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# Summer Foods That Make You Sexier

Strawberries, blueberries, peaches—your favorite in-season fruits taste awesome, but they're also beauty products in disguise. Here's why! **By Kari Molvar**

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# BEAUTY BOOK

Besides keeping you healthy, summer fruits deliver major beauty benefits, according to experts. "Brightly colored picks in season now contain high levels of nutrients that improve your skin, protect your hair, and even undo some UV damage," says dermatologist Jeannette Graf.

You can also amp up the results you get from eating these natural beauty boosters by applying them to your body with DIY masks and scrubs. "The antioxidants help peel away dead skin and add moisture to hair," explains Dr. Graf. Don't have time to mix up anything? Slacker! Just kidding. We offer store-bought substitutions that do the trick too.

## BEAUTY BENEFIT

### Firmer Skin

**Supernutrient:** Vitamin C. It's essential for the production and formation of collagen, the skin's support structure, says dermatologist Macrene Alexiades-Armenakas. Unlike some antioxidants, your body does not produce C on its own, so it's key to pack it into your diet.

**Best summer source:** A cup of whole strawberries (about 8), says nutritionist Jackie Newgent, author of *Big Green Cookbook*. Pop them in your mouth whole (if you slice them, eat fast since vitamin C breaks down when exposed to air). Or make a crushed-berry cooler: Blend a cup each of strawberries and ice. Pour into a glass, and garnish with mint.

**Fresh beauty fix:** Try a vitamin-C treatment to tighten pores and lighten sun spots every few weeks, says Dr. Alexiades-Armenakas. Puree a handful of strawberries, and add in the juice of 1 lemon and ½ cup plain soy yogurt (it helps fade brown patches). Let chill in the fridge for 30 minutes, then apply to your face and neck. Leave on for half an hour, and rinse off. Follow up with SPF since applying C makes you ultrasensitive to harsh rays.



**Store-bought swap:** Rub on a vitamin-C serum nightly. Try Avon Anew Clearly C Serum, \$20.



Hmm, make a frosty treat for your face.



## BEAUTY BENEFIT

### A Glowing Complexion



Blueberries are nature's moisturizer.

**Supernutrient:** Vitamin E. It reinforces your skin's natural barrier, helping to keep it hydrated and dewy, says Dr. Graf. In the summer, you might think you have more than enough dew on your face, but sweating actually depletes your internal H<sub>2</sub>O levels, so it's important that your skin stays replenished to avoid flaking.

**Best summer source:** A cup of blueberries has tons of antioxidants, including some hydrating vitamin E, says Newgent. Mix them into your yogurt in the morning or sprinkle over a grilled-chicken salad along with a handful of almonds (a great source of vitamin E).

**Fresh beauty fix:** Seal in moisture with a fruity blueberry mask once a week, says celeb aesthetician Renée Rouleau. Put ⅔ cup of blueberries in a blender, and

mix for a few seconds. Add in the juice of 1 lemon, a handful of sliced almonds, 1 tablespoon full-fat plain yogurt, and 1 tablespoon honey. Continue to blend until everything turns into a medium-thick paste. Remove from the blender, and transfer to a small bowl. Place in the refrigerator for 20 minutes; it will be easier to apply on your skin after it's chilled. Spread the mixture evenly onto your face and neck, and let sit for 20 minutes. Rinse off. (Note: Do a patch test on your arm first to make sure your skin isn't reactive or allergic to any of these ingredients.)

**Store-bought swap:** Slather on Rouleau's Triple Berry Peel, \$85, with blueberries, once a month.



# BEAUTY BOOK


## BEAUTY BENEFIT

### Strong Hair and Nails

**Supernutrient:** Essential fatty acids. These help your body produce healthy oils—the kind that keep your hair strong and your nails from turning brittle. (And as an extra perk, these good fats moisturize skin too.) Without an adequate supply, your body churns out an irritating form of sebum, which can clog hair follicles and slow the growth of nails, explains hair doctor Philip Kingsley.

**Best summer source:** Half an avocado, says Newgent. Make a delicious guacamole dip: Dice the flesh of half an avocado, and mix with a small handful of diced red onions and a dash each of minced jalapeño, lime juice, and salt.

**Fresh beauty fix:** Try this weekly luster-enhancing remedy from Kingsley: Combine 1 mashed avocado (½ for short hair), 1 egg yolk, and ½ teaspoon olive oil. Work into damp hair, and leave on for 30 minutes, then shampoo. For nails, combine ¼ avocado, 1 egg white, 2 tablespoons oatmeal, and 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice. Apply to nails and cuticles for 20 minutes, then rinse.



Store-bought swap: Go for Burt's Bees Avocado Butter Pre-Shampoo Hair Treatment, \$9.



Hey, peaches! Slice up a fix for softer skin.


## BEAUTY BENEFIT

### A Smoother Body

**Supernutrient:** Vitamin A. It promotes cell production and turnover, ridding dead skin so your body feels more supple, explains dermatologist Doris Day. Research shows it may also reduce damage caused by overexposure to the sun.

**Best summer source:** One to two peaches or apricots. Look for ones with a deep orange flesh and skin to get the most vitamin A. Dice up a couple, sprinkle with lemon juice, and toss on top of grilled fish or poultry, says Newgent.

**Fresh beauty fix:** Whip up a weekly body scrub to slough off built-up skin, advises Rouleau. Puree 2 pitted peaches. In a bowl, mix puree with 1 tablespoon olive oil and enough brown sugar to make a thick paste. Lightly scrub all over, and leave on for a few minutes before rinsing with warm water for instantly polished skin.



Store-bought swap: Lather up with Caress Daily Silk Body Wash, with peach, \$7.

## BEAUTY BENEFIT

### Fewer Breakouts

**Supernutrient:** Lycopene. It helps fend off zits and redness by reducing inflammation that can lead to pimples and clogged pores. Adding more to your diet can actually deliver clear-skin results comparable to those of antiacne Rx's, says Dr. Alexiades-Armenakas.


**Best summer source:** A large tomato. The deep red fruit, particularly the skin, is a tasty way to get lycopene, says Newgent. Slice the whole, fully ripened fruit, and top with a little balsamic vinegar and basil for an appetizer. Or chop and sauté with olive oil and garlic to create a pasta sauce—the nourishing fat along with the heat of cooking help make the lycopene more available to the body, explains Newgent.

**Fresh beauty fix:** Do a weekly tomato mask, recommends Rouleau. Place thin tomato slices over your face, and let sit for 10 to 15 minutes so the juices seep in. Follow up by slicing another tomato in half and rubbing the smooth side of both halves in small cir-



Rubbing on raw tomatoes clears pores.

cles over the skin. Rinse with warm water. The lycopene declogs pores and acts as a natural astringent to eliminate acne-causing bacteria.



Store-bought swap: Massage in a Yes to Tomatoes Total Treatment Facial Mask, \$14.99.