

Read the Labels for a Nutritious Skincare Diet

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Admit it, you've stood in the center of the grocery aisle scanning the sugar count on a box of cereal or spotting the amount of fiber delivered in your favorite bread. But have you taken the same amount of time to investigate the list of nutritious properties in your daily skincare?

Just like the nutrition labels on the food we eat can help us create a healthy diet, the active ingredients in our skincare help us manage and maintain great-looking skin. So, get your brain buzzing from fiber to ferulic acid with this short list of popular skin-saving properties.

What it is: Salicylic Acid

Why you need it: Salicylic acid is a beta hydroxy acid, which means it's oil soluble and able to penetrate pores to remove dirt, oil and other cellular debris. It's an excellent tool for those with oily skin who battle blackheads and whiteheads and a great alternative to products with benzoyl peroxide.

Where you can find it: Creams, cleansers, solutions or toners that fight acne often feature salicylic acid. Natures Alternative Acne Spot Treatment for example, was designed to reduce blemishes and keep pores clear using salicylic acid.

What it is: Alpha Hydroxyl Acid

Why you need it: Unlike beta hydroxy, alpha hydroxy acids are water-soluble only and better used on age-damaged skin where breakouts aren't an issue. These acids, derived from fruit and milk sugars, break up the cohesion of keratinized (protein bonded) skin cells and speed up the exfoliation process to reveal, fresh-looking skin. Natural exfoliation slows with age, so alpha hydroxy acids such as glycolic or lactic acids help restore a more youthful appearance and stimulate collagen synthesis.

Where it's found: It's typically found in chemical peels, creams and serums. For example, Nature's Alternative Glycolic Perfecting Crème acts as both moisturizer and treatment product in one.

What it is: Ferulic Acid

Why you need it: This well-known plant antioxidant is rarely used alone and most often paired with L-ascorbic acid (the Vitamin C recognized by the body) as a wrinkle fighter that provides substantial protection against UV-induced sun damage. Antioxidants protect the skin from photo aging due to exposure to sun, air pollution and smoke.

Where it's found: The powerful SkinCeuticals CE Ferulic Acid serum.

What it is: Retinol

Why you need it: This vitamin A derivative reduces the appearance of deep wrinkles, fine lines and improves skin texture and tone by building collagen and thickening the skin. It also can reduce the appearance of age spots when an SPF sun block is used. Retinol is ideal for women beyond the age of 35 to fight the onset of aging skin and minimize the size of pores.

Where it's found: Retinol can be found in a range of serums and creams. Because it can dry out skin, it's often offered as a night cream. Check out Kinara's Nighttime Skin Quencher for a healthy dose of vitamin A.

What it is: Matrixyl 3000

Why you need it: Becoming a skincare buzzword, this antioxidant is a peptide (amino acids linked in a chemical bond) that reduces the depth and number of wrinkles by assisting collagen growth and repair and enhancing elasticity and tone.

Where it's found: A handful of serums are available featuring Matrixyl 3000 including Nature's Alternative Firm and Regenerate Serum, which firms skin instantly and in a long term manner by activating the regeneration of healthy skin.

What it is: Honey

Why you need it: This humectant attracts and retains water to itself so it's effective in hydrating the skin and maintaining suppleness and elasticity. It's a particularly helpful moisturizer for those with oily complexions.

Where it's found: Masks and moisturizing products such as Kinara Eye Crème.

What it is: Pumpkin

Why you need it: Pumpkins are full of beta-carotene, a plant derivative that is converted to vitamin A in the body. It works to break down the outer layers of the skin as a natural exfoliant and encourages cell turn over.

Where it's found: Look for it in masks and peels like the Nature's Alternative Pumpkin Mask.

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