

8 Tips to Revitalize and Take Care of Your Skin

1 Drink Plenty of Water

Your skin is the largest organ in the body and is made up of cells. Those cells are made up largely of water. When water is depleted from skin cells, it causes the skin to be dry, tight and flaky. This, in turn, can lead to wrinkling. Unfortunately, your skin is on the tail end of the line for receiving the water you drink, so you should drink a lot. At least 8 glasses a day is recommended. This will help get rid of toxins and can result in a more radiant glow to the skin. Don't wait to feel thirsty...by then you are dehydrated.

2 Eat Healthy Foods

It probably won't surprise you that a balanced diet has an impact on every part of your body, including your skin. What may surprise you is that there are delicious options that are recommended for a skin-healthy diet. And, there are some foods that have a larger impact on skin health than others. As part of your balanced diet, you'll want to include these:

- **Start with Chocolate** - Dark chocolate contains a potent type of antioxidant, and helps hydrate skin, making it firmer and more supple. For maximum antioxidant content, eat chocolate that's at least 70 percent cacao. A couple of squares a day should be enough to improve luminosity.
- **Low Fat Dairy Products** - Vitamin A is perhaps one of the most important ingredients in skin health. Low-fat dairy products are high in dietary vitamin A. We recommend only organic in this category and small quantities.
- **Foods with high antioxidant content** - These antioxidants protect the skin cells against damage and disintegration. This guards against premature aging. Some foods that are high in antioxidants include blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, pomegranates. Colorful fruits and vegetables in general will give you the variety of antioxidants that help support that fight off wrinkles.
- **Essential Fatty Acids** - These impact the cell membranes. Those membranes are what hold water in the cell. The stronger the membrane, the healthier the skin. Foods high in essential fatty acids include salmon, walnuts, seeds, olive oil and flax seeds.



- **Selenium** - High levels of selenium provides for cells that are less likely to suffer oxidative damage. Foods that are high in selenium include whole wheat breads, turkey, tuna and brazil nuts.
- **Green Tea** - It's anti-inflammatory and it protects the cell membrane, and may even improve redness.

Foods you'll want to avoid:

- **Sugar and simple carbs** - These throw off insulin levels, which can lead to inflammation.
- **Foods cooked in oil at high temperatures** - These produce compounds that cause oxidative stress and can also lead to inflammation. Foods such as French fries, potato chips, and fried chicken are examples.

3 Learn About Supplements

Take proven supplements to improve the body's anti-oxidant state. Although there is loose regulation of these, there are quality brands with solid research behind them, such as Standard Process and Life Extension.

One great thing about the skin is that we can impact it from both inside and outside the body. These supplements can protect the skin from the sun and against skin cancer: Vitamin C, E, Selenium, Polypodium, Leukotomos. They may even reverse some of the effects of aging. They are absorbed and function best when taken with food and in combination with other vitamins and minerals that are in a form that is easily digestible.

4 Get Enough Sleep

It's damaging to the skin to not get enough sleep. This is due to the presence of one hormone and the absence of another. Without sufficient sleep, the body releases cortisol. Cortisol can have the side effect of breaking down skin collagen and elastin, the proteins that keeps skin smooth. On the other hand, when you do have sufficient sleep, the body releases more human growth hormone, which is responsible for tissue repair.

5 Use Sunscreen /Sun Protection

This falls into the common sense arena. Wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen that defends against both UVA and UVB rays with SPF 30 or higher. Do this even on cloudy days, as UV radiation penetrates through clouds and windshields. SPF 50 is the highest that has been scientifically proven to be most effective, as it blocks 98% of sunburn rays. SPF 100 only provides 99% protection and has additives that are toxic and don't protect as well against UVA.



Note that SPF only refers to block of UVB rays, yet UVA rays penetrate deeper into skin and are potentially more dangerous. Unfortunately, labeling of sunscreens is highly misleading and the higher SPF's seem to encourage unsafe sun exposure.

Avoid vitamin A (RetinA) in sunscreen as it may speed the growth of cancerous tumors when used on skin exposed to sunlight, as shown in a federally funded study.

6 Hormone Balance

Sometimes hormones are out of balance due to stress, menopause (men experience a form of this also), diet, or disease. Having a professional evaluation of one's hormone state should be considered after age 40 or so, depending on symptoms and family genetics.

7 Use Non-toxic, Paraben-free Products

Parabens are widely used in personal care products as preservatives. The most common parabens used in cosmetic products are methylparaben, propylparaben, and butylparaben. These have shown to be toxic by disrupting hormone balance. Make sure to look closely at the label. In general, if there are tongue-twisting names like those above, you should avoid them.

8 Consult with a skin expert

It always helps to talk with someone who has been thoroughly trained and done their own research on skin health. You're likely to learn something new about available treatments as well as get additional tips that are appropriate and customized for your particular skin.

Call us now at **412-683-3358** to schedule your consultation. Just mention "8 Tips" when you come in, and we'll give you **10% off of any product purchase**. That's our way of saying thanks for reading this.

Feedback? We'd love to hear from you. Just email us at **info@aestheticpittsburgh.com** with your comments.



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4424 Penn Avenue
Suite 102
Pittsburgh, PA 15224

412-683-3358

