

[IMAGE]

Beautiful Skin From Within

By Dr. John Maher

Throughout your lifetime, numerous environmental insults work to damage and alter your "sheath," otherwise known as your skin. Indeed, more than 80 percent of the visible changes that age the skin are caused by outside factors like the sun, detergents and pollutants. Besides minimizing such exposure, we may actually be able to prevent and reverse some of the visible signs by fighting chronic inflammation and maintaining skin barrier function. To do this, we can rely on an easily accessible, all-natural source: good nutrition.

Researchers recognize that many natural foods have anti-inflammatory properties, mostly provided by healthy fats and antioxidants. Foods containing these skin-healthy fats include avocado, fish oil, flax seed, and olive oil. Olive oil and avocado provide barrier-supporting nutrients, called sterols, and anti-inflammatory monounsaturated ("good") fats. Vitamins E and C, selenium, green and white teas, apples, cocoa and berries are also skin friendly; they supply protective antioxidants. Antioxidants fight off the bad guys (free radicals) to keep us looking young and healthy. Even probiotics, which are the friendly bacteria in our diets, aid in protecting the skin. Experts suggest we get more of the aforementioned foods and less red meat, fried foods, salt, sugar and white flour.

Beautiful skin with fruits - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark *Nutracosmetics* are nutritional supplements that produce a cosmetic benefit. Various studies have reported on the "cosmeceutical" value of ingredients like collagen extracts (hydrolyzed gelatin), and peptides and growth factors from dairy colostrum and whey. In one case study, researchers used omega-3 fatty acids to rehydrate skin via nutrition. Approximately 50 percent of women are affected by dry and sensitive skin. Dry skin can be a result of inadequate hydration and a lack of fatty acids in the diet. In one study, supplementing with omega-3 fatty acids (flaxseed and borage oil) resulted in a 12-fold increase in the omega-3 status of the skin in three months!

The other major defense against environmental damage is the antioxidant capacity of the skin. Bolstering the antioxidant defense system of the skin is an important strategy for reducing environmentally induced skin damage. Recent clinical trials in which green leafy vegetables, egg yolks, and marigold flower extracts

(all rich in lutein and zeaxanthin) were administered orally, topically, or both indicated that combined oral and topical administration provides the highest degree of antioxidant protection.

As we age, the essential mesh-like collagen structure of the skin's layers breaks down, causing skin to lose its elasticity. When this happens, skin starts to dry and then lines and wrinkles become visible. Nutritional science suggests it is possible to reverse some of the damage and promote cell rejuvenation. Colostrum, which is the "first milk" of newborn mammals, contains peptides that regulate cell function and stimulate growth of collagen cells. These peptides may be taken as a supplement from bovine (cow) colostrum.

Gelatin is a form of hydrolyzed collagen commonly used in foods. It has long been reported that consuming gelatin can improve the structure and health of the skin, hair and nails. Indeed, proline, glycine and hydroxyproline are the main amino acids in gelatin and collagen - and the skin, hair and nails. However, certain simple chains of amino acids called collagen *peptides*, sourced from gelatin, appear more promising. Collagen and elastin are often incorporated into cosmetics, but neither collagen nor elastin is able to penetrate the skin.

A Healthy Skin Strategy: Five Take-Home Points

- Stay well hydrated throughout the day and particularly during exercise and when the weather is dry.
 - Avoid excess drying of the skin, which can be caused by detergent cleansers, sun and wind.
 - Minimize ultraviolet (UV) exposure.
 - Consume a variety of antioxidants and omega-3 fats with food and/or supplementation.
 - Topically apply all-natural moisturizers containing antioxidants, sterols and healing peptides.
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Recipes for Beautiful, Healthy Skin

Although consuming nutrients that support healthy skin appears to be more important than topical applications, the best results seem to come from combining oral and topical applications. The following recipe and mask are rich in antioxidants, omega 3 fatty acids, probiotics and/or peptides known to support skin health.

Smooth Skin Smoothie

Beautiful skin with smoothie - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark The Basic Recipe: Mix 8-12 ounces of green tea with one scoop of a greens powder and 1 tablespoon flax seed.

- Option 1: Add 1 scoop of whey protein with colostrum, which not only adds skin healthy peptides, but also makes the smoothie more of a meal replacement.
- Option 2: Add 4 ounces of low-fat, high-active-culture yogurt to add friendly microorganisms (probiotics) that are good for the skin.
- Option 3: Add a packet (tsp) of plain gelatin 9 hydrolyzed collagen to add the amino acid building blocks of all connective tissue (joints, skin, hair , nails).

Refreshing Nano Facial Mask

Beautiful skin with facial mask - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Mix the following ingredients in small bowl:

- ¼ teaspoon of a greens powder
- ¼ teaspoon whey protein with colostrum
- 1 tablespoon plain organic yogurt

After cleansing and drying your face, generously brush on your face, neck & top of your hands with facial brush or fingers. Let set for 20-30 minutes and shower off, or use a warm towel to whip off.

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