



BENEFITS OF GREEN TEA FOR SKIN

The health benefits of [green tea](#) are well documented. This antioxidant-packed drink helps fight free radicals, naturally occurring atoms that can cause disease and premature aging. To maximize the many benefits of green tea, you can use it in different ways as a topical treatment for the skin to protect against sun damage, combat signs of aging, treat inflammatory skin conditions and soothe cuts and sunburns.

Sun protection

Topical green tea formulas have been shown to reduce sun damage by neutralizing free radicals and reducing inflammation. However, green tea does not block UV rays so it's important to use it in conjunction with a sunscreen. For best results, apply a green tea formula under a zinc-oxide-based sunscreen.

Damage prevention

Research has shown that green tea can help prevent signs of aging. In a study, the use of a 10 percent green tea cream on subjects with moderate skin damage resulted in improved skin elasticity.

Anti-inflammatory

The antioxidants in green tea have anti-inflammatory properties, which can be used to treat skin conditions such as psoriasis, rosacea and inflammatory lesions.

Acne treatment

Green tea's anti-inflammatory properties also make it useful in treating acne. Green tea cream has been found to improve skin complexion while resulting in fewer cases of dry skin or itching than benzoyl peroxide.

Application

Ice cubes made from freshly brewed [green tea](#) can be used as a toner. Let the ice thaw slightly before use and then sweep gently over the face after cleansing. Green tea leaves can be used as a gentle exfoliant. A spritzer made with green tea and mineral water can be used to freshen the face, treat minor cuts, soothe sunburn or reduce swelling.

Beauty benefits

Traditionally, many types of make-up, lotions, creams and beauty preparations have used chemical antioxidants, or vitamins A, C and E as preservatives for their products. Now, with research indicating that green tea has even more antioxidant properties than these powerful vitamins, there is a surge in products capitalizing on its natural benefits.

Concentrated green tea extract is simple to make at home and is a flexible addition to both your daily beauty routine and your medicine cabinet.



Soothing spritzer

Simply steep 100g of [green tea](#) in half a liter of still mineral water at room temperature for at least one hour. Strain the liquor. It's better to make small quantities and use it fresh but surplus liquid can be poured into clean, sterilized bottles and refrigerated. The liquid can be used as a spritzer, to freshen up the face, or cotton pads soaked in it can be particularly soothing for tired or strained eyes. It has antiseptic properties, so it can be used to treat minor cuts and rashes, and is surprisingly effective when applied to spots and blemishes.



How Green Tea Can Improve and Protect Your Skin

These days, in a world obsessed by beauty, everyone wants to find new ways to improve their skin and to slow down the effects of ageing. One of the ways that you may not have thought of is by including green tea in your diet, and, surprisingly, it can have significant results.

Yes, as well as having numerous other health benefits, green tea can be a great way to keep your skin healthy. One of the ways it does this is by reducing the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation, the leading cause of sunburn, skin damage and skin cancer.

Researchers at the Department of Dermatology at the University of Alabama looked at the effects of green tea in relation to UV radiation, finding that green tea polyphenols can significantly suppress the cancerous activity of such radiation [1]. It also had an effect in relation to sunburn and even sun-induced ageing of the skin, with Yusuf et al suggesting that, when used in combination with sunscreen, green tea could be an effective way to protect the skin from any undue effects caused by the sun and UV radiation.

A similar study confirmed the findings. Schwarz et al, from the Department of Dermatology at University Kiel, looked at the effects of green tea in relation to skin cancer caused by UV radiation, and found that the risk of skin cancer was significantly reduced after admission of green tea phenol extracts [2].

A further study, this time conducted by Chiu et al at the Department of Dermatology at Emory University, looked at the ability of green tea to improve the appearance of photo aging skin[3]. They found that, after oral and topical administration (administration directly to the skin) of green tea extract, subjects had significant improvement in the elastic tissue content of their skin, with lack of elasticity being a primary reason that skin appears to age.

These studies show that green tea really can help to both improve and protect our skin, largely because it can be a barrier to the harmful effects of UV radiation. This is mainly down to its high levels of antioxidants and also its anti-inflammatory properties, with both playing a part in the ability of green tea to protect our skin from damage and also to improve its appearance.

So, if you're worried about the effects of UV radiation or even if you want to improve the appearance of your skin, make sure to consider consuming some organic, edible green tea. You could even try the various creams and moisturizers out there that contain green tea extract to see if it makes a difference, but above all make sure to include it in your daily diet and reap the rewards. Your skin will thank you for it.



References:

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- [2] Schwarz A, Maeda A, Gan D, Mammone T, Matsui MS, Schwarz T. Green Tea Phenol Extracts Reduce UVB-induced DNA Damage in Human Cells via Interleukin-12. *Photochem Photobiol*. 2008 Jan 7
- [3] Chiu AE, Chan JL, Kern DG, Kohler S, Rehmus WE, Kimball AB. Double-blinded, placebo-controlled trial of green tea extracts in the clinical and histologic appearance of photo aging skin. *Dermatol Surg*. 2005 Jul; 31(7 Pt 2):855-60; discussion 860.



IS GREEN TEA AN EFFECTIVE ACNE TREATMENT?

Although [green tea](#) has been a favorite topic of researchers looking into its anti-cancer and anti-inflammatory properties, very few studies have been conducted on its role in acne treatment. This is perhaps because its potential in treating more serious diseases has eclipsed the need for this type of research. However, the few studies that have been conducted show positive evidence for the effectiveness of green tea in treating this widespread skin affliction.

A study conducted a few years back by a group of scientists in the Philippines led by Jennifer Gan-Wong suggests that green tea may be just as effective in treating acne as benzoyl peroxide, which is currently the most popular topical treatment for the skin ailment.

The researchers involved in the study found that a facial cream using three per cent green tea extract as the active ingredient was just as effective in treating acne as a similar facial cream using four per cent benzoyl peroxide.

The study consisted of 108 patients split into two groups of 54. The study was conducted as a double blind, so that none of the participants knew which type of treatment they were receiving. Each participant received an identical bottle of facial cream, without knowing which active ingredient was contained within. The researchers who were assigned to examine and photograph the patients were also unaware of which treatment the patients were receiving. This was done in order to ensure the objectivity of the study.

At the end of the study, the researchers found that both groups experienced comparable improvements in the state of their acne. However, the [green tea](#) group actually experienced fewer of the mild side effects associated with benzoyl peroxide use such as dry and itchy skin. The researchers suggested that the difference in side effects may be attributed to the fact that “natural” products tend to have fewer side effects than chemicals such as benzoyl peroxide, even while admitting that this assertion would be difficult to prove as a general condition.

A recent Iraqi study published in 2008 has confirmed these results by comparing green tea acne treatment with another popular acne remedy: zinc sulphate. The researchers gave forty patients unmarked facial creams containing either two per cent green tea or five per cent zinc sulphate. Each of the patients had mild to moderate acne before the trial and used the treatment for two months. At the end of the study, the group who was given the green tea lotion actually showed greater improvement than the group which was given zinc sulphate. The researchers concluded that green tea lotion is a superior acne treatment in comparison with zinc sulphate.

These two studies certainly indicate some effectiveness in the use of green tea to treat acne; however, no study has yet been conducted on the benefits of applying moist green tea leaves directly to the skin, a practice which anecdotal evidence seems to indicate may be effective. Therefore, while the evidence



seems to point to the effectiveness of using moist green tea leaves as a facial mask treatment for acne, we can only recommend this practice with the reservation that its effectiveness still needs to be directly tested scientifically.

References:

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