

Moisturise your skin with food

Healthy foods cannot only keep you hydrated, but keep your skin smooth.

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A dry skin is normally a temporary disorder. It may be a result of a poor diet and since it is a vital body organ, the skin requires proper nourishment and care to prevent dryness. One can detect that their skin is dry if it peels, cracks, reddens, becomes rough or itchy. It can sometimes bleed or develop fish-like scales. There are a few causes of a dry skin.

Genetics

Edward Ogwang, a dermatologist, says some dry skins are genetical meaning someone's skin is naturally dry.

Not moisturising

Ogwang adds that bathing without moisturising will likely cause skin dryness. "People who swim especially in pools with a lot of chlorine and do not moisturise are likely to have a dry skin because the water washes away the protective layer leaving the skin bare," he adds.

Medicated soaps

Ogwang notes that some mediated soaps comprise disinfectants and chlorine substances that are harmful to the skin. These can cause the skin

to peel or crack when regularly used.

According to Sarah Wamala, a nutritionist, a dry skin can be treated perfectly well with the usual foods we eat or sometimes ignore.

Fruits and vegetables

Lilian Nakayiki Nyanzi, a nutritionist at Neulife Medical Centre in Bweyogerere, says: "One should eat at least three fruits per day or drink fresh fruit juices to ensure that they obtain the nutritional benefits in the fruits. Fruits contain a variety of vitamins relevant for a healthy skin. These include; vitamin C, E, A. Vitamin C is necessary for regular manufacturing and repairing of tissue cells as well as helping in the production of the collagen protein."

Nyanzi recommends fruits rich in vitamin C especially citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons as well mangoes, pawpaw, watermelons, apples and avocado, among others.

She says citrus fruits are antioxidants and help fight against free radicals in the body cells. This prevents cell damage due to oxidation reactions thus preventing dryness, wrinkles and accumulation of cancerous particles (free radicals) in the body. "Just like Vitamin C, Vitamin E is also an antioxidant that provides protective functions to the skin body cells. Vitamin C, E are found in fresh

fruits and green leafy vegetables such as cabbage, lettuce, and broccoli," she adds.

Wamala says it is important to note that fresh fruits have a higher water content which helps rehydrate the skin cells. In addition, one should eat foods rich in beta carotenes for example, carrots and sweet potatoes.

"Vitamin A helps in sebum production. Sebum is natural oil produced by the body to prevent dryness of the skin and keep it hydrated. Vitamin A can be supplemented in diet by eating foods rich in Vitamin A for example egg yolks, spinach and avocado, among others" Nyanzi says.

Fats

Nyanzi recommends using vegetable cooking oil instead of lard/ animal fats or hydrogenated fats and oils. For example, olive and palm oil are rich in Vitamin

E and Omega 3 fatty acids.

Omega 3 fatty acids

Omega 3 fatty acids are essential body fats that are found in fish and fish products as well as avocado. They are healthier fatty acids required by the body for brain functioning, retaining moisture and strengthening the skin barriers. She says they can be found in all types of fish and fish oils.

