

Eat Well for Better Looking Skin

By Mary Germanotta Duquette

mary@maryduquette.com

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Toxins; impurities; pollution; high sun exposure; food additives; artificial coloring and flavoring; parabens – the list goes on and on. With all these factors present in our world today, it's no wonder your skin sometimes needs help to feel fresh and dewy. Chances are you don't live on a mountaintop with cool, clear water to drink, and fresh, cleansing air to breathe. (And even if you do, the mountain winds and bright sunlight might be cause for a little pick-me-up)!

The fact is that no matter where you live, the toxins in our environment can do a number on your skin and can leave your epidermis parched and thirsty for nourishment. A little TLC from the inside does wonders, and helps your skin feel invigorated and soft once again.

Eating well is an absolute necessity, when it comes to beautiful skin. And while there are

plenty of foods that are skin-friendly, there are also foods that can clog your pores, and make you look and feel less than radiant.

Foods to remove from your diet:

- **Sugar.** While it does taste good, sugar does nothing for your skin. In fact, if you are worried about signs of aging, consider this: Many experts believe that sugar contributes to wrinkles, by damaging the collagen present in your skin. Collagen is important, as it helps keep your skin elastic.
Bottom line: Concerned about wrinkles? Cut out the sugar.
- **White flour.** While white flour is processed and stripped of its vitamins and nutrients, whole wheat flour contains all the vitamins your skin needs - including beta carotene, which is known for its skin-nourishing properties.
Bottom line: Opt for whole wheat carbs, rather than processed, white carbs.
- **Fried foods.** French fries, onion rings, chicken fingers, and more, have an extremely high fat content, which clogs your pores and wreaks havoc with your complexion. If you love eating fried foods, do so in moderation, and try oven

baked fries or onion rings made at home - using olive oil or other unsaturated oils, such as sunflower.

Bottom line: Avoid fried foods, unless you make them yourself at home – and eat them in moderation. Better yet, cut them out altogether.

- **Fast foods.** Stay away from fast food restaurants, as you really don't know what is in the food that's served there. Even the so-called healthier options may not be so healthy.

Bottom line: Hamburgers, fried chicken, breakfast sandwiches, and bacon cheeseburgers should all be meals of the past. You can wave at them as you drive by with your glowing, dazzling face.

- **Saturated fats.** These types of fats – found in red meat, processed foods, and dairy products - can increase problems like acne and eczema, if consumed in large amounts. They have also been found to lead to obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Bottom line: Cut down on your consumption of saturated fats for the health of your skin – and also for your general health and fitness.

- **Potato chips.** Many potato chips contain saturated fats, like cottonseed oil and palm kernel oil. If you must indulge in the chip, do it wisely – read labels. Lots of companies are jumping on the all-natural bandwagon, and are producing brands with healthier ingredients.

Bottom line: Crazy for chips? Eat them in moderation, and buy only the brands that use unsaturated oil.

Remember that whatever you put in your body shows on your face - so think twice before reaching for that greasy burger.



Foods to incorporate into your diet:

- **Fish.** Any kind of fish is great - except for fried fish, which might contain saturated fat. Instead, try it baked, broiled, or grilled. Fish is high in Omega 3s, known for its contribution to good heart health. And fish oil is beneficial in counteracting environmental contaminants, which can be unkind to your skin.
- **Blueberries.** Rich in antioxidants, blueberries are just about the most perfect food around – and with a powerful punch of antioxidants, can help reverse the aging process.

