

# **Secrets** **of** **Great Skin**

**How to Clear Away the Wrinkles  
and Marks & Rejuvenate Your  
Face and Body**

**Special Sampler Edition**

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# **Secrets of Great Skin**

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# Introduction & Overview

**Secrets of Great Skin**  
(How to Clear Away the Wrinkles  
& Rejuvenate Your Face And Body)

## Understanding the Skin

Not only is the skin the largest organ of the body, it is also the most hard working and perhaps, the least understood. While most of us learn about the skin in elementary school, chances are good you have forgotten most of what was taught in your fifth grade health class. This section offers a mini refresher course.

The average human body consists of approximately 20 square feet of skin and weighs between six to ten pounds. Not only does skin hold the skeleton together and keep body organs and muscles intact, it also has the ability to stretch. And, it's washable and waterproof. Pretty amazing stuff, isn't it?

The skin consists of three individual layers: the epidermis, dermis and hypodermis. The epidermis is the surface of the skin. It consists of five layers: stratum basale, stratum spinosum, stratum granulosum, stratum lcidum, and stratum corneum.

The stratum basale is the bottom layer of the epidermis and consists of cells in the shape of columns. In this layer, cells are constantly being produced. Once they are formed they are pushed into higher levels where they flatten and eventually die. The stratum basale cells contain melanocytes, which produce melanin. Melanin is the element responsible for providing skin with color.

The stratum corneum resides at the top of the epidermis. Its job is to protect the remaining layers and allow them to efficiently perform their job. This layer consists of flattened cells pushed up from the stratum basale. As these cells are pushed through the layers, they become coated with humectants. These humectants are surrounded by lipids to keep them moist and flexible.

Additionally, the stratum corneum is covered with sebum. Sebum is the oil that lubricates the skin and helps retain moisture. Sebaceous glands are located over most of the body, with the exception of the hands and feet.

The thickness of the epidermis varies from person to person. Factors that determine the epidermis thickness include: age, sex, and location on your body. For example, the epidermis is typically much thicker on the soles of your feet, than it is on your eyelids.

The dermis layer is connected to the epidermis by a continuous membrane. This layer is home to blood vessels, white blood cells, sweat glands, sebaceous glands, nerve endings, and hair follicles.

The main cells that reside in the dermis are known as fibroblasts. The job of the fibroblasts is to manufacture the fibrous proteins of collagen and elastin, which are the proteins that give skin elasticity and helps keep skin firm.

The hypodermis is also referred to as the subdermis. It is laced with fat cells and gives skin its shape, cushions the outer layers, and connects skin to underlying tissues and muscles.

Your skin is constantly at work. Every 15 to 30 days, it produces entirely new skin cells. As we age, this process begins to slow down. Additionally, both internal and external factors contribute to skin rejuvenation.

Internal factors which can interfere with skin rejuvenation include: hormonal changes, health problems, medications, diet, and smoking.

External factors which can interfere with skin rejuvenation include: climate, prolonged exposure to the sun or wind, and skincare products.

### **How to Keep Your Skin Looking Its Best at Any Age**

Our skin is the largest organ of our body. It is constantly bombarded by environmental toxins, free radicals, and oxidation (chemical reactions). Oxidizing elements include chlorinated water; exposure to the sun, air and wind; detergents and cleaning solvents; and heating and air conditioning.

As the body ages, the sebaceous glands do not produce as much sebum. Sebum is the oil that lubricates the skin and helps retain moisture. Sebaceous glands are located over most of the body, with the exception of the hands and feet.

When production of sebum slows down, it causes skin cells which normally exfoliate to slow down as well. Typically, skin cells exfoliate and reach the surface of the skin every 36 hours. As the skin ages, this exfoliation time can double or triple, resulting in dry skin.

When you sleep your skin pores open, allowing your skin to breathe. Anything you put on your face, such as creams and moisturizers, will be absorbed into the deeper levels of your skin. Scientific research has confirmed that topical vitamin C and E help protect skin against free radicals. However, the amount of protection depends on the percentage and form of vitamin C and E in the skin care formulas.

