

# INFLAMMATORY SKIN CONDITIONS LIFESTYLE & NUTRITION GUIDE



I am regularly contacted about inflammatory skin conditions, and the first thing I always recommend to my clients is to look at nutrition and lifestyle. Inflammatory skin conditions are wide-ranging, here are a few you may recognise:

- Acne, or breakouts
- Rosacea
- Eczema or dermatitis
- Sensitive skin
- Psoriasis
- Rashes and/or itching

Before we go any further, I must say I am not a doctor or dermatologist, so if you are experiencing severe symptoms, please seek medical advice for your conditions.

As your skin is the largest organ of your body, it reacts to everything from the inside out and outside in. Your nutrition can play a huge role in what's happening with your skin in two ways. Certain foods can trigger inflammatory skin conditions, especially if you have an intolerance (eg. dairy, wheat, etc). On the other hand, it can be incredibly healing, and reduce inflammation.

In this guide, I'll share some top tips on looking after your skin with nutrition and lifestyle. I hope it's helpful to you.



# FOODS TO NOURISH YOUR SKIN



There are many foods that can help improve the health and appearance of your skin. Here are a few examples:

- 1. Water:** Drinking plenty of water helps to keep your skin hydrated and glowing. Aim to drink at least 8 glasses of water per day.
- 2. Fruits and vegetables:** These foods are rich in vitamins and minerals that are essential for healthy skin. Fruits and vegetables that are particularly good for your skin include tomatoes, berries, leafy greens, and carrots.
- 3. Nuts and seeds:** Nuts and seeds are a good source of healthy fats and antioxidants, which can help to improve the appearance of your skin. Examples include almonds, sunflower seeds, and chia seeds.
- 4. Fish:** Fish such as salmon, tuna, and mackerel are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which can help to keep your skin healthy and moisturized.
- 5. Dark chocolate:** Cocoa is rich in antioxidants, which can help to protect your skin from damage caused by free radicals. Choose dark chocolate with a high cocoa content (70% or higher) for the most benefits.



# FOODS THAT CAN TRIGGER INFLAMMATION



There are certain foods that may contribute to skin problems in some people. Here are a few examples of some of the more common triggers, but it's important to remember that if you have a food intolerance/allergy of any kind, it will likely show up on your skin in the form of inflammation. Here are a few examples of some of the triggers:

- 1. Sugar:** A diet high in sugar can cause inflammation in the body, leading to acne and other skin problems. It can also cause glycation, which is a hardening of the collagen fibres - which can cause premature ageing and increase lines & wrinkles.
- 2. Dairy:** Some people may be sensitive to dairy products, which can cause skin problems such as acne or eczema.
- 3. Alcohol:** Alcohol can cause dehydration, which can lead to dry, dull skin. Make sure you drink plenty of water and boost your healthy fat intake to combat these effects.
- 4. Processed foods:** Processed foods are often high in sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats, so best to avoid them where possible. Eat natural.
- 5. Caffeine:** Caffeine is a stimulant that can increase stress hormones in the body, which can lead to inflammation and skin problems.





# A LITTLE MORE ABOUT INFLAMMATORY SKIN CONDITIONS



When I work with clients with inflammatory skin conditions, I recommend keeping a skin/lifestyle/diet diary for 12 weeks. It's a great way to find any patterns and to see if you have any potential triggers. It could be food, sleep, or stress-related!

Inflammatory skin conditions are skin disorders that are characterized by inflammation. Some examples of inflammatory skin conditions include:

- 1. Acne:** Acne can appear as pimples, blackheads, or whiteheads, and is often seen on the face, neck, back, and chest. You can also get acne rosacea. Acne can respond very well to lifestyle and nutrition changes, but it's important to work alongside your medical professional for support.
- 2. Eczema:** Eczema is where you have red, itchy patches on your skin and can occur anywhere on the body, but is most common on the face, hands and feet.
- 3. Psoriasis:** This is a chronic skin condition that causes cells to build up rapidly on the surface of the skin. It can appear as red, scaly patches on the skin, and is often seen on the scalp, knees, and elbows. This is an autoimmune condition and not something I treat directly.



