



Are Collagen Supplements the Secret to Younger Looking Skin? Here's the Scoop

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Collagen seems to be a buzzword that is thrown around when it comes to both the beauty and health industries. Health food stores and beauty stores alike sell collagen supplements, some of which claim to boost collagen production in the skin, while others are made of actual collagen that's been extracted from animal hides.

So, how do you choose which one is the best out of all the collagen boosters in the market?

Registered Dietitian, Jenn Randazzo and Facial Plastic Surgeon, Dr. Michelle Yagoda both weigh in on this topic.

What is collagen and why is it important?

“Collagen is a peptide that is responsible for your skin's strength and vigor,” Yagoda explains. “In 2005, a study showed that a deficiency in dietary protein caused a reduced cellular turnover, decreased DNA repair, fragmentation of collagen and elastin, and skin wrinkling and laxity,” she continues. “Several scientific studies have demonstrated that daily oral ingestion with collagen hydrolysate of 2.5 grams or more per day will statistically and significantly increase skin hydration and decrease skin wrinkles.” What this means is that you're looking for hydrolyzed collagen or amino acid chains that have been broken down so that you can digest them easier. “So, if firmer skin is your objective, incorporating collagen into your regimen is important,” Yagoda concludes.

What are the health benefits of collagen supplements?

“While the benefits of collagen protein are often associated with beauty, there is a growing body of research that suggests it can support so much more,” Randazzo explains. “Regular collagen consumption has been shown to promote hair, skin and nail health, support bones and joints and

even help boost digestion.” Sounds like an all-around great item to add to your daily routine, whether you’re looking for beauty or health benefits.

Buy it now: Vital Proteins, \$14-59

How do you incorporate collagen into your daily regimen?

While some skincare companies boast collagen-boosting properties of their creams, the best way to get collagen is through your diet. “Because collagen is a large molecule, and because your skin’s main function is to act as a barrier, topical collagen is not well absorbed into the skin,” Yagoda says. “Interestingly, your body can create collagen if you consume a lot of proteins.

But, according to the Centers for Disease Control, 33% of people over the age of 18 (and this number increases with advancing age and certain medical conditions) have difficulty absorbing nutrients even from a healthy and balanced diet. For these people, supplementation is important both to correct insufficiency and to bypass problems with absorption,” Yagoda explains.

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Are there any options for vegans/vegetarians?

Collagen supplements are usually made from bovine hides or fish scales, but vegans and vegetarians need not fear. They don’t have to miss out on other collagen-boosting ingredients. “While there isn’t a plant-based source of collagen, vegans and vegetarians can supplement with nutrients, like biotin and Vitamin C, which can boost the body’s own ability to produce collagen,” Randazzo says.

Are there any negative side effects?

There is little evidence that there are any negative side effects to taking a collagen supplement if you’re taking the recommended daily allowance. “Each of us is unique and can react in different ways to any food or supplement, including collagen,” Randazzo says. “If you have any questions or concerns about collagen, check in with your healthcare practitioner and, together, determine if it’s something that you should start incorporating into your diet.”