

POST-SUMMER SKIN REPAIR

Healthy, radiant skin begins from within

A season of summer indulgences, whether it be swimming in chlorinated pools, several weeks of rosé wine, or too much sun bathing, our skin can look a little worse for wear. Once the summer holidays are over, we can be left with dehydrated and perhaps wrinkly skin, sun damage, blocked pores and chapped lips. So what's the best remedy? Good nutrition can help protect the skin not just pre-holiday season, but also post-holiday to help the skin repair.

The skin can be thought of as the window to overall health of the body. It is the largest elimination route for toxins, so an overworked liver from a long summer of excesses can show up on the skin. The simplest step to a fresher complexion is to address water intake. Well-hydrated skin looks plump and less wrinkled. Aim to drink two litres of water or herbal teas each day, more if you are exercising and perspiring. Add lemon/lime, mint leaves, slices of apples or pear to pep up your water and try to avoid drinking water from plastic bottles by using a glass or stainless steel container.

Photo ageing from sunlight is responsible for up to 90% of thinning and wrinkling of the skin as the ultra violet light affects the flexible tissue, collagen and elastin which helps skin regain its shape. Collagen is the most abundant protein in the body and it helps give skin a youthful glow as well as supporting strength and stability of skin tissue. Although we produce collagen it relies upon several nutrients to do so such as vitamin C, zinc and copper.

Every 35 days skin cells are replaced and new cells created from what is consumed. A diet rich in anti-oxidants, found primarily in fruits and vegetables, and essential fatty acids, will help support and repair skin tissue. Yet another reason to eat several portions of veggies and a little fruit each day!

TOP NUTRIENTS FOR SUPPORTING SKIN HEALTH

► **Collagen**, collagen and yet more collagen! Benefits of consuming collagen far outweigh topical application. Throw together a pot of bone broth to stimulate your collagen levels and support complexion.

► **Vitamin C** is a fabulous skin booster that can brighten skin tone and decrease appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. It also helps to protect existing collagen. The best food sources are citrus fruits, strawberries, guava, kiwi, bell peppers, broccoli and tomatoes.

► **Zinc And Copper** (along with vitamin C) stimulate collagen production. Sesame seeds, cashews and mushrooms are sources of both;



cashews, spinach, asparagus, pumpkin, chickpeas and grass-fed beef are rich in zinc; soybeans and dark leafy vegetables are good sources of copper.

► **Vitamin A** contains a plant chemical called Carotenoids which not only help support collagen and elastin levels in the skin, but also support production of hyaluronic acid - our skin's own natural moisturiser. Astaxanthin is a carotenoid found in plants, algae and seafood and gives the red pigment. It has exceptional antioxidant activity with evidence suggesting it may both prevent UV damage by acting as a natural internal sunscreen and also help to reverse these signs of ageing. Unlike sunscreen it offers protection without blocking UV rays, so vitamin D can still be synthesised. Two other carotenoids supporting the skin are lycopene, found in tomatoes and watermelon and beta-carotene found in carrots, orange peppers and sweet potatoes.

► **Omega 3** This chain of essential fatty acids ensure flexible cell membranes enabling nutrients to enter cells and toxins to freely move out of them. It will also help protect skin cells in the cold weather to come. Fatty fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines and herring are the best sources. The protein in fish also stimulates cell renewal. Vegan sources are: flax/chia seed, seaweed and avocados.

► **Niacin (B3)** is found in avocado and turkey and helps to speed up skin cell regeneration - essential for repairing sun damage, acne hyperpigmentation, and reduces the symptoms of rosacea. Niacin also helps your skin to retain moisture, so make sure you are properly hydrated! Turkey has 30 x more niacin than avocado.

► **Green Tea** - Epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), the antioxidant found in green tea has been shown prevent genetic damage in skin cells exposed to UV radiation. A large mug of green tea (250ml) with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice to add the vitamin C may help achieve that post-summer glow!

DON'T FORGET LIFESTYLE FACTORS!

Whilst skin damage can be a result of unprotected sunbathing and a high sugar diet, lifestyle factors also play a significant role.

Exercise: move and get the heart pumping to support skin health. High intensity bursts of exercise will also stimulate growth hormone production, which can be used for stimulating new cells.

Sleep: Getting enough "beauty sleep" encourages skin repair. Growth hormone influences tissue growth and repair and is greatest at night during deep core sleep. Skin brushing supports the lymphatic system to rid the body of waste and supports circulation. ▽

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