

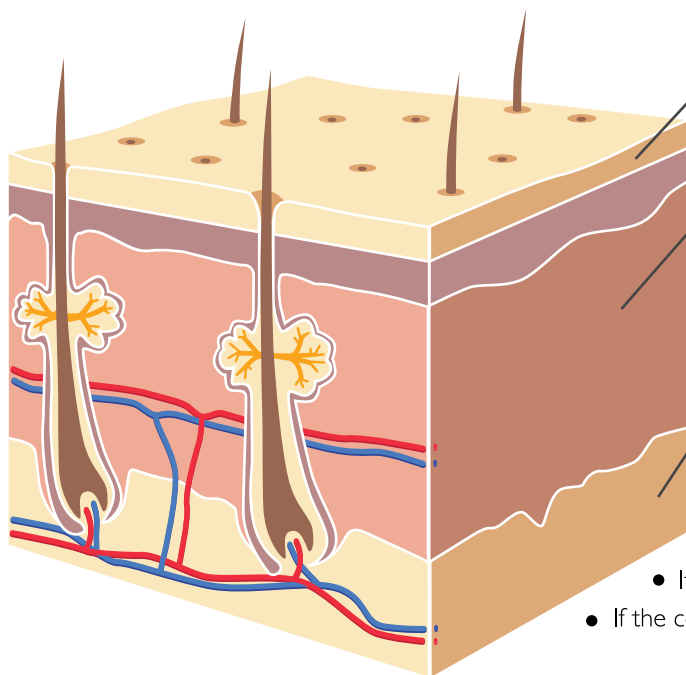
DEFY YOUR AGE

skin rejuvenation guide

Maintaining youthful skin is not a modern obsession. Since ancient times, we have all been searching for ways to delay the signs of ageing, but recently it has become big business with billions of pounds spent every year on the latest products, treatments and plastic surgery. With so many options and competing skincare brands it can be difficult to find the truth behind the marketing. This guide aims to give you some facts about anti-ageing and introduce you to Chinese concepts of beautiful skin.

THE ANATOMY OF SKIN

Your skin is truly amazing. As a barrier to the outside world it has to protect against invasion from micro-organisms and prevent the loss of your body fluid. But it also has to be open to allow an exchange of fluids, air and regulate body temperature. It also has to act as one of your most important sensory receptors. Your skin is made up of 3 distinct layers:



THE EPIDERMIS - This is the skin that you see and is typically about 0.5-1mm thick. It contains layers that produce millions of new skin cells everyday. It is the layer which affects how radiant your skin looks.

THE DERMIS - This is a thick and dense meshwork of collagen and elastin fibers that contribute to the elasticity and suppleness of your skin. It also contains the blood and lymphatic supply to feed and nourish your skin cells and regeneration. It is the layer which affects how elastic and toned your skin looks.

THE SUBCUTANEOUS LAYER - This is the deepest layer of skin which is mostly made up of fat. This provides insulation, acts as a shock absorber and feeds energy to the layers above. It is the layer which affects how plump and resilient your skin looks.

The secret to youthful skin is to maintain the health of all three layers.

- If the subcutaneous layer begins to lose fat then skin loses its smoothness.
- If the collagen and elastin in the dermis become damaged and weaken then the skin loses elasticity and strength and begins to sag and wrinkle.
- If the epidermis slows in its ability to regenerate skin cells then the skin becomes thin and translucent and loses lustre.

THE AGEING PROCESS

Most dermatologists will tell you that there are 2 types of skin ageing. One is known as intrinsic and relates to the natural ageing process which is defined by your genetic makeup. The other is extrinsic ageing which is due to lifestyle and environmental exposure. Although it is true that we will all succumb to the natural ageing process, there are powerful and effective ways to slow down this process. First let's look at the main physical changes that lead to ageing skin.

1. **SLOWER SKIN REGENERATION** - The epidermis starts to slow skin production which leads to less radiant, new skin and slower wound and blemish healing.

2. **SKIN THINNING** - Partly due to hormone changes, the skin starts to thin,, making any blood vessels and dark circles more visible. The skin is also more susceptible to environmental damage and irritability.

3. **COLLAGEN & ELASTIN DAMAGE** - The essential fibers in the skin are produced less efficiently and become damaged which causes a loss in elasticity. This leads to sagging and wrinkles.

4. SKIN DRYING - The moisture holding proteoglycans and GAG's in the skin decrease in number making the skin unable to hold as much moisture. This leads to sagging and drying. Also, the oil producing glands in the skin become less active which contributes to dry skin and sensitivity to soap and other environmental irritations.

5. REDUCTION IN BLOOD SUPPLY - The number of blood vessels supplying the skin decreases which affects skin colour and glow and reduces the amount of nutrients supplied to the skin.

6. FAT LOSS - The fatty subcutaneous layer starts to thin which makes the skin look less resilient and more drawn and shows the bones under the skin more than previously.

7. SKIN DAMAGE - The skin cells become damaged by both internal and external factors which affect the quality of the skin and pigmentation. The main form of skin damage is cell oxidation caused by free radicals in the skin.

