

Seven Things You Can Do to Prevent Skin from Aging

Each year, Americans spend billions of dollars on beauty products to prevent their skin from aging. Yet keeping your skin youthful takes much more than applying a moisturizer. Knowing your skin type, eating the right diet, and daily cleansing are essential for fresh and young looking skin.

Protect yourself from the sun

In our world of ozone holes and 30+ sunscreens, many people have come to think of the sun as an enemy to the skin. Yet the sun, besides being the source of energy for mind and body, also nourishes the skin. It's the best source of Vitamin D, which is necessary for calcium absorption and healthy bones. Doctors today recommend 15 minutes of direct exposure to the sun on the hands and face to absorb the minimum daily requirement of Vitamin D. Over-protecting from sun is not a good idea. The challenge is to maximize the benefit from sun and at the same time protect it from damage.

While people with Caucasian skin definitely should avoid direct exposure to the midday sun, short periods of exposure to the early morning sun is soothing and mild on the skin, and allows even very sensitive skin to absorb necessary Vitamin D. The Council of Maharishi Ayurveda Physicians recommends avoiding long exposure to the sun whenever you are angry, hungry or emotionally upset, as these factors increase heat in the body and make the skin more sensitive to sun damage. At these times it's important to protect yourself by wearing a hat and sunglasses. People with more Pitta in their body should always take care to protect themselves from the midday sun. It's also a good idea to cool the body from the inside if your skin is very photosensitive. Eating green leafy vegetables and fruits such as raisins, pears, apples, and pomegranates, for instance, will help nourish and restore balance to the skin.

[Amla Berry](#), available as a supplement called [ReGen Vitality](#) and also contained in [Amrit](#), is also an excellent anti-oxidant and rasayana for the skin. Cooking your food with a skin-protecting spice mixture to stimulate digestion but not overheat your skin helps. Sauté equal parts turmeric, coriander, fennel and cumin in ghee and add it to your vegetables and grains. Even in winter people with photosensitive skin should avoid eating too much ginger, garlic, aesofetida (hing), red chilies or any types of hot peppers if you are sensitive to the sun.

Avoid Chemicals

Harsh chemicals in your shampoo, skin products, or soaps irritate the skin. They cause Bhrajaka Pitta, the subdosha of Pitta that governs absorption and enzymatic changes of the skin, to become overworked and overheated. A strong preservative or antibacterial agent in skin-care products, for instance, kills harmful bacteria but at the same time destroys enzymes that trigger absorption and lubrication. The result might be permanent dry patches, oversensitive skin, or susceptibility to sun damage. Even synthetic aromas in skin products can be irritating because they affect your emotions. For this reason, all shampoos, skin care products, and soaps made by Maharishi Ayurveda Products International are free of sodium laurel sulfate, which dries and irritates the hair and skin; and other chemicals which can be carcinogenic, or cause skin rashes and other allergic reactions. Maharishi Ayurveda products contain all-natural ingredients and are designed to balance and nourish all seven layers of the skin.

It's also essential to avoid eating chemicals in your food—buy organic foods whenever possible. Eat fresh, organic, unprocessed, unpackaged foods for the healthiest skin. Chemicals, preservatives, and additives in foods accumulate in the liver and kidneys, and many of them mix with sweat and are released through the skin. When sweat mixes with the toxic chemicals in foods, it creates foul or strong body odor. Another source of harsh chemicals can be your water. If your water is chlorinated or contains pesticides and chemical fertilizers from nearby farms, it can cause imbalance in all the layers of the skin and result in

irritation and drying. It's worth investing in a reverse osmosis water filter for drinking and a shower unit for bathing, to hydrate your skin with the purest water.

Eat for your skin type

To figure out which foods are best for your skin, first determine your skin type. Vata skin is dryer, thinner, small-pored, delicate, and cool to the touch. Vata skin may age faster, and tends to be dry, rough and flaky when out of balance. Or your skin may be more Pitta—fair, sensitive, soft, warm, and of medium thickness. When out of balance, Pitta skin can flare up in rashes, rosacea, acne, or sun spots. Kapha skin tends to age slower and form less wrinkles than the other two types. It is thick, oily, pale, soft and cool. Kapha skin types may struggle with dull complexion, enlarged pores, excessive oil, blackheads, pimples, moist types of eczema and water retention.

