

## Healthier Skin Naturally in 7 Days or Less

Contributed by Burgundy Shank  
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{bot\_wrgoogle}Healthy skin is moist and produces adequate amounts of oil from the sebaceous glands, producing a natural "glow." Plump skin cells fit together like a carefully constructed mosaic, where each one has its own place. When skin cells dry out, however, they begin to lift and separate at an angle, giving skin a dull, flaky look that makes the skin appear older.

The two main causes for dry skin are environmental factors (weather, chemicals, the use of the wrong personal care products) and poor diet. In order to look great on the outside, you must first treat yourself right from within. A regular balanced diet is the number one defense against wrinkles, outbreaks and dry skin conditions. However, certain foods have properties that are most important for that glow that we crave. Here we'll talk a bit about some of these foods, and you'll see how quickly you can achieve radiant skin without breaking the bank.

Most moisture for your skin is provided through your bloodstream. The bloodstream is responsible for pumping nutrients and minerals into your system which are carried through that moisture. Without being properly hydrated, nutrients and minerals in your bloodstream may never reach your skin, making them useless in keeping your skin youthful. The oil that your skin produces is not directly responsible for moisturizing, but instead helps to keep moisture in. An inadequate amount of oil will allow excessive evaporation or the moisture in your skin, allowing it to dry out quickly.

Foods rich in protein are essential for skin regeneration and repair. Not just any protein will do. The Atkins diet, which boasts of its low carb dieting results, allows for many types of protein that can cause damage to your skin. Any kind of processed meat, such as bacon, hot dogs or deli meats are loaded with preservatives and salt that will do nothing but pull moisture from your skin. Better sources of protein would include seafood (salmon in particular is a very good choice), lean fowl (turkey, chicken) and vegetable protein. Veggie protein is often overlooked, as American society is accustomed to "meat with every meal." Try tofu or beans as a high quality protein source. Morningstar Farms makes an excellent veggie burger that even meat lovers would crave if given a try!

Another healthy practice is to eat lots of raw foods every day. Canned and frozen vegetables may provide some nutrients, but only raw veggies and fruits will contain the enzymes necessary to prevent free radical damage. If you absolutely must cook vegetables, steam them lightly and eat al dente.

Certain vitamins and minerals are crucial to youthful skin, including sulfur. In its natural form from foods such as garlic, onions, eggs and asparagus, sulfur with help to keep skin smooth and youthful. You can also take an L-cysteine supplement which will also provide adequate amounts of sulfur for healthy skin. A lack of either Vitamin A or B can make your skin chapped or cracked. Beta-carotene is as good for your skin as it is for your eyes. Don't limit yourself to carrots; any type of yellow or orange vegetable is loaded with them. Good examples are squashes and peppers.

Alpha-hydroxy acids are responsible for keeping your skin pH balanced. You can get them from foods such as apples, grapes, blackberries, citrus fruits, tomatoes and milk. Essential fatty acids (EFAs) found in fish (especially salmon), dark leafy vegetables (kale, collards, dandelions) and flax seeds are also extremely important for your skin. Lactic acid helps to improve your skin's moisture content, while glycolic acid removes dead skin cells that make your skin look dry and flaky. Eating foods containing these two EFAs will assist in healthy, glowing skin.

If you're willing to spend a little (just a little), there are a couple of supplements that will powerboost your healthy eating habits. If you find that you can only take one supplement, let it be Vitamin E. It prevents the formation of free radicals and helps repair skin cells damaged from scrapes, burns and bruises. Aloe Vera is another skin healer as well as moisturizer, and can be used topically from the aloe plant, or consumed as a juice found in supermarkets and health food stores. Kelp is an excellent source of nutrients due to its absorption from sea water and is available in several forms.

Junk foods should especially be avoided when trying to maintain healthy skin. Eliminating soda, sugar and other empty-calorie foods will not only improve your skin's appearance, but will help take off the extra pounds. Fried foods are especially bad, because hot-processed oils (such as those found in the supermarket) actually create free radicals and can destroy that look you've been working so hard for. Alcohol and caffeine should also be avoided, as these and other types of diuretics make the body lose fluids and essential minerals, which dries out your skin.

Each of these foods and supplements are easy to find in your local supermarket or health store, and will cost you much less than the myriad of skin care products which promise unrealistic results. In just a few days, you'll notice that your skin will begin to produce adequate amounts of oil naturally, and will no longer show signs of being dull, scaly, flaky or tight. Chapping and cracking during the winter will be much less likely to occur as well. Most importantly, these tips will help you to slow down the effects of aging, such as fine lines and wrinkles, brown spots, enlarged pores and sagging skin.

#### About The Author

Burgundy Shank designs Nutrient Rich Handmade Soaps that contain skin-loving Vitamins such as A, B, C, D, E, and K. She specializes in custom soaps for those with allergies and sensitive skin conditions. You can download the FREE Report "The Top 10 Ingredients to Avoid in Your Personal Care Products" by joining her online newsletter, "Beauty Secrets from Around the World" at <http://www.burgundysoap.com>.

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