

The skin is an external mirror to our inner condition

We would like to take a look at the skin as this is the most obvious of all our organs, it is what we can see everyday when we look in the mirror, and it is the body's way of trying to show us if there are any problems within. The problem is we no longer know what we are looking at. If you have a skin complaint like psoriasis, eczema, acne, dandruff, flaky dry skin, fungal infections, etc. Do you know why this is happening? Most people deal with these things topically or in some cases with antibiotics. We use creams, lotions, shampoos, steroid creams and so on to try and treat these ailments, what we need to look at is what is causing them to happen and the cause is usually an internal issue not an external one.



When the skin has a recurring skin complaint that won't resolve itself with the steroid cream or the antibiotic, then you know it isn't a skin issue.

What the body does when we are not working well on the inside is push the issue out to the skin for elimination and instead of allowing this to happen we use steroid creams or antibiotics which you may find works temporarily, but long term you have just pushed the issue back into the body.

What our skin needs ...

For the skin to remain healthy we need certain nutrients like Vitamin A, D, and E, these are fat soluble vitamins and we need our cell membranes to have good levels of essential fats in order for these vitamins to be utilised effectively. We also need Vitamin C and B vitamins. Each of these has an important role to play in the function and elasticity of the skin cells.

We need certain minerals for instance calcium, without it we may manifest dry itchy skin or have premature ageing

and also without it we could be more prone to skin cancers, the best sources of calcium are sesame seeds, nuts and green leafy vegetable.

Zinc



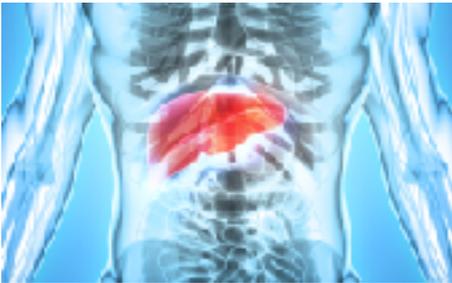
Zinc is another mineral that is necessary for skin health. The skin actually contains around 27% of the bodies total zinc with the majority of it being concentrated in the epidermis. Zinc is a potent antioxidant and it may be used to help protect the skin from the damaging effects of UV radiation and inflammation, zinc has also been shown to enhance wound healing by assisting the enzymes that clean up damaged tissue and promoting the migration of new cells across the wound and assisting the production of collagen along with Vitamin C. Considering that 50% of the population of the western cultures is actually zinc deficient, it may be worth considering supplementing although always seek advise from a Nutritional therapist on the best sources.

Copper

Copper works together with vitamins C and zinc to develop the elastin fibres that support the skin structure from underneath. Zinc and copper also function together in the antioxidant enzyme superoxide dismutase, which helps protect the body from free radicals. The balance of copper and zinc is vital due to their related roles, high zinc intake can affect the absorption of copper, so if considering supplementing zinc it is perhaps better if we take it in balance with copper. The female contraceptive pill has been shown to affect our copper balance, chocolate could also affect copper balance. Selenium, sulphur, MSM and silicon all have roles to play. These are all important for the skin and they are all available in abundance if we eat a diet high in plants but it is not the only consideration and it is important to realise that in order to get these nutrients into our system we

must look at how well the body functions in the first place, so we therefore must look at our digestive health, poor digestion or gut infections and good gut bacteria are all key factors when it come to the health of your skin.

Liver congestion



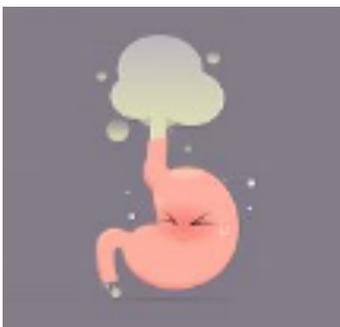
Liver congestion is often a problem and if the liver is overwhelmed by too much toxicity, hormones, sugar, alcohol, high protein diets, refined carbohydrates, etc. We need to address this and remember that when we start to detoxify the liver then our skin may get worse before it gets better.

Water is the Key

Water is key when it comes to the detoxification process and the quality of the water is also a consideration - look at a good quality water filter and avoid drinking from plastic bottles unless they are BPA free.

Poor Kidney function can lead to a build up of acidity and toxins and mineral imbalances and this can compromise health. The quality of our food and drinks is paramount to good kidney function. Reduction of Lymphatic flow can cause a build up of waste products and inefficient delivery of nutrients to cells, especially those in the epidermis.

To resolve skin issues we need to consider the following;



Stomach Acid production - Do the stomach acid test below - If it is low it needs to be sorted - and to do this you can use Barley grass or celery juice, - 2 teaspoon of Barley Grass (increasing gradually) or a full stalk of Celery juiced (start by juicing 2 stalks and build up gradually). You can start by using apple cider vinegar and you will need to consider zinc as this is needed for stomach acid production.

Probiotics - Needed for the proper breakdown of foods especially complex carbohydrates, they also aid in the prevention of gut infections, help maintain gut permeability and reduce toxin build up and aid in nutrient absorption.

Chicory - purifies the blood and supports circulation and digestion as well as aiding the removal of toxins via the liver and gallbladder.

Marigold - Is soothing for the digestive system and supports detoxification.

Dandelion - is a cleansing stimulant for the liver, it is also of benefit to the stomach and intestines, it aids in the balance of the enzymes that simultaneously support digestion assimilation and elimination.

Watercress - stimulates cleansing enzymes in the liver, kidney supporting diuretic properties, which aid in flushing out toxins.

Chervil - diuretic, digestive aid and skin freshener.

Burdock root - Used to neutralise and eliminate toxins from the body, rids the lymphatic system of congestion and promotes good kidney function, liver function and can aid digestion.

Sage - digestive aid. Can also be used as antiseptic and hormone balancer, can be useful for skin conditions like acne and rosacea.

Olive leaf - A powerful internal cleanser with both microbial and antioxidant properties.

Garlic - Natural antibiotic powerful digestive and liver support, one of nature's blood cleansers.

Alfalfa - Is rich in nutrients and an excellent digestive tonic, It can promote regular bowel movements, beneficial in the breakdown of toxins.



Chlorophyll - powerful cleaning agent, it detoxifies the bowels, liver, kidney and blood stream, it can help normalise friendly bacteria in the gut and stimulates tissue regeneration.

Essential Fats - especially omega 3 - adding in some hemp oil or flaxseed oil - some times algae oil is more beneficial if you are not converting seed oils within the body.

If you have specific skin conditions you may need to see a Nutritional therapist or herbalist to tailor the treatment to your needs. But you can try some of the above ideas and see how you get on. We will look at more specific skin problems in future boosts.

Bibliography.

Taylor, H., Atkinson, M. (2009), Nutrition Solution for Optimising Skin Health. Another Country Publishing. pp10-22

Pitchford, P. (2002), Healing with Whole Foods, Asian Traditions and Modern Nutrition, Third Edition. North Atlantic Books, Berkley, California. pp 346-348

Stomach Acid Test

1 teaspoon of Bicarbonate of soda 250 ml water.

Mix the bicarbonate of Soda in the water and then drink the full amount on an Empty stomach. After a minute or so you should start to burp.

If you have between 6 and 8 burps you have normal stomach acid

if you get less than 5 burps you are low stomach acid.

As soon as you eat you will stop burping but it is highly unlikely that you will get more than 8. You can try this for 2/3 days as this will give you a true result.

