

HEALTHY EATING TIPS > Compiled by Beatrice Nakibuuka

Foods that will nourish your skin

Did you know that what you eat is more likely to affect your skin? This is because the foods get digested and broken down into vitamins and minerals which the body uses to build healthy skin. Dr Edward Ogwang, a dermatologist at the Skin Specialist Clinic in Wandegaya, recommends reducing sugar intake and replacing it with nutrient-dense foods- like fruit, vegetables and healthy sources of Omega-3.

"Some people's skins react to oily and sugary foods differently. Some may get acne outbreak when they eat such foods so it is important for people to know what affects their skin," says Dr Ogwang.

Fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables contain powerful antioxidants that help to protect skin from the cellular

damage caused by free radicals. Their daily intake prevents the development of free radicals caused by smoking, pollution, sunlight and aging.

Dr Ogwang says, "For normal skin cell development and a healthy skin tone, kale, papaya and spinach are potential antioxidants. Beta-carotene, also an antioxidant found in sweet potatoes, carrots and pumpkin and the lutein, are potent antioxidants, are important for normal skin cell development and healthy skin tone.

Zinc. Zinc is involved in the normal functioning of the

sebaceous glands in the skin (which produce oil) and helps to repair skin damage and keep skin soft and supple. Zinc-rich foods include fish, lean red meat, whole grains, poultry, nuts and seeds.

Omega 3. Omega 3 obtained mainly from fish is an essential fatty acid that cannot be made in the body and must be obtained through the diet.

It encourages the body to produce anti-inflammatory compounds to protect the skin from inflammatory conditions such as eczema and psoriasis.

Vitamin E and C. Vitamin E protects the skin from oxidative damage and

supports growth of healthy skin. Foods rich in vitamin E include almonds, avocado and sunflower and corn oils. He says, "Vitamin C is also a good antioxidant needed for a strong immune system and radiant skin. It helps in the healing of skin blemishes. They produce collagen that strengthens the capillaries which supply the skin."

The vitamin can best be got from black currants, strawberries, broccoli, papaya, guava, kiwi fruits, oranges and sweet potatoes.

Drink. The skin needs moisture which is mostly obtained from taking a lot of water. Mild dehydration will therefore cause your skin to look dry. Dr Ogwang recommends one to drink six to eight glasses of water a day, more so warm water. Avoid smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.

