

10 FOODS YOU MUST EAT TO FIGHT WRINKLES

LOTIONS AND POTIONS MAY HELP YOUR SKIN LOOK BETTER FROM THE OUTSIDE, BUT THE BEST WAY TO FIGHT AGEING IS FROM THE INSIDE - WITH WHAT YOU EAT. SO HERE'S OUR GUIDE TO THE TOP 10 ANTI-AGEING FOODS (AND ONE OF THEM IS CHOCOLATE!)

1 SPINACH

FOR skin that looks 38 per cent younger in just a few weeks, add dark green leafy veg such as spinach, cabbage and kale to your diet every day.

These are packed with an antioxidant called lutein that new French research reveals boosts skin hydration and elasticity, fighting wrinkles. You need 10mg of lutein to get results - which equates to about 4oz of spinach or 2oz of kale.

2 BEANS

BAKED, kidney or butter, all of these help your body produce a vital anti-ageing substance called hyaluronic acid, says Nicky Hambleton-Jones from TV's 10 Years Younger show: "When we're born our skin is pumped full of this and it makes it look plump and smooth. As you age levels fall, but eating plenty of beans can help replace it."

Aim for at least two tablespoons of beans each day - broad or butter beans make a great substitute for mashed potatoes if you mix them with a little Greek yoghurt.

3 GOJI BERRIES

SKIN-guru Dr Howard Murad swears by the anti-ageing power of these red berries, claiming they're the most "nutritionally dense food on the planet".

Fact is, they have nearly 500 times more vitamin C per ounce than oranges - and vitamin C helps you make the collagen that keeps skin firm. They also contain linoleic acid, an essential fat that plumps skin up, making it look and feel younger. You'll find goji berries at Holland & Barrett (£2.75 for 75g). They're most commonly used in smoothies or sprinkled over cereal - but celebs including Naomi Watts like them in salads.

4 TURKEY

THIS white meat contains a vital skin-friendly protein called carnosine that slows down a process in the skin called cross-linking. When this happens, fibres grow into the collagen of the skin making it stiff and inelastic. This then stops it snapping back when you do things like smile, laugh or frown - and this is what causes smile lines or crows feet. If you want to reduce your risk of these, don't save turkey for Christmas, eat it two to three times a week.

5 FLAXSEED

OIL YOU can gulp this oil down by the spoonful, mix it into smoothies or add it to balsamic vinegar and use it as a salad dressing, but whatever you choose, have a tablespoon each day.

"Flaxseed is a major source of the healthy fat omega-3," says Suzi Grant, author of *Alternative Aging* (Penguin, £14.99) "Skin cells are surrounded by a fatty layer made from this and other fats so, the higher your omega-3 intake the stronger that layer is, and the plumper your skin cells are - which helps disguise lines and wrinkles." You'll find flaxseed oil in health stores.

6 PRUNES

ONE of the biggest causes of skin ageing is attack by substances called free radicals, that break down healthy skin tissues. Nutrients called antioxidants help neutralise these free radicals before they can do any damage - and prunes are the fruit containing the absolute highest level of antioxidants. Blueberries are a close second. Eat five to six prunes, or a small punnet of blueberries, daily to get a great health boost.

7 BEETROOT

THIS is the top choice of independent nutritionist Carrie Ruxton: "It's not only a great source of antioxidants, all purple foods contain pigments called anthocyanins that help support collagen production in the skin," she says. The obvious way to use beetroot is to slice it up in salads, but you can now also buy beetroot juice in supermarkets. Try James White Organic Beetroot Juice (£2.59), which you can find in most Tescos and Sainsbury's.

8 OLIVES

AUSTRALIAN researchers recently discovered the more olive oil people had, the less wrinkled their skin looked.

"The oleic acid found in olives and virgin olive oil can make the difference between a complexion that looks and feels like old shoe leather - and one that looks like a rose petal," says dermatologist to the stars Nicholas Perricone. A healthy fat, oleic acid actually soaks through the membranes of skin cells plumping them up, which then makes fine lines and wrinkles less noticeable.

To build more olive products into your day use olive oil for cooking, add olives to pasta sauce and salads - or nibble on them whole as a healthy snack.

9 CHOCOLATE

YES, there is a god! Chocolate really is good for your skin. In studies in Germany, it was found that after drinking a cocoa-packed drink, blood flow to the skin was boosted (meaning it gets higher levels of nutrients and moisture). It also seemed to be more protected against UV damage - the number-one skin ager.

Only dark chocolate contains enough antioxidants to have effects, though.

10 RED PEPPERS..

...SWEET potatoes, carrots and more - it's not just chocolate that protects skin against sun damage. Research from Dr Ronald Watson at the University of Arizona has found that the antioxidants in red, yellow and orange foods build up under the skin creating extra UV protection. "The effect is so strong that eating six portions a day for about two months will build a natural barrier equivalent to a factor four sunscreen," says Dr Watson.

BEAUTY IN A PILL.. is it worth it?

THERE are numerous skin-boosting supplements available. But are they worth the money or can you get everything you need from your diet? "This depends on the nutrient," says Carrie Ruxton.

"Supplements are worth considering for skin-boosting nutrients with limited numbers of natural sources, for example evening primrose oil.

"But for antioxidants such as carotenes, quercetin, vitamins C and E, it's better to eat the natural foods. A number of studies on single antioxidants given as pills have found no benefit to health. This is probably because the antioxidants work together or with other, as yet unidentified, phytonutrients."

SOURCE: http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm_headline=yourlife--10-foods-you-must-eat-to-fight-wrinkles-&method=full&objectid=17923641&siteid=94762-name_page.html