



Glynis Barber

THE EASY COLLAGEN DIET

Our holistic guru looks at how you can eat to beat wrinkles and keep fine lines at bay

Collagen is found throughout our bodies. It's the most abundant protein the body contains and is the matrix that sustains its structure, maintaining cartilage, tendons and skin. It's found in connective tissue, from muscles to those in the digestive system, and it comprises 70 percent of our skin's protein. It helps skin to stay soft and aids the renewal and repair of its cells.

So, it's no surprise that we can visibly see changes in our skin when collagen production begins to diminish. We lose elasticity, acquire wrinkles and even experience sagging, plus we begin to feel aches and pains in our bones and joints. Unfortunately, the loss of collagen begins early, as it starts to diminish by our mid-twenties. Sadly, it all heads south at a very young age.

Added to this there are environmental factors that will hasten the process and further slowdown collagen production –

poor nutrition, excessive drinking, pollution and too much sun, to name a few.

Collagen is, in fact, a compound of essential amino acids, which the body can't produce. The only way to therefore get it is through your diet. So, as far as collagen is concerned, you really are what you eat. Keeping your skin firm and glowing starts from the inside, and it will be far more effective than any lotion or potion you can buy.

There are certain organs that will respond more to diet, and the effects will be clearly visible in the skin. Both the large and small intestines are crucial in releasing nutrients to the body. A good diet with enough fibre helps to get rid of waste in a timely manner. If the waste hangs around for too long, you can break out in spots and your skin will dull down. The liver and kidneys filter impurities and need a nutrient-dense diet to function well. If this doesn't happen, the skin will once again start to suffer. Added to this, the adrenals make essential hormones, which if imbalanced, can affect the skin and cause a host of other problems. And thyroid problems can lead to dry, dull and wrinkly skin. Thankfully, there are certain foods and supplements that will help boost your collagen levels and make a visible difference to your skin. Probably top of the list is bone broth. This is now considered a superfood as it's so beneficial that it can help fight infection and soothe aching joints. Collagen leaches out of the bones as it slowly cooks down. If you make your own it's best to use organic chicken or beef that has been grass fed. Bovine collagen is similar to the collagen found in your own body and is also available as a supplement. This makes it a lot harder for vegetarians to keep their collagen levels up because the best source of collagen is in animal bones. Thankfully, however, a good overall diet will benefit everyone.



SKIN-BOOSTING SECRETS

- 1. Look to your gut.** Poor gut health will affect not only your skin but also your overall wellbeing. A diet with plenty of vegetables, good fats, enough protein and little sugar is a good place to start. You may want to take a probiotic as well.
- 2. Hyaluronic acid** is another important compound for both collagen and skin. Found in many skin creams, it can also be taken as a supplement and is found in root vegetables and beans.
- 3. Antioxidants**, in particular vitamin C, protect and help form more collagen. Aloe vera, when taken orally, has been shown to hugely increase both hyaluronic and collagen production.
- 4. Processed foods** and too much alcohol take their toll on many of your organs thereby slowing down the production of collagen.
- 5. Use meditation**, breathing and mindful techniques to keep stress at bay. Stress is bad for just about everything, including collagen production and skin health.

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