Choosing a skin cleanser is almost as important as the act of cleansing. It's best to use a cleanser close to the skin's normal pH level of 4.5. If a skincare product is too harsh, it will strip the skin of its natural oils and leave it dry and irritated.

Most soap is alkaline and can be irritating to nearly all types of skin. Two of the most gentle skincare cleansers include goat milk soap and herbal glycerin soap. Both of these skin cleansers help remove excess oil, while leaving it feel soft and moisturized. Natural shea butter is beneficial for dry, wrinkled, or irritated skin.

It's important to consider your skin type when choosing a cleanser. People with oily skin should avoid skincare products that strip away oil, or those with added moisturizers. Look for skincare products that include antiseptic properties such as witch hazel, or essential oils such as eucalyptus, tea tree oil, or peppermint. Use caution when using products that include

essential oils and be careful not to apply them too closely to skin around the eyes.

People who have dry skin should use nonabrasive cleansers that contain nourishing ingredients such as vegetable glycerin, olive or coconut oil. These ingredients are known to help keep the skin soft and hydrated.

Skincare products that are beneficial for all skin types include aloe vera, or essentials oils such as chamomile, lavender or rose..

Experts advise avoiding the use of washcloths and loofahs, as they can damage delicate facial skin and are known to harbor bacteria. Instead, use a soft cloth designed specifically for the face.

After cleansing your face, you'll want to use a toner. Whenever you use a cleanser on your face, it causes the pH level to rise. This occurs even if you use a cleanser that is pH balanced. Using a toner helps return the acid mantle (a natural layer that covers the skin) to its normal level.

Toners reduce the pore size, which in turn reduce the amount of pollutants absorbed into the skin. The most beneficial toners are ones that include aloe vera. Aloe vera is one of the best skin nutrients available. You can also use pure aloe vera juice as a skin toner. Simply pour a teaspoon or so

onto a cotton cosmetic round and apply in an upward stroke on the face and neck.

If your skin is exceptionally oily, an astringent can help absorb excess oil and kill bacteria. Astringents are similar to toners, but have a higher content of alcohol. Look for astringents that contain camphor, menthol, tea tree oil, or citrus products such as orange or lemon.

It is best to use botanical based and all-natural cleansers, toners, moisturizers and cosmetics. Your complexion will love you for it and your skin will be radiant.

### **Healthy Eating Makes Healthy Skin**

Most scientists agree that skin cancer and premature aging results from the ultraviolet light of the sun. It is said that ultraviolet light creates highly reactive substances known as free radicals. Free radicals are known to damage cell proteins and DNA.

Most scientists also agree that antioxidants such as beta-carotene and other carotenoids have the ability to stabilize free radicals and put an end to their skin damaging effects.

Carotenoids are part of the phytochemicals family. Phytochemicals are oftentimes referred to as phytonutrients. Basically any nutrient derived from a plant source is considered to be a phytochemical.

Although phytochemicals are not required for normal functioning of the body, scientific studies have proven they offer numerous health benefits and have the potential to eliminate disease. Phytochemicals are known to assist in maintaining a healthy immune system; reduce inflammation; possess antibacterial and anti-viral properties; and may help to reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer.

According to the National Institutes of Health, there are 563 identified carotenoids. Of these, approximately 50 can be converted into vitamin A within the body. Vitamin A is necessary for maintaining vision and bone growth, and helps to regulate the immune system. It also helps to keep skin healthy by protecting the mucous membranes from bacteria and viruses.

Research has indicated that people who obtain inadequate amounts of carotenoids are more susceptible to damage from free radicals. As a result, they tend to suffer from tissue damage and an increased risk of chronic diseases; particularly heart disease and cancers.

The National Cancer Institute recommends that adults should consume at least 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables that contain phytonutrients each day. Typically, one serving is equivalent to one-half cup.

