



Nutrition CLINIC

PRACTICAL EXPERT ADVICE FOR
YOUR HEALTH AND DIET DILEMMAS

Q What foods promote healthy skin?

Dr Ross Perry says: "Diet is highly influential on how the skin looks, feels and ages. The first area to consider is hydration. When the body is dehydrated, skin cells shrink and the skin may appear dry with more fine lines. Therefore, you should drink plenty of water and minimise caffeine, sugary drinks and alcohol, as these are not as hydrating - they contain ingredients that can prematurely age the skin."

"In terms of food intake, the fattier types of foods such as crisps or chips can have a direct impact on the skin. A high-sugar intake has also been linked to premature skin ageing. Choosing a healthy balanced diet with high fibre, fruit, veg and protein is extremely influential in maintaining clear and radiant skin as they contain vitamins which help the skin to stay in good shape. So a diet high in fruit and veg, and low in sugary treats has the best impact."

Q Are you more likely to put on weight if you eat before bed?

Fiona Campbell says: "The timing of meals can affect your metabolism. Eating late at night can cause an increase in fat storage as your body burns less fat for fuel and stores any extra sugar. It can also increase your risk of developing Type II Diabetes."

"Late night eating has also been associated with a tendency to skip breakfast which further increases the build-up of fat, so if you skip the most important meal of the day, then you are more likely to have hunger pains mid-afternoon, and reach for more unhealthy foods."

"In order to curb this process, it is recommended that you eat a bigger meal at breakfast time, a slightly smaller one at lunchtime, and make dinner your smallest meal. Aim to have your dinner no later than two hours before you go to bed, so that your body can focus on healing and repairing while you sleep - you'll have much more energy the next day if you do. A natural fast overnight is also great for your digestion and will ensure that you are ready to 'break the fast' the next morning."

Q Which foods generally affect IBS symptoms?

Dr Eileen Murphy says: "Diagnosis and management of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) can be frustrating, but some general recommendations on diet may help to ease those symptoms. Start by establishing a regular eating pattern and include plenty of fluids, but there should be a limit on fizzy drinks, alcohol and caffeine."

"It may be helpful to keep a food diary to see if there are specific foods that trigger symptoms. Some people with IBS may not tolerate



specific meals and this can be quite an individual response. A diet low in short chain carbohydrates such as wheat and beans, and low in sugar alcohols found in fruits and berries may also decrease the risk of developing certain IBS symptoms."

"You can also increase your fibre intake slowly. Soluble fibre such as oats and some fruit are most effective in people who mainly have constipation. However, fibre may not improve IBS symptoms for everyone. Taking a good quality probiotic has been shown to reduce bloating, abdominal pain and gas. It is recommended that you talk to a GP first so that you can figure out what dietary steps are right for you."

30-second summary: