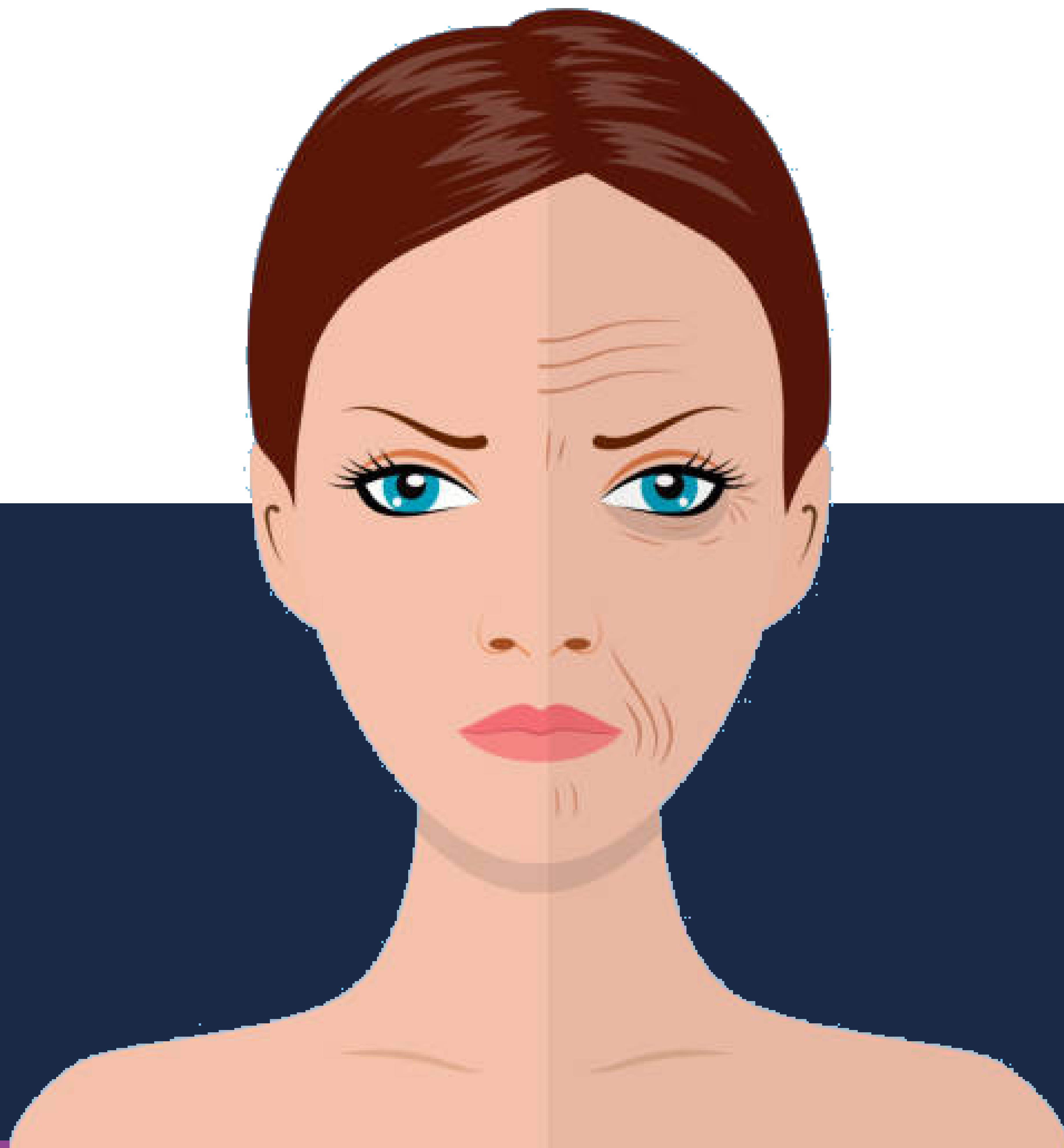


FOODS TO HELP THE ANTI-AGING PROCESS



Some people are born with a genetic leaning towards certain skin disorders, but that doesn't mean that they can't get a clear complexion and improve their skin with healthy behaviours. Not smoking and not tanning are great places to start. But the best way to keep your skin in tip-top shape is to eat healthily. As for lotions, potions and make-up, they are simply a beauty band-aid. Healthy, beautiful skin begins from the inside out. Our skin reflects our health, so eating the right foods will enable you to see a noticeable difference in your complexion and how it ages.

A healthy diet is a powerful weapon in the battle against acne, premature ageing, wrinkles, or any other skin disease. Inflammation is reduced by including specific nutritious foods in your diet. This gives your body the resources it needs to grow and rebuild healthy skin tissue.