These are the main processes that lead to skin ageing but the good news is that with a good lifestyle, sensible skincare regime and natural treatments, all of them can be worked on to slow down the signs of ageing. Let's look at the main factors that lead to these ageing processes:

INTERNAL FACTORS

SKIN NUTRITION

Whilst we like to pamper the skin with creams, it is important to remember that practically all of your skin's nutrition comes from within. Eating and drinking skin boosting foods and encouraging a healthy blood supply to the skin is essential to slow down the signs of skin ageing.



DIET

Since most skin damage comes from cell oxidation it is important to have a diet rich in antioxidants which soak up the free radicals in the body before they react with skin cells. All fresh fruit & vegetables have antioxidants and vitamins but one of the most potent forms of antioxidants are called Catechins which are found in tea.



HYDRATION

Most of us do not drink enough water during the day. This leads to dry skin and skin cell damage. Try to drink about 2 litres of water a day. Even better is to drink white or green tea which is more hydrating than water containing powerful antioxidants, vitamins and minerals.



WHITE TEA

White tea has been shown to have an anti-collagenase function which protects against the breakdown of collagen and elastin. This makes White tea the go to drink for skincare. When combined with other herbs it is even more powerful.



SWEETS CHEEKS

For an everyday, delicious tea which is good for your skin, try 'Sweet Cheeks'. This contains a combination of White tea which protects collagen, Red Date to nourish the blood and Rose.

SLEEP

The term 'beauty sleep' is not too far from the truth.

Sleep allows the skin to rejuvenate by stopping facial expressions and relaxing facial muscles. Lying down for an extended period also combats the constant attack of gravity on the skin.

Getting rest also helps to destress the body, remove toxins and improve mood - all of which can help your complexion and facial appearance.



EXERCISE

Getting regular exercise is not just good for your body and stress levels but is also a great way of preventing premature skin ageing. It does this by stimulating the rapid flow of blood through your skin. This helps to draw away toxins and bring oxygen and other nutrients to the skin.

Exercise has also been shown to improve collagen production. People who exercise also tend to drink more water, which helps to cleanse and moisturise skin.



TOXINS

If your body is carrying around lots of toxins (for example from smoking) then this will contribute to skin damage. It is essential that you work on reducing the toxic load in the body and strengthening the detoxifying ability of the body.

SMOKING - This is a terrible habit for your skin. Cigarette smoke contains toxins and causes free radicals to attack your skin. It also accelerates the breakdown of collagen and elastin which leads to premature wrinkles and skin sagging.



ALCOHOL - The regular consumption of alcohol leads to premature skin ageing. Alcohol dilates the skin capillaries and if consumed in large amounts can lead to a permanent flushing and broken capillaries in the face. It also dehydrates the skin and aggravates skin irritation, depleting the body of Vitamin A which is an important skin antioxidant.



BODY IMBALANCES

INTERNAL HEAT OR COLD - Body temperature has a major effect on the quality of your skin. If you suffer from excessive heat then there is a tendency for skin irritation and flushes. If you suffer from internal cold then your skin can appear tired, pale and lacking in lustre.

INTERNAL DAMP OR DRY - Just like body temperature, your internal body can be imbalanced in terms of dampness or dryness. This is due to diet, lifestyle and genetic predisposition. Damp people suffer from clammy and spotty skin, whereas dry people suffer from dry, flaky and irritated skin.

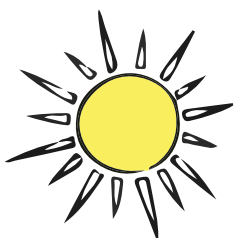
HORMONES - Your hormones have a powerful effect on your appearance. Keeping them in balance will not only make you feel better but look better too.

EMOTIONS & STRESS - Your emotional state directly affects your health and therefore your appearance. Anxiety, stress, depression and mood swings all negatively impact your skin.

All of these body imbalances are treatable with Chinese Medicine.



EXTERNAL FACTOR



SUN

It is estimated that up to 80% of premature skin ageing is caused by the damaging effects of the sun. Also, known as 'photo-ageing', the harmful UV rays from the sun damage collagen in the skin, create free radicals which damage the skin and slow the skin's ability to repair itself. Probably the single biggest lifestyle change that anyone can make for their skin is to reduce the amount of hours under the sun.

ANTI-AGEING TREATMENTS

There are many anti-ageing treatments out there. Most of them deal with the external skin. As we have seen, most skin ageing factors are related to internal factors so you should use a treatment that treats both the outer and internal health in one session.

Cosmetic acupuncture is a powerful and natural treatment for anti-ageing, skin rejuvenation and addressing any specific skin conditions.

It works by invigorating Qi and blood flow to the skin as well as treating internal conditions which may be leading to aged, aggravated or dull looking skin.



COSMETIC ACUPUNCTURE WILL:

- Dramatically boost skin nutrition and improve hydration.
- Increase cell & collagen regeneration for renewed complexion & skin elasticity.
- Rejuvenate skin tone, restoring a lustrous glow to the face.
- Reduce crows feet, minimize fine lines & wrinkles.
- Help clear dark circles and puffy eyes.

FOR COSMETIC APPOINTMENTS - TEL: 08700 100 023 or EMAIL: clinic@acumedic.com