Foods that are rich in phytochemicals include:

- Red, green, yellow and orange vegetables
- Dark leafy greens
- Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower)
- Citrus fruits
- Berries (particularly blueberries)
- Whole grains
- Beans
- Garlic
- Leeks
- Flaxseeds

An easy way to obtain the recommended daily allowance of carotenoid-rich foods is to eat a small to medium sized salad with lunch and dinner. You'll also want to eat one to two servings of fresh fruits and vegetables with each meal.

Instead of stopping at a fast food restaurant for your morning breakfast, consider making a fruit smoothie or indulging in a bowl of oatmeal topped with blueberries. Add a teaspoon of flax seeds and you'll receive the additional health benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids.

According to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, golden flax seeds contain 27 identifiable cancer preventive compounds. Other benefits of flaxseeds include:

- Alleviation of dry skin and skin ailments such as psoriasis and eczema.
- Stabilization of blood sugar levels.
- Ability to lower blood pressure.
- Decreases inflammation, which can be beneficial to people with autoimmune diseases such as arthritis, multiple sclerosis and lupus.
- Increases metabolism, which can assist in weight management

Omega-3 fatty acids appear to lower triglyceride levels of blood cholesterol. Other foods that are rich in omega-3 include walnuts, canola oil, and fatty fish such as bluefish, salmon, halibut and sardines.

Nearly every day, we are learning more and more about the health benefits of eating foods rich in phytochemicals. Adding these foods to your diet can help you maintain or regain your health. Not only will you have more energy and a clearer mind, your skin will become healthy and radiant.

### **Age Defying Home Care Treatments**

Basically, in today's society showing signs of age is practically a felony. Both men and women are engaging in surgery to alter their appearance in an attempt to retain their youthful looks. From plastic surgery to implants and Botox to collagen injections, defying age is quickly becoming a top priority for many people.

Believe it not, you don't have to engage in these extreme procedures. There are many things you can do to retain your youthful look without undergoing the knife or injecting poison into your body.

As we have already said, one of the best defenses to defy age is diet. Everything you allow to cross your lips has an affect on not only how you look, but how you feel. Processed foods are your worst enemy. These chemical-laden concoctions can cause your skin to age prematurely and

have been linked to numerous health problems including heart disease and cancer.

Mother Nature provides us with a bounty of healthy foods. Not only do they provide us with energy to get us through the day; consuming whole foods on a daily basis can give you the youthful appearance you desire.

Millions of Americans invest in teeth whitening solutions. Many purchase home treatments which consist of alcohol, glycerin and peroxide. Instead of using harmful chemicals, consider brushing your teeth with baking soda.

If you want to take it a step further, you can create your own teeth whitening home remedy. Simply take a piece of aluminum foil and form it to your teeth. Use a pea-size amount of toothpaste and mix together with one teaspoon of baking soda. Place the mixture into the foil mold and place for your teeth. Leave on for one hour.

Yes, you will look a little silly and it will feel weird, but many people swear by this inexpensive treatment. Brush your teeth immediately afterwards. You will notice whiter teeth in just a few days!

Another side effect of aging is that oftentimes our memory begins to fade. If you find that you are becoming more forgetful, consider adding the mineral zinc and the trace mineral boron to your diet.

Zinc is found in a variety of foods including oysters, red meat, poultry, beans, nuts, whole grains, and dairy products.

Boron is necessary for increasing bone density and preventing bone loss. This trace mineral is exceptionally important for postmenopausal women and those at high risk for osteoporosis. Studies have shown boron to be effective in the treatment and possible prevention of osteoporosis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Boron can be found in fruits, nuts, legumes (beans), and green leafy vegetables. It's best to purchase organic foods whenever possible, as boron is found in the soil. Unfortunately, most of the soil where commercially produced food is grown is depleted of this important nutrient.

Last, but not least, maintaining a positive outlook and sense of humor goes a long way in defying age. Research has shown that optimistic attitudes and beliefs can ward off illness and help people recover more quickly when illness does occur.

Optimists are more likely to feel they can take charge of their health and tend to take better care of themselves. It's essential to realize that your beliefs are just that - beliefs, not facts. The beauty of beliefs is that you can change them whenever you discover they are no longer working in your favor.

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The End