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Expert tips for summer skin care

Bask in the sun. Take a dip in the pool, feel the blades of grass between your toes. Summer's long days are here to enjoy. However, some of the season's best outdoor pastimes can wreak havoc on our skin.

Combat summer's most pesky skin concerns with these expert tips:

Sunburns

Redness, warmth and tenderness are symptoms of overexposure to the sun's rays. In fact, about **33% of Canadians** report getting sunburns each year.[1]

The best way to protect yourself from the sun is prevention.

When shopping for sunscreen, look for those that protect against both UVA and UVB rays. The sun protection factor (SPF) should be 30 or higher.

Reapply every two hours and more often if you're in or near water.

Look for shade, especially between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Wear long-sleeved, protective clothing, including a wide-brimmed hat and large sunglasses.

These protective strategies can help prevent skin cancer from developing too. If you're feeling the burn, take a cool bath and liberally apply a non-comedogenic moisturizer. Drink plenty of water and avoid the sun. Bad sunburns can be painful or cause your skin to blister or peel. You may develop fevers or chills. Talk to a doctor if you have any of these symptoms.

Rashes

While exploring the outdoors, you may come across dangerous plants. Poison ivy, oak and sumac aren't poisonous. However, they do give off an oil that causes skin to itch badly and blister.

If you know you've been in contact with these plants in wooded or marshy areas, wash your clothes and skin thoroughly. A reaction of red, itchy and swollen skin will appear within one-to-three days if you've been affected.

Rashes can also occur from chlorine in the pool or a new soap you're using while on vacation. It may take some detective work to determine and remove the cause of your irritation.

You can treat rash symptoms with calamine lotion and oatmeal baths. If you get hives, your rash covers the eyes, face, sensitive areas, or is severe, talk to a doctor.

Stings

Bee and wasp stings are a threat during summer months. They can cause swelling, itching, a rash or a more serious reaction.

If stung, soothe the area by applying a cold compress or ice. If you have trouble breathing, swelling in your lips or arms, or hives, call 911 immediately. These symptoms signal a severe reaction.

Bites

Mosquito bites are a common, yet bothersome, side effect of outdoor fun. Most people get a small bump with some redness or swelling within a day of the bite. Calm the itching with an over-the-counter topical cream. Prevention is effective. Cover up skin, wear a hat and gloves and use a bug repellent with DEET before heading outside.

Aquatic stings and scrapes

Consider wearing a wetsuit to protect your skin from scrapes and irritants. For any water activity, water shoes can protect your feet from rocks and other sharp objects.

If your skin is suffering, don't be too quick to blame summer itself. Irritants can come from foods, dyes, perfumes or even certain medications. Talk to a doctor who can help you work through some of these other causes.

Preparing for and taking care of these skin issues will help you have a memorable summer for all the right reasons.

[1] https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/170517/g-b001-eng.htm

Other sources:

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/sun-safety.html

https://www.aad.org/public/everyday-care/skin-care-secrets/routine/prevent-summer-skin-problems

Finding workouts in everyday activities

There are enormous benefits to staying physically active.

It helps improve your brain health, manage weight, and make your body stronger. There are few lifestyle choices that can affect you more positively than moderate physical activity.

Warmer weather means it's enjoyable to spend time outside. For some, that means going for a hike, a run, or a long bicycle ride. Enjoy the fresh air and sunny days. The following are great opportunities for physical activity that are less strenuous but will still keep you active.

Please note: Before you start any new exercise routine, talk to your doctor to make sure it's safe.

Remember to hydrate.

When exercising, drink water before, during and after your activity.

Here are 7 "workouts" found in everyday activities.

Water walks

If swimming laps in a pool is not your thing, try walking laps or circles in the shallow end. Grab a friend, and rather than sitting on the side of the pool, add some movement for a resistance workout. If you're at the beach, walk on the sand, which is harder than walking on the sidewalk.

Seasonal decluttering

Deep cleaning your home or garage each season is a perfect way to get moving and muscles firing. Who knows, maybe you'll make some room for a new bicycle? than walking on the sidewalk.

Gardening

Pushing the lawn mower gets you moving. Moving plants, mulch and topsoil around will strengthen your muscles. Seeing the fruits of your labour blooming is good for your mind.

A new commute

Because the weather is warmer and the daylight is longer, add a walk to your commute. Park your car in the farther back in the parking lot. Just a 10-minute walk improves your fitness. The walk can also reset your attitude at the end of the day. If you're ambitious, leave the car at home and commute on your bike if there is a safe route.

Puppy playtime

Your pets enjoy nice weather as much as you do. Explore local dog parks and lead your furry friends on off-leash chases.

Plogging

Plogging[1] is considered Sweden's "green sport." It's a mashup of jogging and picking up litter. Pack a trash bag and gloves and delitter as you walk at the beach, in a forest or your local park. It's good for your heart, soul and the environment.

Picking produce

Visit your local farmers market for what's fresh or in season. Even better, visit berry patches and orchards to pick your own produce.

Incorporating "workouts" into your daily life can help physical activity seem less daunting.

