

THE KEYS TO EATING FOR MORE YOUTHFUL, HEALTHY SKIN

The 3 keys to eating for youthful skin:

- 1. Eat Power:** Eat foods that provide powerful nutrients.
- 2. Stop Sugar Spikes:** Elevations in blood sugar levels (sugar spikes) lead your body to produce AGEs (advanced glycation end products). These “sticky” compounds cause collagen damage.
- 3. Stop Skin Sabotage.** I call them skin saboteurs, and they're all around us: foods that damage collagen. From refined carbs, to fried foods, to browned meats, a number of foods have been shown to accelerate the skin aging process.

EAT POWER

Eat power means eat foods that provide powerful nutrients. Certain foods contain the powerful nutrients that promote youthful skin. If you're looking at your dinner plate, you want to make sure you've got these covered.

- **Foods and beverages that are naturally rich in antioxidants**, including fruits, vegetables, green tea, herbs and spices, and more. These foods are also rich sources of anti-inflammatory compounds and other powerful nutrients, which means they pack a double punch.
- **Power carbs**, such as whole grains, beans, and lentils. These foods provide carbohydrates along with a host of powerful nutrients, including fiber, vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and protein.
- **Power fats**, including mono-unsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs) and omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids. These have been shown to help strengthen the skin barrier, maintain skin elasticity, and provide anti-inflammatory benefits.
- **Herbs and spices** are considered a triple threat: they're a concentrated, powerful source of antioxidants, they're a powerful source of anti-inflammatory compounds, and they have anti-glycation properties.

- **Prebiotics and probiotics** promote the growth of “good” microbes in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. This ensures good gut health, and it impacts skin health. That’s because these good gut microbes secrete substances that help strengthen the skin barrier and make it more resistant to irritation.

STOP SUGAR SPIKES

We all love cupcakes. But if you’re enjoying them a little too frequently you’re risking long-term collagen damage.

That’s because eating foods heavy in refined carbohydrates or added sugars can cause elevated levels of blood sugar. That excess sugar can combine with proteins in the body to create advanced glycation end products (known as AGEs). These “sticky” compounds wreak havoc on your skin and on your health.

AGEs cause damage to collagen, blood vessels, and other organs. In the skin, that collagen damage results in sugar sag: premature wrinkling and sagging of the skin.

To prevent the formation of collagen-damaging AGEs, you need the right strategies. It starts by avoiding foods heavy in added sugars and refined carbs. It also means focusing on 3 main strategies:

- **Eat power carbs:** Carb sources such as whole grains, beans, and lentils naturally contain fiber. They also provide vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and sometimes protein.
- **The Half-Produce Plate:** With half your plate covered in fruits and vegetables, you’re ensuring hefty doses of fiber and micronutrients.
- **Balanced Meals:** Eating meals that contain healthy protein to balance out carbs helps keep blood sugar levels stable.

STOP SKIN SABOTAGE

You may love doughnuts, but those deep-fried, sugary, carb-loaded treats are doing your skin no favors. They don’t just cause your body to produce collagen-damaging AGEs. They actually contain their own pre-formed AGEs.

Your body produces AGEs when your blood sugar levels start to spike. But that’s not the only way AGEs find their way into your collagen. You can also eat them. Pre-formed AGEs are found in browned meats,

fried foods, some grilled foods, and others. Processed foods that contain trans fats are also skin saboteurs.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Eat power. Stop sugar spikes. Stop skin sabotage.

When it comes to eating for youthful skin, these are the three major goals. And the right foods and recipes can help you reach them.

In the next chapter, you'll be introduced to some of the common (and less common) foods that promote youthful, luminous skin: skin saving foods.