

Benefits of Antioxidants: Inside and Out

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Antioxidants serve as more than just a beneficial supplement; they can protect the skin from aging and destruction as well as the body from environmental assaults like pollution, cigarette smoke and stress.

Simply put, antioxidants are like sponges that soak up damaging molecules in our bodies. "So called 'oxidants' or 'free radicals' are triggered by all kinds of stress factors, known as oxidative stress," says Cosmetic Dermatologist Susan Van Dyke, M.D. of Scottsdale "This is part of the normal function of the body when we pile pollution, UV radiation, cigarette smoke, and everyday stress on top of that." All of this can overwhelm the natural antioxidants in our bodies.

By maximizing the use of antioxidants, we can better protect our bodies from assault both inside and out. There are many sources of antioxidants that can be found in food:

- Tomatoes
- Berries
- Peaches
- Kale
- Plums
- Bell peppers
- Cantaloupe
- Green tea
- Spinach
- Pomegranates
- Artichokes
- Espresso
- Chocolate
- Nuts
- Russet potatoes



Van Dyke. says beans, artichokes, russet potatoes, nuts and berries have the highest source of antioxidants. "For the best outcome, combine diet, supplements and topical treatment; there is no magic pill," she says.

There are also physician product skincare lines that use antioxidants to protect the skin directly:

Vivite: GLX technology combines glycolic acid exfoliation with vitamin C, vitamin E, green tea extract, pomegranate and many other antioxidants

SkinMedica: vitamin C, vitamin E, TNS growth factors, retinoids

Protherapy: ergothioneine super antioxidant, Kinetin and Zeatin plant-derived growth factors

Neova: ergothioneine super antioxidant, vitamin C, vitamin E, DNA repair enzymes and SPF

Each line has a variety of products including cleansers, eye creams, serums, day and night creams for all skin types and specific needs.

Another useful tip to protect your skin is using an SPF 30 sunscreen daily that has built-in antioxidants. For best results, Van Dyke says to apply moisturizers with antioxidants in the morning, right after a shower when the skin is still damp — the skin absorbs active ingredients more effectively when the skin is damp.

And, don't forget your daily multivitamin packed with antioxidants!