[1]https://www.plogging.org/what-is-plogging

Foods to fight inflammation

Inflammation is an important part of your body's natural healing process. It's your immune system sending out cells to fight bacteria and infections or heal injuries.[1]

Chronic inflammation is completely different

It can be caused by an autoimmune disorder, an untreated injury or infection, or even overexposure to allergens such as pollen. It can lead to heart disease, diabetes, psoriasis and other illnesses. Symptoms may include fatigue, body pain, joint stiffness and puffiness in the face, especially under the eyes.[1]

If you suffer from chronic inflammation, there are foods that can make inflammation worse.[2]

Try limiting these types of foods and ingredients:

- **Saturated fats**

  Like those found in margarine, shortening and lard, processed meats (hot dogs, sausages), cream and butter.

- **Trans fats**

  Fast foods and fried foods.

- **Refined carbohydrates**

  Processed foods made with white flour (white bread, pastries) and refined sugar (cane sugar, molasses, brown sugar).

- **Soda**

  and other sweetened beverages.

Eat this instead

Now that you know what foods to avoid, here's a list of foods that contain anti-inflammatory benefits such as omega-3 fats, fibre, and vitamin C:[2]

Fruits and vegetables

- Cherries
- Blueberries
- Kale
- Spinach
- Oranges
- Strawberries
- Tomatoes

Protein

- Mackerel
- Sardines
- Wild-caught salmon
- Tuna
- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Chia seeds
- Flax seeds

Other foods

- Coffee
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Green tea
- Sauerkraut
- Turmeric

Greek lentil salad

Makes 4 servings | Prep: 45 min

Ingredients

- 1 cup black lentils (dry/uncooked)
- 3 cups water
- 3 cups of baby spinach, chopped
- ½ medium red onion, chopped
- ⅓ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, rinsed
- ⅓ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and quartered
- ⅓ cup basil or flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Optional: crumbled feta cheese

Greek dressing

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon tahini
- 2 garlic cloves, pressed or minced
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Preparation

First, pick through the lentils and remove any debris. Pour the lentils into a fine-mesh colander and rinse under running water. Dump the lentils into a medium saucepan. Add the water and bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook, stirring occasionally. The lentils will be tender in about 25 to 35 minutes. Drain the lentils and return them to the pot to cool for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, in a medium serving bowl, combine the spinach, red onion, sun-dried tomatoes, olives and basil. Set aside.

To prepare the dressing, combine all of the ingredients and whisk until thoroughly blended. Once the lentils have cooled for about 5 minutes, add them to the serving bowl. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss until blended. Taste, and add more salt and pepper if necessary. Serve in individual bowls with a sprinkle of feta cheese on top, if desired.

Nutrition

Serving size: 1 cup

Calories: 214 | Total fat: 16 g | Saturated fat: 2 g | Sodium: 215 mg | Cholesterol: 0 mg
Total carbs: 15 g | Fibre: 5 g | Sugars: 3 g | Protein: 6 g | Potassium: 441 mg

[1] https://www.plogging.org/what-is-plogging

Grilled shrimp tacos with cabbage slaw

Makes 4 servings | Prep: 30 min

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons nonfat Greek yogurt
- ⅓ cup light mayonnaise
- ½ chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, minced into a puree*
- 1 pound medium peeled and deveined shrimp
- 2 limes, divided
- ¼ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ medium green cabbage, finely shredded
- 2 medium carrots, coarsely grated
- ¾ cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra, if needed, for brushing
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 8 small whole grain corn tortillas

Preparation

Preheat a grill or grill pan to medium-high heat. In a small bowl, whisk together the yogurt, mayonnaise and chipotle pepper; set aside. In a medium bowl, toss together shrimp, juice of 1 lime and chili powder; set aside. In a large bowl, combine shredded cabbage, carrots, cilantro and the juice of the remaining lime; toss well. Add salt and pepper to taste. Thread shrimp on skewers, 3-4 shrimp per skewer. Brush each skewer with olive oil and season to taste with salt and pepper. Coat the grill rack with cooking spray and grill shrimp skewers 2-3 minutes on each side, or until pinkish and opaque in color. Meanwhile, warm tortillas, as desired, on the grill.

To assemble, spread a few teaspoons of the chipotle mayo along the center of a warmed corn tortilla. Lay 3 or 4 shrimp across the mayo. Top with a generous spoonful of the cabbage slaw. Serve additional slaw as a side salad. **Chipotle peppers in adobo sauce are sold in small cans in the Mexican food section of most supermarkets. One-half of a minced chipotle pepper measures about half of a tablespoon.*

Nutrition

Serving size: 2 tacos

Calories: 389 | Total fat: 11 g | Saturated fat: 2 g | Sodium: 509 mg | Cholesterol: 229 mg
Total carbs: 40 g | Fibre: 8 g | Sugars: 10 g | Protein: 37 g | Potassium: 564 mg

[1]https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/symptoms/21660-inflammation
[2]https://www.heartandstroke.ca/articles/the-anti-inflammatory-diet

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