

9 SNEAKY WAYS TO REACH YOUR DREAM WEIGHT

# SELF

FOUNDER OF THE PINK RIBBON



**Renée Zellweger**  
On Living Life

## THE GREAT-SKIN DIET

All sorts of supplements, special eating plans and complexion drinks promise glowing skin from the inside out. But not everything that is being dished out is based on science. SELF digested the research and polled experts to determine which foods to add to your diet to truly benefit skin, which may be worth an occasional munch and which to pass up. Get ready to eat, drink and be beautiful! *By Beth Janes Photographs by Fernando Milani*

### PROVEN COMPLEXION PERFECTERS

Pile these on your plate. All pack nutrients essential for healthy skin.

strawberries, citrus fruits, red peppers, broccoli

BEAUTY BENEFIT  
A SMOOTH TEXTURE

**EAT-RIGHT EVIDENCE** Vitamin C, plentiful in this produce, is vital for the production and formation of collagen, skin's support structure, says Toby Amidor, R.D., director of nutrition for DietTV.com in New York City. And a strong support layer helps smooth what's on top and prevent wrinkles, she says. Aim for: two 1-cup servings of fruit and 1 cup of red peppers and/or broccoli a day

sunflower seeds and almonds

BEAUTY BENEFIT  
SUN PROTECTION

**EAT-RIGHT EVIDENCE** These seeds and nuts are loaded with vitamin E. Collectively, antioxidants act like an army, protecting skin from UV-spawned free radicals. But E is on the front lines; skin's top layers contain high levels that guard cells

dark leafy greens and red peppers

**EAT-RIGHT EVIDENCE** You'll get zinc and iron, minerals key to skin functioning. Zinc contributes to cell production, plus natural cell sloughing, which keeps dullness at bay. Red blood cells need iron to carry oxygen to skin, helping give you a glow, says David Bank, M.D., a derm in Mount Kisco, New York. Aim for: 1 serving of cereal (a cup), 1 palm-sized serving of meat or poultry or 3 oysters per day

fortified lean meats and poultry

water

BEAUTY BENEFIT  
DEWY SKIN

**EAT-RIGHT EVIDENCE** Skin cells contain mostly water, and if you're dehydrated, skin will look and feel parched, too. But you needn't chug 8 cups a day; University of Pennsylvania researchers found no studies to back up the recommendation. Simply ward off dehydration—and dryness—by drinking when you're thirsty. Aim for: 6 cups a day. It's a good starting point, says Keri Gans, R.D., of NYC.

sweets

↳ **TROUBLE** Chowing candy and other sugary snacks may

make you feel like a kid, but it's likely aging you. The rush of glucose into your bloodstream sets off a process known as glycation, in which sugars attach to proteins and form advanced glycation end products (AGEs). These molecules naturally build up in skin as you get older, but the more sugar you eat, the more AGEs you have. Bad news: They cross-link with collagen and elastin fibers, making the normally resilient tissues weak or inflexible, Dr. Bank says. And skin that doesn't bounce back easily leads to wrinkles and sagging. In fact, the study showing fish lovers had fewer wrinkles revealed the opposite for those with a sweet tooth.

dark chocolate

↳ **TREAT** Although there might be some truth to the claims that sugar-laden chocolate contributes to acne (and

20 percent or more preliminary studies antioxidant) can oxygen, improve at dark chocolate as a day.

Milk may not be Three new study-connection between potentially trans- More research is hormone-related. ic versions with- out added hormones) may add to a drinker's own level of androgens, which are associated with oily skin and acne. Milk also raises insulin levels and contains growth factors that act like insulin, Dr. Treloar says. Both may lower the production of molecules that bind to and deactivate hormones—meaning there may be more free-roaming androgens able to cause pimples. It's too early to prescribe a dairy ban for anyone zit-plagued.

spicy foods

↳ **TROUBLE** Rosacea sufferers know to avoid five-alarm meals. But if you have fair, sun-damaged skin, hot-and-spicy foods may lead to the condition or a red, blotchy complexion. "UV exposure weakens blood vessel walls. If your skin then repeatedly flushes, which swells vessels, they may not be able to shrink back down," Dr. Treloar says.

wine

↳ **TREAT** Reds are rich in polyphenols, antioxidants that help fight skin-damaging free radicals. But sip no more than one glass a day, says Katherine Brooking, R.D., of NYC. Excessive alcohol halts your body's release of its antidiuretic hormone. As a result, you make extra visits to the ladies' room and end up not only feeling dehydrated, but having skin that looks dry, with a dull tone and more visible wrinkles. So enjoy wine in moderation—and make a toast to great skin!

- What to Eat for Naturally Clear Skin
- A 10-Day Plan to Get Shiny, Bouncy Hair
- Tricks for Looking Great in Less Time



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