# INFLAMMATORY SKIN CONDITIONS



**4. Rosacea:** This is a skin condition that causes redness, flushing, and bumps on the face. It is most common in adults over the age of 30 and is more common in women than men. Rosacea can be very reactive to foods and common triggers are spicy foods, alcohol, and dairy - although this will differ for everyone.

**5. Dermatitis:** This is a general term that refers to skin inflammation. There are several types of dermatitis, some are caused by inflammation in the body, and others are contact dermatitis, where you've come into contact with an external irritant.

If you think you may have an inflammatory skin condition, it's important to see a dermatologist for proper diagnosis and treatment.

The reason that our diet affects our skin, is because of the microbiome in our tummy. Research has suggested that the microbiome may play a role in the health and appearance of the skin. I am a BIG fan of microbiome supplements, having personally experienced the positive benefits, and seeing the impact they have had on my client's skin. There are a few potential benefits of microbiome supplements for the skin:

**1. Improved skin barrier function:** The microbiome may help to strengthen the skin's barrier function, which helps to protect the skin from damage and infection.



# BENEFITS OF SUPPLEMENTS



**2. Reduced inflammation:** Some studies have suggested that the microbiome may help to reduce inflammation in the skin, which can be beneficial for people with inflammatory skin conditions such as acne, eczema, and rosacea.

**3. Improved skin hydration:** It helps to keep the skin hydrated and nourished, giving it a more glowing and healthy appearance.

**4. Improved skin texture:** Some people have reported that microbiome supplements have helped to improve the texture of their skin, making it feel smoother and softer.

As with any supplement, it's not designed to replace lifestyle and nutrition choices, but to support them. And, not all supplements are created equal! My favourites are Advanced Nutrition Programme Skin Youth Biome or Skin Clear Biome, Rejuvenated Immune Complex, or if you're looking for a high street option, try Optibac, or Prebio7.

**Always read the labels and check with your doctor before starting any new supplements.**



# LIFESTYLE ADVICE

## INFLAMMATORY SKIN CONDITIONS



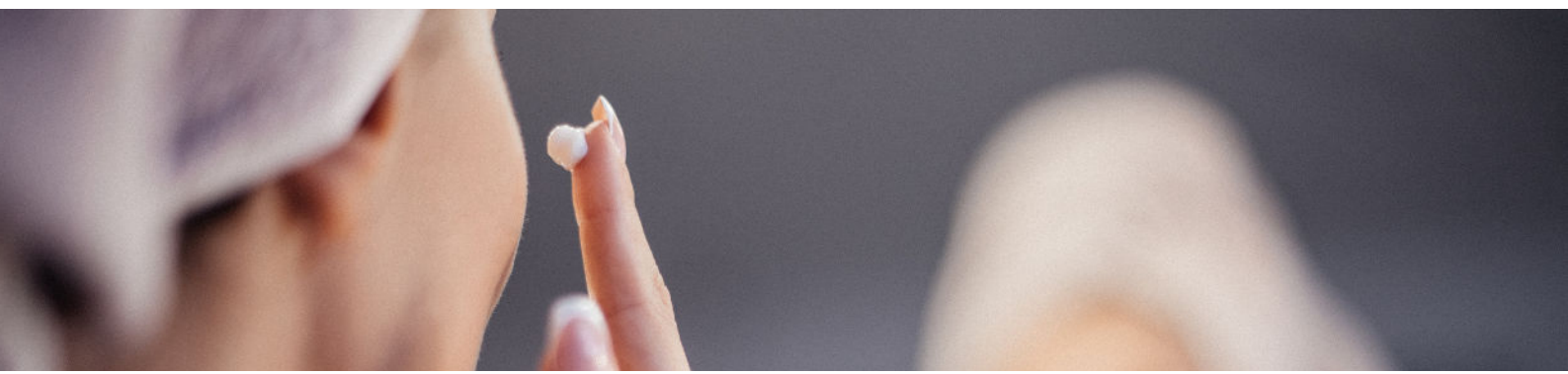
It's not just about nutrition, it's also about lifestyle and overall health. Here are some other factors to consider, to help your skin.