Then, what should you consume in order to have the radiant complexion you desire?

Omega 3 fatty acids help reduce inflammation from free radicals, giving you healthy, glowing skin. Healthy fats are very important for slowing down the aging process by making sure your cells have a strong membrane to hold in moisture. If your skin lacks this hydration, it will make the skin look dry and increase the chances of wrinkles forming. Omega 3 oils also help to strengthen the skin and reduce inflammation, such as that caused by dermatitis and eczema (1). It can also speed up healing and offer some protection against the aging effects of the sun (2).

The best sources of omega 3 in food are oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, pilchards and anchovies; walnuts, flax seed and flax seed oil. The proteins in fish are also essential for the creation and maintenance of keratin, elastin and collagen that keep skin healthy and young looking (3).

Another fat that is great for skin and anti-aging is coconut oil. It helps reduce water loss from the skin and helps heal irritations such as dermatitis (4).

Coconut oil is delicious when eaten but you can also put it on your skin to heal wounds and reduce redness (5).

Choline is another nutrient that is beneficial for the skin. Pastured egg yolks, liver and cod are amazing sources of this recently discovered nutrient (6) which gives elasticity to the skin. This helps keep it tight and young-looking which prevents sagging as we age. This is because choline helps maintain cell integrity (7)

Healthy fats are great for keeping skin young and locking in moisture. Other sources of healthy fats are avocado, olive oil (8), and nuts – especially walnuts.

When you eat fruits and vegetables, you are not only getting vitamins and minerals, which boost the immune system, but also antioxidants. Anti-oxidants protect us from the damage done by free radicals. In the case of aging, free radicals, such as those caused by poor diet, pollution, smoking and the sun, cause wrinkles, hair loss and loss of elastin, which keeps skin supple (9).

Some of the best sources of antioxidants are berries such as blueberries, blackberries, strawberries and raspberries (10). Blueberries, in particular are especially potent anti-oxidants (11).

Eating a handful of blueberries every day will boost the appearance of your skin, due to the ability of these amazing fruits to boost nitric oxide and circulation. This enables nutrients and oxygen to be delivered to the skin, making it glow with health (12).

On top of that, blueberries are rich in vitamin C. This increases collagen which plumps up the skin, keeping it strong and healthy. Vitamin C also plays a part in protecting against skin diseases (13).

Due to the amazing anti-aging benefits of vitamin C, you will see improvement to your skin if you eat lots of oranges, grapefruits, tomatoes, red peppers, strawberries and kiwi fruit to name just a few (14).

Another food that is good for anti-aging are beets. Beets are very high in betalains, which is one of nature's most powerful antioxidants, providing protection for your cells against oxidative stress while also soothing inflammation on your skin. Beets also contain nitrites, which are important for healthy blood circulation, making sure that all those health-giving nutrients are delivered to the skin to keep it healthy, supple, elastic, glowing and young looking (15).

Beets also contain folate, also known as folic acid, which reduces wrinkles and fine lines and boosts collagen (16). Other foods that contain folate and will benefit your skin and help slow down the aging process are leafy greens such as spinach, kale and cabbage. Seafood, eggs and wholegrains are also packed with folate.

Vitamin K has been found to help heal wounds, protect the skin against UV light and pollution and reduce dark circles under the eyes.

. These all contribute to keeping you looking less tired, younger looking and healthier (17). So the foods you need to eat that contain this skin-boosting vitamin are leafy greens. Hopefully, you are eating these already, following the advice to eat foods that contain folate - so you are getting a double whammy of anti-aging benefits in one plateful of greens.

Add vitamin C-rich foods to the mix and those dark eye circles will be banished forever (18).

So far, all we have mentioned is fruit, vegetables, fish and oils. Although these foods are delicious, I am sure a bit of chocolate would be welcome. The good news is that dark chocolate is another anti-aging food. This is due to the high levels of antioxidants in cocoa beans. In fact, dark chocolate actually has more anti-oxidants than blueberries (19).

As well as eating chocolate, drinking cocoa can benefit the skin and fight the aging process. The cocoa bean is full of flavonols, which improve the appearance of wrinkles on the face and increase the elasticity and suppleness of your skin (20).

And finally, the best drink of all for your skin is water. It is great to drink, but it will also help keep your skin looking young if you use warm water to wash it with as a gentle cleanser. It keeps your kidneys working properly, flushing out toxins that may cause clogged pores and free radical damage.

The best way to stay young looking is to eat lots of healthy foods. And the best part is that the nutrients in these foods will boost your health in lots of other ways too. And when you are healthy inside, you will look healthy and vibrant outside too.

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