

the body needs vitamin D to absorb calcium, a daily 1,000mg vitamin D supplement is advisable, too. For a dairy-free splash in your tea, Cox is keen on unsweetened almond and hazelnut milk – plentiful in calcium.

Sugar damage can be corrected with topical strategies. “Anything that stimulates the skin to produce new collagen is going to help,” says Dr Lancer, who’s a fan of creating a controlled injury in the skin to do this. Professional microneedling will get results; a course of four treatments will set you back roughly £450. A good daily vitamin C product should keep your collagen production ticking over long-term, too; try Lancer Advanced C Radiance Cream (£68).

PROTEIN FACE

You’ve sworn off a beige diet of processed carbs in favour of protein for every meal to complement the HIIT regime that’ll make you all lean and muscular. So why is your skin suffering from a nasty cocktail of dullness, flakes and fine lines?

It turns out you *can* have too much of a good thing. As well as muscle growth, protein encourages the production of collagen to thicken the skin and prevent wrinkles. But there is a downside. The more protein you eat, the more of its waste products the kidneys have to remove from the blood. “The latest research supports the thinking that healthy kidneys can adapt to increased protein intake without negative impact” says Roberts. However, if you have kidney disease or reduced kidney function, it can lead to problems such as dehydration, “because the body has to rob your tissues of water to flush out the waste. That can lead to wrinkles, sensitivity, and even acne as oil production goes into overdrive,” warns Dr Nigma Talib, a naturopathic practitioner.

Another not-so-fun fact: while canned meat and fish are easy ways to get your protein fix, they are also high in histamine. “This natural



chemical is produced over time in preserved foods; the older it is, the higher the levels of histamine,” says Cox. “If you’re sensitive to histamine, angry red patches on the chest and cheeks are almost impossible to avoid.

Over time, this reaction leads to a breakdown of tiny capillaries close to the skin’s surface, resulting in an almost permanent flush [aka rosacea]. Dollop of tuna, anyone?

Fix it Dehydrated skin needs water, not oil. Avoid heavy emollient creams and opt for serums and oils based on hyaluronic acid, a molecule that holds onto water like a sponge. Instead of just hydrating the surface of the skin as larger hyaluronic acid molecules

do, The Ordinary Hyaluronic Acid 2% + B5 (£5.90) uses tiny ones that travel deep into the skin to plumpen.

As histamine sensitivity is often a precursor to rosacea, use NeoStrata Redness Neutralizing Serum (£47) on skin that’s prickly and flushed. Its brew of peptides and soothers quells inflammation, while bionic acids rebuild your skin’s barrier. As for diet, those with kidney trouble shouldn’t exceed the RDA of protein – which, according to Roberts, is 1.5g per kilo of bodyweight – so 90g or two large chicken breasts a day for a 60kg woman. “Balance this with complex carbs such as wholegrains, quinoa and buckwheat, which keep blood-sugar levels even,” says Dr Talib.

SALAD FACE

Veganism has shed its anaemic, hippy image (the number of vegans in Britain has risen by more than 360% in 10 years). There are plenty of reasons why your skin will thank you for switching to a plant-based diet: nuts rev up circulation to help with nutrient delivery to cells, while fruit and vegetables have tonnes of antioxidants to nuke skin cell-destroying toxins and other free radicals.

But there are downsides. Fruit and vegetables also contain compounds known as oxalates, which are basically natural pesticides. “The trouble is, when consumed in large quantities, oxalates can fuel inflammation in the body,” says Dr Sohère Roked, a GP,

hormone expert and author of *The Tiredness Cure*. Inflammation is how the body responds to invasion from undesirable substances – it produces white blood cells to kill the ‘attackers’. This causes swelling and irritation, and if it goes on for a long time, damage to healthy tissue. Inflammation in the gut often leads to tiredness too, which will show up on your face as sallow skin and dark circles.

As a vegan, you are also at risk of not getting the variety of protein needed for building skin and supporting the muscles. Eggs in particular are nutritional powerhouses for the skin, so cutting them out requires you carefully substituting the proteins and lipids they pack.

Fix it While we love the benefits of veganism, it’s all about balance. Diet-wise, aim for “complete” or ‘high-quality’ proteins, which contain amino acids the body cannot produce,” says Roberts. “Add a variety of pulses, grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, and anti-inflammatory omega-3 and -6 essential fatty acids in the shape of olive, avocado, sunflower and other plant oils.”

On your skin, try Yes To Argan Miracle Oil (£14.99); argan oil is one of the best sources of essential fatty acids. Retinoids matter, too: “Vegan skin needs extra help to build collagen and repair itself,” says Dr Lancer. Try Allies Of Skin 1A Overnight Mask, £75; it’s less likely to cause redness because the retinoid is gradually released over time. Counter the visible effects of tiredness with a serum rich in ferulic acid, such as Goldfaden MD’s Brightening Elixir (£75); it increases blood flow to the skin’s tissues for increased luminosity. Pair with an eye cream that contains caffeine (such as Perricone MD Pre:Empt Series Brightening Eye Cream, £39); it speeds up blood flow in the capillaries around the eyes to fight bags and circles. ♦

YOUR FACE-FRIENDLY FOOD FAD

Fermented food fans, pat yourselves on the back. “Foods such as kimchi and sauerkraut, along with fermented milk (or kefir) and yoghurts, introduce ‘good’ probiotic bacteria to the gut,” says Roberts. “Gut bacteria create a barrier to reduce inflammation, which is at the heart of countless diseases, as well as the ageing process.” Add plenty of prebiotics in the form of fibre from plants and wholegrains: they act as food and fertiliser for the good bacteria. “A gut full of healthy microbes modulates the immune system and so keeps every part of the body in balance,” says doctor of pharmacy Marie Drago. A good probiotic supplement such as OptiBac Probiotics For Every Day (£11.29) is also an option.

Topical bacteria are crucial, too. “Skin has its own microbiome of healthy bacteria [the acid mantle], which keeps the surface slightly acidic to ward off ‘bad’ bacteria and pollution and locks in moisture,” says Drago. But soaps, sulfate cleansers and even hard tap water

strip this layer, making skin dry and sensitive and creating an inviting environment for acne bacteria to thrive. The right strategy? Choose sulfate-free cleansers such as Gallinée La Culture Foaming Facial Cleanser (£14), with added biotics to support the acid mantle, followed by probiotic-rich Aurelia Cell Revitalise Night Moisturiser (£52). To keep skin’s acidity topped up, embrace exfoliating acids: “Lactic acid is akin to what the body itself produces, and is the best acid for efficacy and safety,” says Drago. Swipe skin with a Zelens PHA+ Bio-Peel Resurfacing Facial Pad (£65 for 50) twice a week.



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