

Food and Supplements Affecting Acne

Foods

This is a guideline only—We are not asking you to eliminate foods or food groups completely; we do suggest you cut back and moderate some food types. The “Try to Reduce” group has been proven to be a problem for most acne sufferers. We also know that some people have trigger foods such as citrus, but this is not across the board.

Try To Reduce	Acceptable Substitute
Iodides	
Iodized Salt	Sea Salt, Uniodized Salt, Celtic Salt
Milk (including organic and especially nonfat)	Almond Milk, Coconut Milk, Rice Milk
Cheese	Nut cheese
Whey or Soy Protein Shakes and Protein Bars	Pea Protein, Egg White Powder, Hemp – still check for iodides and biotin before buying (Vega Sport Performance Protein & Perfect Fit are a few safe ones.)
Soy – e.g., tofu, soy milk, tempeh, edamame, soy sauce	
Seafood, Shellfish e.g., cod, scallops	Fresh Water Fish – lake trout, bass, catfish
Spirulina, Chlorella, Blue-Green Algae	
Kelp, Miso Soup, Seaweed, Seaweed Supplements	
Vitamins with iodides, iodine, kelp, potassium iodide (also avoid Biotin and B12)	
Foods High in Androgens	
Peanuts, Peanut Butter	Almond Butter or other nut butters
Peanut Oil, Corn Oil, Canola Oil	Olive Oil, Coconut Oil
Shellfish	
Organ Meats including patè	

Supportive Foods/Beverages

Foods/Beverages
Ceylon Cinnamon
Apple Cider Vinegar
Green Tea especially Matcha

Antioxidant “Helper” – foods high in Selenium

Brazil Nuts
Pinto Beans
Halibut
Wild – caught salmon
Oats
Navy beans
Chicken
Spinach

Foods/Beverages

Anti-inflammatory Support

Turmeric
Ginger
Green Tea (especially Matcha)
Ceylon Cinnamon
Foods high in Vitamin B3
- Crimini Mushrooms
- Tuna
- Chicken Breast
- Fish (Halibut, Salmon, Sardines)
- Leafy Greens
- Asparagus

More Anti-Inflammatory Support

Foods high in Omega-3
Fatty Fish
Salmon
Sardines
Atlantic Mackerel
Anchovies
Herring
White Fish
Omega-3 Enriched Eggs
Walnuts
Deep Leafy Greens – Spinach, Kale, Watercress
Blueberries
Hemp Seeds
Mustard Seed
Brussel Sprouts
Winter Squash
Navy Beans

Foods to Avoid

Foods That Cause Inflammation:

Trans Fats

- Cakes, pies and cookies
- Biscuits
- Breakfast sandwiches
- Margarine (stick and tub)
- Crackers
- Microwave popcorn
- Cream-filled candies
- Doughnuts

Overheated fats – baked foods/ fried at high temperatures

Excess Sugar

Omega-6 oils (most vegetable oils) and not enough Omega-3s

Known Food sensitivities (examples – fruit, gluten)

A well-balanced low-glycemic diet can support all aspects of health, including your skin.

Supplements

The following supplements have been found to be useful in aiding your recovery from acne. Your esthetician may make recommendations based on the type of acne you have.

Anti-inflammatory Supplements

Zinc Monomethionine

This form of zinc is the most bio-available form that acts directly as an anti-inflammatory. Many people with acne have low levels of zinc in their body. Supplementing with zinc has been shown to reduce the severity of cysts and inflamed lesions. It has also been shown to be beneficial for helping improve many of the dermatological symptoms in women with PCOS (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome).

Omega 3 Fish Oils

Fish oil is a great anti-inflammatory and helps to alter sebum production; HOWEVER, only if it's molecularly distilled or pharmaceutical grade. Unfortunately, many fish oil supplements are oxidized which actually creates more inflammation. So, only take it if you are sure about your source. Read our handout if not buying from Face Reality.

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Gut Health

Probiotics

These are good bacteria that colonize the digestive tract and the skin. They can help people who have been on long-term antibiotics (both oral and topical). These good bacteria compete with the pathogenic bacteria and can help improve the incidence of breakouts.

Antioxidant Support

The acne-prone are generally lower in antioxidants than the general population. We recommend getting your antioxidants from fresh food sources, but here is the RDA for them.