**1. Sleep:** When you're asleep, your body is going through repair and regeneration. It removes toxins, and excess fluids balance your hormones, and aims to restore the best balance possible. If you're not sleeping enough, your body can't effectively do this, making inflammatory skin conditions worse. Aim for 7-9 hours a night.

**2. Stress:** Possibly the BIGGEST contributor to inflammatory skin conditions. Raised stressed hormones, cortisol, and adrenaline, are not good for your skin and cause inflammation in your entire body. Try and take measures to reduce stress, where you can.

**3. Skin care routine:** Often, when someone has an inflammatory skin condition, they are using the wrong products or too many/too harsh. This can make things even worse. Look for gentle products for sensitive skin, or seek the advice of a professional.

**4. Sunscreen!** When you have an inflammatory skin condition, your skin is vulnerable to UV damage, which will make it worse. Wear sunscreen every day, SPF 30 for the face, UVA/UVB, and a 4/5 star rating. I recommend a natural sunscreen with ingredients like titanium dioxide and zinc oxide, as chemical sunscreens can be irritating. Switch to mineral makeup too, such as Jane Iredale. Much kinder to your skin!





# INFLAMMATORY SKIN CONDITIONS



It can be difficult to deal with inflammatory skin conditions and upsetting if you just can't figure out what's going on. I have experienced both acne and eczema from stress and food intolerances, so I understand how upsetting it can be.

It might sound too good to be true, but often, lifestyle, health factors, and nutrition are at the root cause. It might interest you to know that I rarely bring clients with inflammatory skin conditions into my clinic for treatment, it's just not necessary.

We always start with 12 weeks of monitoring their skin, along with lifestyle and food and introduce a simple, targeted skincare routine, alongside supplements. It's usually enough, and then my clients have the knowledge to look after their skin for the long term.

Please don't struggle alone, reach out if you'd like some support and help. There are plenty of blogs on my website that will help. And I've also attached a shopping list for you too!

Best wishes,

*Nikki x*





# SHOPPING LIST & GUIDANCE



**Fruits and vegetables:** These foods are rich in vitamins and minerals that are essential for healthy skin. My advice is always to 'eat the rainbow', as different colour foods contain different nutrients.

**Nuts & Seeds:** Nuts and seeds are a good source of healthy fats and antioxidants, and are anti-inflammatory. Almonds, sunflower seeds, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, Brazil nuts, and flax seeds.

**Fish:** Fish such as salmon, tuna, and mackerel are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are anti-inflammatory and good for dry skin.

**Dark Chocolate:** (Yay!!) Cocoa is rich in antioxidants, which can help to protect your skin from damage caused by free radicals. Choose dark chocolate with a high cocoa content (70% or higher) for the most benefits.

**Water:** Aim for 8 glasses of water per day, more if you're exercising.

**Leafy Greens:** Spinach, kale, broccoli, and cabbage. These are super cleansing and nutritious.

**Berries:** Increase your intake of low-sugar fruits, such as blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries. Full of antioxidants and help to reduce inflammation and support healthy tissue repair.

**Protein:** Make sure you're eating good sources of protein at every meal. Protein is important for the health of your skin and collagen production.



# SHOPPING LIST & GUIDANCE



## VITAMINS MATTER

**Vitamin C:** Eat foods that are rich in Vitamin C, such as berries, oranges, sweet potato, papaya, and pumpkins/squashes. These help to support healthy skin production and tissue repair.

**Vitamin E:** This is essential to healthy skin growth and protects your skin. Avocados, pine nuts, and hazelnuts are great sources.

**Selenium:** Great for your immune system and skin health. Find it in eggs, tomatoes, wheatgerm, shellfish, broccoli, and Brazil nuts

**Zinc:** Helps your skin to repair and keeps it supple. Find it in lean meat, poultry, whole grains, fish, shellfish, nuts & seeds. This is SUPER important for inflammatory skin conditions.

**Spices:** Turmeric is a wonderful anti-inflammatory. Ginger is amazing for its ability to flush out toxins and aid blood circulation - it's also said to increase collagen production and reduce inflammation. Add these little powerhouses to your cooking or soups!

