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* Go on—feed your face! These 19 picks nourish your complexion from the outside in.

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You already know that what you eat plays a huge role in how good your skin looks. More surprising, perhaps, is that many of the same healthy foods you reach for when you want beautiful hair, skin and nails can help your complexion from the outside, too. “Food is what our bodies know and recognize,” says Horst Rechelbacher, founder of Intelligent Nutrients, a USDA-certified organic beauty line that obtains most of its ingredients from food sources. “So when food ingredients are applied to the skin, they are readily assimilated into the body.”

Feeding your skin should be a two-part process that combines a healthy diet with some targeted topical, food-derived ingredients, says Leslie Baumann, M.D., director of the Baumann Cosmetic & Research Institute in Miami Beach, Fla. “Inflammation is a big cause of skin aging—it’s a destructive process that breaks down collagen and leaves skin looking older,” she explains. The way to combat this inflammation is with a diet and a skin-care routine that are rich in antioxidants, which are substances that help protect and repair the skin. Here, a few foods popping up in cosmetics—all loaded with skin-healthy antioxidants and other beauty-boosting nutrients—and why they should find their way into your beauty pantry.



* apples

An apple a day keeps the doctor—and wrinkles—away! This go-to fruit contains ample amounts of skin-healthy nutrients and antioxidants, including quercetin, catechin, phloridzin and chlorogenic acid. The flavonoids in apples can help prevent inflammation—one of the main culprits in skin aging. “We use apple juice instead of water in many of our products because it is an excellent skin toner—it helps refine skin texture,” says Rechelbacher.

(A) *emerginC Protocell* (\$90; emerginc.com) is a rich cream that combats the signs of aging using apple stem cells. (B) *L'occitane Almond Eye Gel* (\$33; usa.occitane.com) fights under-eye puffiness and circles with organic apple extracts.

► **Also try:** *Ilike Apple & Lemon Whipped Moisturizer* (\$60; skincarebyalana.com), which combines the exfoliating properties of apple with the antiseptic properties of lemon to refresh and brighten skin. *H.wood Beauty Green Apple Lip Tea Scrub* (\$20; hwoodbeauty.com) exfoliates dull, dry lips with apple-scented grains.

Food is what our bodies know. When applied to the **skin**, food ingredients are readily assimilated into the **body**.

* mushrooms

For thousands of years, mushrooms have been used for medicinal purposes. Now, they're being used for their beauty-boosting effects. "Some varieties exfoliate the skin, and most will have a potent anti-inflammatory effect," says Baumann. "They can help control free radical damage." And those free radicals—which break down collagen and lead to wrinkles, sagging and other signs of premature aging—are your skin's worst enemies.

- (C) *Aveda Tourmaline Charged Radiance Masque* (\$29; aveda.com) brings dull skin back to life and soothes with poria cocos mushrooms.
- (D) *Aveeno Positively Ageless Multi-Defense Daily Moisturizer* (\$19; ulta.com) is enriched with a shiitake blend that helps speed cell turnover.
- (E) *Dr. Weil for Origins Mega-Mushroom Skin Relief Advanced Face Serum* (\$66; origins.com) helps calm redness and fight inflammation.

* chocolate

This sweet treat (and the cocoa bean from which it is derived) is a rich source of antioxidants. In fact, says Baumann, cocoa has significantly higher levels of antioxidants (like resveratrol and theaflavin) than red wine, green tea and black tea. "The polyphenols and methylxanthines in cocoa are rife with anti-aging benefits," says Macrene Alexiades-Armenakas, M.D., a New York City dermatologist. "The polyphenols are antioxidants that have anti-cancer activity, and the methylxanthines act like caffeine to help shrink broken capillaries and decrease redness and puffiness." And cocoa butter (obtained from the same bean) has long been used in moisturizers designed to super-hydrate skin.

- (F) *Crater Lake Company Chocolate & Silk Renewing Face Masque* (\$17; craterlakecompany.com) contains organic Peruvian cocoa powder to refresh and detoxify skin.
- (G) *The Body Shop Cocoa Butter Body Butter* (\$20; thebodyshop-usa.com) is a treat that leaves skin super soft.
- **Also try:** Lush Double Choc Lip Tint (\$7; lush.com), a neutral bronze shade that adds a warm glow to lips.



The best way to **combat** the signs of aging is with a diet and skin-care routine that are **rich** in antioxidants.

* milk

Cleopatra reportedly took frequent milk baths to keep her complexion smooth—and she may have been on to something. “The proteins in milk are very soothing,” says Baumann. “They work on the surface of the skin to help reduce redness.” Milk is also a source of lactic acid, which is an alpha hydroxy acid in the same family as glycolic acid. When topically applied, it acts as an exfoliant to remove dead skin cells. “The lactic acid in milk makes the dead cells let go of each other so they can flake off,” explains Baumann. The result? A brighter complexion.

(A) *Aura Cacia Soothing Organic Milk & Oat Bath* (\$3; auracacia.com) nourishes skin with organic milk powder and calms your senses with a soothing lavender scent.
 (B) *Korres Milk Proteins Foaming Cream Cleanser* (\$21; sephora.com) uses the soothing power of milk proteins to gently wash away the day.
 (C) *One Love Organics Brand New Day Microderma Scrub and Masque* (\$39; oneloveorganics.com) contains whole milk powder, which gently exfoliates.

* blueberries

This little blue fruit is an antioxidant powerhouse: It's got ample amounts of vitamin C, plus phytonutrients called anthocyanidins (which are found in the berries' blue pigment). Besides their antioxidant benefits, blueberries may inhibit collagen breakdown, says Valori Treloar, M.D., an integrative dermatologist in Newton, Mass. In one study, subjects who applied blueberry extract to their skin showed an increase in skin thickness and moisture, as well as an improvement in fine lines.

(D) *Yes to Blueberries Daily Repairing Moisturizer* (\$20; yestocarrots.com) is loaded with antioxidant-packed blueberries to help fight free radicals while softening skin.
 (E) *Goldfaden Blueberry + Pomegranate Hydrating Serum* (\$65; goldfaden.com) uses blueberry extracts to repair damaged collagen cells.
 ▶ **Also try:** The Body Deli Blueberry Fusion Resurfacing facial wash (\$38; thebodydeli.com) which uses raw organic blueberries to lighten hyperpigmentation and minimize the appearance of fine lines and pores.





*** soy**

The isoflavones in soy are potent antioxidants that reduce free radical damage and promote the growth of new, skin-plumping collagen. "There's evidence that the natural estrogens in soy improve skin thickness," says Alexiades-Armenakas. There is also good science behind the use of soy to reduce age spots. The soy proteins help even out skin tone to reduce the appearance of existing spots—and may even prevent new spots from popping up. "Soy blocks the receptors in the skin cells so that pigment can't move from the melanocytes—where the pigment is produced—into the cells," says Baumann.

(F) *La Natura Soy Pure Butter* (\$28; lanatura.com) infuses skin with soy essential fatty acids.

(G) *derma e Papaya Enzyme and Soy Foaming Facial Cleanser* (\$14; dermae.com) helps prevent dehydration and improve skin's texture.

(H) *Garnier Ultra-lift Pro Gravity Defying Cream* (\$17; garnierusa.com) firms skin and plumps wrinkles. ✕

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