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What Skin Doctors Really Eat

Is it kiwis all the way or seeds with everything? We ask five leading dermatologists to reveal their skin-friendly diets

WORDS BY ANNA MAGEE



I swear by boiled eggs, tomatoes, oily fish and plenty of green vegetables, along with red meat twice a week.

I don't touch foods that aggravate my rosacea – which causes redness and broken capillaries – such as alcohol, spicy curries and hot drinks.

DR NICK LOWE *consultant dermatologist*



I swear by freshly squeezed tomato juice, watermelon, Brazil nuts and walnuts, brown rice, chicken, eggs, fresh fish, lamb and vegetables. Oysters and liver are high in skin-loving zinc.

I don't touch sugar, coffee or refined carbs. I don't eat between meals because it causes skin-damaging insulin spikes.

DR NEETU NIRDOSH *cosmetic doctor*



I swear by slow-release carbs, such as wholemeal bread, brown rice, lentils and pulses, plus almonds and green leafy veg. I make a shake each day from berries, banana, coconut water and flaxseeds.

I don't touch white carbohydrates, anything high in salt or desserts.

DR SAM BUNTING *cosmetic dermatologist*



I swear by a Mediterranean diet (for example, vegetables, fruit, fish, olive oil), sprouted lentils, chickpeas and beans, wild Atlantic salmon and line-caught fish, organic nuts, salads, 80-per-cent-cocoa chocolate and buckwheat or spelt pasta.

I don't touch wheat, red meat or sugar.

DR MICHAEL PRAGER *cosmetic doctor*



I swear by berries, fish, meat, eggs, colourful fruit and vegetables, 85-per-cent-cocoa chocolate, coconut and almond flour for baking, and 100 per cent birch-wood-derived xylitol for sweetening (from health shops).

I don't touch sugary, fried or processed foods, starches or grains.

DR STEFANIE WILLIAMS *dermatologist*

HOW TO FEED YOUR SKIN: THE GOLDEN RULES

✓ DO remember the skin statistics

'Only 20 per cent of the way your skin ages is down to your genetics,' says Dr Neetu Nirdosh. 'The other 80 per cent is governed by smoking, sun damage and your diet.'

✗ DON'T eat too much sugar

'When blood sugar levels are constantly on the high-low cycle that comes from a high-sugar and high-carb diet or eating too often between meals, sugar molecules bond to proteins, including the collagen in your skin,' says Dr Stefanie Williams. 'As a result, tissues become stiff and inflexible, skin becomes tougher and saggier, and wrinkles form prematurely.'

✓ DO eat all types of berries

'They're high in antioxidants, which bring great anti-ageing benefits to the skin,' says Dr Williams. 'Although you might want to avoid sweet tropical fruits,' she adds.

✗ DON'T binge on chocolate

'Where once we dismissed the idea of a connection between diet and pimples, there is now good evidence of a link between unrefined sugars, sweets, milk chocolate and unrefined carbohydrates, and increased incidence of acne breakout,' says leading dermatologist Dr Nick Lowe.

✓ DO eat high-water-content food

'Consuming fruits and vegetables that are high in water rebalances your system more efficiently than drinking, because they are surrounded by molecules that help deliver the water into cells more easily,' says Dr Howard Murad, founder of Murad skincare and associate professor of medicine at UCLA. 'I encourage patients to eat – not drink – their water.' Foods with a high water content include watermelon, cucumber, broccoli, spinach, apricots and avocados. ■