Once you determine which kind of skin you have, you can follow the [Vata](#), [Pitta](#), or [Kapha](#) pacifying dietary guidelines to keep your skin balanced, healthy and youthful. Vata skin types, for instance, will want to eat more warm, unctuous foods to counteract the cool dryness. While eating all six tastes is important for everyone, favoring the sweet, sour and salty tastes will balance the dry, rough, moving Vata dosha. Eat plenty of cooked, leafy green vegetables spiced with cumin, coriander and turmeric. If you have Pitta skin, you will thrive on sweet, bitter and astringent tastes, as found in sweet, juicy fruits, [Rose Petal Preserve](#), and cooked greens. You'll need to favor cooling spices such as cumin, coriander, fennel and licorice. Avoid hot, spicy foods. The oiliness of Kapha type skin calls for a diet that is warmer, lighter, less oily, and free of heavy, hard to digest foods. Eating more bitter, astringent and pungent tastes help stimulate digestion and balance Kapha skin. Flavor your food with ginger, black pepper, turmeric, cumin and coriander.

Soothe Away Stress

There are three types of stress, and all three impact the skin in different ways. Mental stress starts a chain reaction that ends in the drying out of Shleshaka Kapha, the subdosha of Kapha that governs moisture balance in the skin. The drying of Shleshaka Kapha causes skin to become thin and age earlier. If the stress is not brought into balance, the shrotas (microchannels) that carry nutritive fluid to the skin also start to shrink, resulting in wrinkles and stress lines. Emotional stress also affects the skin—just notice how anger or embarrassment can make your face turn red. This shows the connection between Sadhaka Pitta, the subdosha of Pitta that governs the emotions, and Bhrajaka Pitta, which governs the skin. If emotional stress becomes chronic, then Bhrajaka Pitta will burn Shleshaka Kapha. The result is acne, sun sensitivity, and other Pitta-based problems. Physical stress is caused by exercising too much, working too much or straining the body over a period of time. Like mental stress, this causes the drying out of skin moisture resulting in rough, aged skin.

To counteract mental stress, try [Worry Free tea, tablets](#), and [aroma oil](#). Maintain a Vata-pacifying diet and daily routine. To bring emotional stress into balance, follow a Pitta-pacifying diet and routine and try [Blissful Joy tablets](#) and [Blissful Heart aroma oil](#). Stop whatever work or exercise is causing the strain. In Maharishi Ayurveda, too much work or exercise means anything more than fifty percent of your physical stamina. And for all types of stress, practice the Transcendental Meditation® program, which has been shown by hundreds of scientific studies to be the most effective technique to alleviate mental, emotional and physical stress.

Cleanse and gently exfoliate

Every skin type needs cleansing, but Kapha skin needs it the most. This is because people with Kapha skin often have low agni. Consequently *ama* collects in the body, clogs the channels of the skin and causes oil to collect on the surface. Many people with Kapha skin try to counteract the oiliness by using products that are too drying. This is not really necessary. What is necessary is to cleanse the pores and channels so

the skin's own balance can be restored, and the skin can be nourished from the inside. But of course the Kapha person should be really careful not to clog their pores by using greasy creams, exposing their skin to freezing weather, or by eating heavy, sweet, oily foods.

Keep the pores and channels open by taking warm baths, cleansing with [Youthful Skin Cleansing Bar](#) and exfoliating with [Youthful Skin Herbalized Clay](#). This herb-infused clay gently cleanses the pores, removes impurities and opens the channels so nourishment can flow from the inner to the outer layers of the skin. Use twice a week to keep Kapha skin in balance. Vata skin types should avoid any products that are too drying. The [Youthful Skin Cleansing Gel](#) is especially formulated to cleanse dry skin without disturbing its moisture balance, and the [Youthful Skin Toner](#) rehydrates, conditions and tones dry skin. Pitta types should avoid products that are too abrasive or heating. The [Youthful Skin Cleansing Bar](#) and Herbalized Clay mask work well for cleansing and exfoliating Pitta skin.

