamin A-rich foods (fish oils, dairy, carrots, cantaloupe, peaches, squash, tomatoes, all green and yellow fruits and veggies) to soften the build-up of keratin, which causes rough, dry skin.
- To tighten sagging skin, boost elasticity and renew healthy collagen with some vitamin C from fresh fruits and berries, green vegetables, onions, tomatoes, radishes and rosehips.

- Prevent aging skin and wrinkles with vitamin E (vegetable oils, wheat germ, soybean oil, raw nuts and seeds, eggs, leafy vegetables, meat, milk, molasses, peanuts, legumes and whole wheat), an antioxidant which prevents free radicals damage to the skin, improves circulation and prolongs the life of red blood cells.
- For hair and nail care, try foods with a vitamin B complex (B2, B3, & B5 together), like whole grains and brewers yeast, which support cellular function of the nervous system, healthy skin, hair and nails.

Wash It Down with Water!

Drinking water is another important part of getting (and maintaining) healthy skin. When you drink lots of water (6 to 8 glasses a day) you'll keep everything working right. [Self Magazine](#) explains that dehydration can make your skin look dull, dry, and parched. Get at least six cups of water a day to work this watery magic on your skin.

Pass On These Foods

I know I said potato chips don't cause pimples, but you should skip foods like this, which offer no nutritional value, anyway. Cut out "empty calorie" foods and drinks from your diet. And stay away from these foods, which can actually add to your acne or wrinkle problems!

- When you eat sweets, the rush of glucose can overload your bloodstream, creating harmful agents that breakdown skin cells and lead to early wrinkling. The stress on your pores can cause bigger problems than just pimples.
- Milk intake has been linked with more pimples in our teenage years, but the link has been proven for adults (yet). It's best to avoid milk, which raises insulin levels and may lead to pore blockage.
- Wine and alcohol should be limited to one glass a day, as it can release its own antidiuretic hormone and cause dehydration.
- Skip the spicy foods, particularly harmful to sufferers of acne and rosacea (an inflammatory problem of the skin). Eating too much spicy heat can cause inflammation of the skin and prolong a breakout.
- Opt to trade in your refined grains for more whole grain items. Refined grains are highly processed and lack nutrients. Consider them "empty" foods that just impede the processes of their healthy alternatives.
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Complete Health for Healthy Skin

Being at your best health is the most effective way to get and keep your skin glowing bright and healthy. Eat a diet rich in the vitamins mentioned above, as well as a few others. Choose foods with selenium (bran, broccoli), beta carotene (leafy vegetables), and omega-3 fatty acids (fish oils) for optimum protection of your skin from harmful environmental agents. Fight cancer and pimples all at once. Add a daily multivitamin, lots of water, and regular exercise for the perfect healthy-skin routine!

About this column: A column featuring advice, tips and discussions on health, beauty products and skin care.