Vitamin A – 700 mcg – women; 900 mcg – men

Vitamin C – 75 mcg – women; 90 mg – men

Vitamin E – 15 mg

Zinc – 30 mg

N-Acetylcysteine – 1000 to 1500 mg

Selenium – 55 mcg (antioxidant assistant)

Insulin Support

Elevated insulin stimulates androgen production which stimulates more oil and increased sensitivity to androgen's effects on the skin. It's best to get insulin support by wise food choices, but here is the RDA.

Berberine – 500-1000 mg

Chromium – 150 mcg

Vitamin D – 400-800 IU

Probiotics

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Choosing a High Quality Omega-3 Fish Oil

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in high concentrations in cold water ocean fish such as sardines, anchovies, herring, salmon and mackerel. Research indicates that Omega-3 fish oil promotes an anti-inflammatory response in the body, preventing and improving symptoms of common diseases and ailments. Studies have shown that people who suffer from chronic inflammatory acne may benefit from taking therapeutic doses (1000-1700 mg) of purified omega-3 oils daily.

With recent scares regarding the purity of ocean fish, and thereby the safety and efficacy of supplements derived from them, it is a good time to revisit how to go about choosing a high-quality fish oil supplement. Use the checklist below to help you select a superior and effective fish oil supplement.

The label is important, so read it. The vital ingredients in fish oil supplements are omega-3 fatty acids, or EPA and DHA. These two fatty acids are the only ones that matter in reducing inflammation and chronic breakouts. The amount of each should be shown separately and should total between 1,000-1,700 mg per serving. There should be a higher ratio of EPA to DHA, about 2:1 or thereabouts. Many labels simply mention the total count of omega-3 fatty acids. This information is not helpful because you don't know the actual amount of EPA and DHA. Similarly, if the EPA and DHA is stated on the bottle, but in lower amounts, be sure you will be able to take all the capsules necessary to get your daily dosage of 1,000-1,700 mg. Some popular drugstore and health food brands have such a low amount of EPA and DHA that one would have to take 12 capsules just to get the adequate daily amount!

Look for molecularly distilled or pharmaceutical grade fish oil. This should be mentioned on the label. This is the highest grade fish oil because it is molecularly distilled, avoiding oxidation of the fish oil. This is also the only process that successfully removes impurities and contaminants (mercury, dioxins, PCBs, etc.). Lastly, it produces a more concentrated form of fish oil with higher potencies of EPA and DHA, so less capsules to swallow!

Find out some information about the manufacturer. Check out some other products they produce. Do some research to see how long they have been in business and if they have a good reputation. Here is a great website for comparing brands: <http://www.ifosprogram.com/consumer-reports.aspx>

Look for capsules that have enteric coating. This coating ensures that the capsules will break down lower in your digestive tract, not in the stomach, minimizing those unpleasant fishy burps that many people experience after taking fish oil supplements.

Look for Vitamin E. Vitamin E helps to prevent oxidation during storage, keeping the oils from turning rancid. Vitamin E will usually be listed under "Other Ingredients" as tocopherols or mixed tocopherols.

By carefully choosing the right fish oil supplement, you optimize the potential benefits that Omega-3 fatty acids can impart to you. Many health practitioners agree there are many benefits to taking a quality fish

oil supplement, especially for the immune system, heart, brain and joints. Of special interest to acne sufferers, they may help regulate hormones, minimizing the intensity and duration of inflammatory breakouts.

**Please note:* Although there is no known toxicity associated with using fish oils over long term, you should check with your physician particularly if you have a chronic underlying illness or are pregnant. According to the FDA, you should not take more than 2,500 mg of Omega-3s daily unless under the recommendation of a physician.

Zinc Supplements

These supplements can upset your stomach. To prevent nausea, always take OptiZinc with food.

Zinc is an essential trace element for humans and there is evidence that it is similar to antibiotics in improving the condition of inflamed acne. The effective dosage is not clear. However, most studies indicate 50-100mg (The OptiZinc tablet that we sell are 30MG). We advise you to not take any more than 100mg because excessive zinc may lead to deficiencies in other vitamins and minerals. One of the reasons that we like OptiZinc is that it contains copper and copper is one of the minerals that can be depleted by taking zinc supplements.

We also recommend discontinuing daily use of zinc once your skin is completely clear. We are not recommending this as a preventative.

If you would like more information to help you make decisions about the benefits, proper dosage and best formulation of zinc supplements, we highly recommend doing further research and consulting with your doctor.