Rehydrate from the inside and outside

First of all, it's important to moisturize your skin from the inside to provide necessary nutrients and to keep the inner layers of the skin from drying out. Drink lots of water, but add some spices to the water to help the water get absorbed and transported to the skin. Kapha skin types should steep 2 thin slices of fresh ginger root, 2 basil leaves, 2 whole cloves, 1/2 teaspoon of whole cumin seeds and 2 pinches licorice powder in hot water and sip hot through the day. For pitta types The Council of Maharishi Ayurveda Physicians recommends steeping 2 pinches of Indian sarsaparilla powder, 1/4 teaspoon cumin seeds, 2 pinches of licorice powder, 1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds and 1/2 teaspoon of coriander seeds in hot water, to be drunk at body temperature throughout the day. And Vata types will benefit from a mixture of 1/2 teaspoon whole cumin seeds, 1/2 teaspoon whole coriander seeds, 1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds, 3 pinches of ashwagandha root powder and 1 pinch whole root licorice powder in hot water, to be drunk warm as needed through the day.

In cold weather, most people benefit from drinking hot water, as it opens the channels and helps clear away toxins. If you have sensitive, Pitta-based skin you will want to stick to room temperature water. Including plenty of vegetables and sweet, juicy fruits in your diet also helps moisturize the skin. Be sure to eat moderate amounts of healthy oils, such as [ghee](#) and olive oil, to provide additional lubrication. To moisturize from the outside, use [Youthful Skin Cream](#) on your face, and use [Youthful Skin Oil for Men](#) or [Women](#) for your body. [Youthful Skin Cream](#) contains a blend of essential oils that are extremely effective in restoring elasticity, moisture, and nutrition to the skin. No harsh chemical solvents or preservatives are included, as these would destroy the holistic effect of the herbs. An independent study showed that after just three months of using [Youthful Skin Cream](#) twice daily, there were significant improvements in moisture, color, tone, clarity, and thickness. Skin moisture improved an average of 47% and reduced wrinkles an average of 39%.

To really moisturize the skin, the skin cream must be comprised of molecules that are smaller than the pores of the skin, so they can slip into the pores and nourish the deeper layers.

Massaging your body skin on a daily basis is also essential to keep the skin young and healthy, and The Council recommends [Youthful Skin Oil for Men](#) or [Women](#), to rejuvenate and nourish the skin. This powerful blend of over two dozen restorative herbs and essential oils keeps the skin supple and youthful. By design it absorbs easier than any other herbal oil, penetrating and nourishing the deeper levels of the skin rather than just staying on the surface. For best results, massage your whole body before your bath or shower. [Youthful Skin Clay](#) is also excellent for moisturizing the skin because it absorbs the toxins and opens the channels, allowing moisture and nutrients to flow to all the layers of the skin.

Nourish your skin

Besides following the diet for your skin type, these foods are terrific skin-enhancers: leafy green vegetables; easily digested proteins such as panir, milk, tofu, sunflower seeds; foods high in zinc such as quinoa; and betacarotene-rich foods such as carrots and sweet cherries. Almonds and walnuts support the skin with their protein and lubricating fat content. Some skin-friendly spices include turmeric, which nurtures the different layers of the skin; cumin, which rids the body of *ama* ; black pepper to cleanse the channels, and fennel to balance the transformational ability of the skin. All antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables, such as pomegranate, apple, pear, and bitter, green leafy vegetables are also excellent for the skin.

Eat only intelligent foods, which are fresh foods, organic foods. Stay away from packaged, canned, frozen, processed, and packaged foods. Leftovers are also a no-no. Some nutritional supplements that are nourishing for the skin are [ReGen Vitality](#), which is rich in Vitamin C. [Radiant Skin tablets](#) are targeted to enhance the radiance of skin and keep it clear, while [Youthful Skin Tablets](#) combat the aging process by providing deep nourishment.