

5 Top no-nonsense tips for maintaining healthy skin

No time for an intensive skin care regime, no worries. Get started with these simple measures...you may be surprised at what you achieve.

1. ****Protect yourself from the sun**** No matter the weather, use of a daily separate sunscreen is essential (ideally a broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher). The sun's UV rays account not only for rising cases of skin cancer, but also causes wrinkles and pigmentation which we all want to avoid.
Whilst nothing feels better than the sun's warm rays on our vitamin D deprived post lockdown skin...try to resist the temptation. Instead, be savvy and indulge in a spray tan, use a self-tanning product and be smug in the knowledge that you are protecting your skin and are better off in the long run!
2. ****Healthy lifestyle**** It may sound clichéd, but healthy eating and not smoking will keep you looking and feeling your best. Smoking speeds up the rate of skin ageing in part by reducing the collagen and elastin in your skin. The different muscles used when smoking gives us additional wrinkles over time. And if you need more convincing, smoking can slow down wound healing, worsens certain skin diseases and cause skin cancers.
As for the eating part, research is ongoing for clear associations, but it is thought diets rich in fish oil and low in unhealthy fats and refined sugars may promote younger looking skin. Drinking plenty of water keeps your skin looking hydrated.
3. ****Keep stress levels down**** Easier said than done! Try as best you can to find a healthy way of managing stress. With Spring in the air, scale back your to do list and take time for regular walks reconnecting with friends. It's known that stress and increased cortisol levels flare certain skin diseases such as acne, psoriasis and eczema.
4. ****Be kind to your skin**** There's no need for strong soaps or scrubbing your skin clean. These things can irritate your skin worsening most skin conditions. Gentle cleansing twice daily keeps skin looking A1. Use lukewarm water, a mild cleanser followed by patting your face dry with a clean towel. Moisturise dry skin and use skin care products that are tailored to your skins needs to help your skin feeling its best.
5. ****Skin checks**** Lockdown may have prevented you getting those regular face to face reviews with your GP so take the time for regular self-skin checks. Ask your partner or a friend to help you with areas like your back that are harder to see. Taking a photo at a recorded distance for comparison is helpful. If you notice a spot that stands out from the rest, itches or bleeds make an appointment for a review. The good news is skin cancer is very treatable when spotted early.