- **Carrots.** Since vitamin A is essential for beautiful skin, carrots are naturally the best source. They are very high in vitamin A, as well as being high in antioxidants, fiber, potassium, and vitamin C. *
- **Flaxseed oil.** This sturdy little oil is wonderful for you in many respects. It's fantastic for your complexion, as it is high in Essential Fatty Acids, or EFAs - which help make your skin look velvety and smooth, and slow down the aging process. Flaxseed oil is also a good digestive aid, and is high in Omega 3s.
- **Foods rich in vitamin E.** Seek out and purchase foods such as mustard greens, Swiss chard, raw sunflower seeds, broccoli, spinach, almonds, olive oil, tomatoes, and kiwi.
- **Foods rich in vitamin A.** Stock your pantry and refrigerator with foods such as beef, liver, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, mango, spinach, kale, broccoli - and carrots, of course!
- **Green tea.** This miracle of nature is a natural boon to preventative care, and is an important factor in your skin care maintenance. Some studies have shown green tea to help in the care and prevention of rosacea – a skin disease that causes facial redness - and most experts agree that this smart little tea helps slow the aging process.
- **Water.** It's no secret that water is essential in keeping skin healthy and glowing. For optimum results, drink eight glasses a day.

Now that you know what's good for your skin, and what's not, write down what you typically eat in a week and analyze the contents. Do you need to cut out some foods that are not so great for your skin? Do you eat too much junk and not enough whole foods?

Once you've determined what you need to add and eliminate in terms of your diet, you can start shopping and begin your journey back to better skin nourishment and health. Try to maintain a healthy diet, and don't worry if you sneak in sweets or the occasional French fry. Every once in awhile won't hurt, as long as you get right back to your plan of eating for your skin – and for your general health.

After all, what's on your face is only an indication of what's going on inside. The clearer and brighter your skin, the healthier you are. Take heart in knowing that you're doing something fantastic for your entire body – not just your skin. Experiment with recipes, take time to snack wisely, and enjoy the way you feel – inside and out!

Wear your food!

- **Eggs-cellent.** Whip up a raw egg and smooth it on your face, avoiding the eyes. Wait 15 minutes, or until the egg is completely dry, and then wipe it off with a warm, damp cloth. Finish with your favorite toner and moisturizer. Good for oily skin. *Note: Do not try this if you are allergic to eggs, or are egg-sensitive.*

- **Go green.** Mash up half of an avocado and apply it onto your face, avoiding the eyes. After about 20 minutes, wipe it off with a warm, damp cloth. Good for dry, sensitive, or mature skin.
- **Embrace the paste.** Exfoliate! Mix 2 tablespoons of cornmeal with water until it makes a paste. Apply the mixture on your face, avoiding the eyes, and wait 10 minutes. Then wipe it off with a warm, damp cloth. Good for all skin types.
- **Tone it down.** For a natural toner, try Rose water or Orange Blossom water. Look for these in a specialty store, or health food store. Good for all skin types.

Another toner to try is Tea Tree oil mixed with water - about 2 drops oil to ½ cup of water. Tea Tree oil is known to have great medicinal value, as well as being an effective antidote for troubled skin. Good for oily skin.

- **Oil up.** One of the best natural moisturizers around is – ready? – Extra Virgin olive oil! Use this beauty secret, which is rapidly becoming less of a secret each day, to gently moisturize your skin with no harsh chemicals or additives. Place a few drops into the palm of your hand, and rub gently on your face at night. In the morning your skin will feel soft and renewed. Good for dry, sensitive, or mature skin.



Try this...

Soothing Smoothies. According to Mike Adams, Editor of NaturalNews.com and author of over a dozen books on health and nutrition, a good way to nourish your skin is to invest in a juicer. You can create your own smoothies using fresh fruit, vegetables, and nuts (soaked in water first). Your skin will love you for it.

Use the good fat. Oils such as flaxseed oil and olive oil can be incorporated easily into your diet, by using them in place of other fats you would normally add to your dishes. You can even try them in baking. Make sure that you use Light olive oil in your baking, as it has a milder flavor than the Extra Virgin variety.

** Make sure that the amount of vitamin A you consume does not exceed 700 micrograms, or mcgs, per day. Vitamin A is fat soluble, which means that what is not used by the body is absorbed, rather than just flushed out. It is therefore possible to have too much vitamin A. If you are taking a supplement, make sure you monitor the amount of foods you eat that are rich in vitamin A. The maximum amount of vitamin A stated here is based on the assumption that you are an adult. The maximum amount varies depending on whether you are an infant, a child, pregnant, or lactating. Consult your doctor or nutritionist if you have a question regarding how much vitamin A you should be consuming per day.*

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