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  - **Multimed Center is pleased to announce we now provide DOT examinations and we are now a certified drug testing collection site. Call today for your physical examination for your commercial drivers license.**

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**Healthy Skin From Within**



Throughout your lifetime, numerous environmental insults work to damage and alter your "sheath," otherwise known as your skin. Indeed, more than 80 percent of the visible changes that age the skin are caused by outside factors like the sun, detergents and pollutants.

Besides minimizing such exposure, we may actually be able to prevent and reverse some of the visible signs by fighting chronic inflammation and maintaining skin barrier function. To do this, we can rely on an easily accessible, all-natural source: good nutrition.

**Nutrition for Healthy Skin**

Researchers recognize that many natural foods have anti-inflammatory properties, mostly provided by healthy fats and antioxidants. Foods containing these skin-healthy fats include

avocado, fish oil, flax seed, and olive oil. Olive oil and avocado provide barrier-supporting nutrients, called sterols, and anti-inflammatory monounsaturated ("good") fats. Vitamins E and C, selenium, green and white teas, apples, cocoa and berries are also skin friendly; they supply protective antioxidants. Even probiotics, which are the friendly bacteria in our diets, aid in protecting the skin. Experts suggest we get more of the aforementioned foods and less red meat, fried foods, salt, sugar and white flour.

The other major defense against environmental damage is the antioxidant capacity of the skin. Bolstering the antioxidant defense system of the skin is an important strategy for reducing environmentally induced skin damage. Recent clinical trials in which green leafy vegetables, egg yolks, and marigold flower extracts (all rich in lutein and zeaxanthin) were administered orally, topically, or both indicated that combined oral and topical administration provides the highest degree of antioxidant protection.

### **A Healthy Skin Strategy: Five Take-Home Points**

- Stay well hydrated throughout the day and particularly during exercise and when the weather is dry.
- Avoid excess drying of the skin, which can be caused by detergent cleansers, sun and wind.
- Minimize ultraviolet (UV) exposure.
- Consume a variety of antioxidants and omega-3 fats with food and/or supplementation.
- Topically apply all-natural moisturizers containing antioxidants, sterols and healing peptides.

Ask your doctor about natural ways to maintain healthy skin during the winter season and all year round.

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### **Exercise: Good for You, Good for Baby**

It's common knowledge that regular exercise is all the more important during pregnancy. Why? Well, for one thing, because the combination of developing child, hormonal fluctuations, and other factors means you will likely gain a moderate amount of weight as part of the natural process.

Moreover, as any mother will tell you, delivering a baby can be a physically traumatic - albeit joyous - experience; exercise in the months leading up to that day helps strengthen your muscles and heart, which can be placed under severe stress during delivery.



Less well-known is that exercising during pregnancy may make for a healthier child. Consider a recent study involving pregnant women (ages 30-35) who were divided into two groups - one group that performed moderate-intensity aerobic exercise for 30 minutes per day at least three times per week, and a second group that did not perform regular exercise over the same time period. The study revealed the following:

- Fetal heart rate was significantly lower (a good thing, within reason) in the exercise group during fetal breathing and non-breathing movement periods.
- Fetal short-term and overall heart rate variability (indicative of a mature neurologic system) were higher in the exercise group during breathing movements.
- The exercise-exposed fetuses had higher measures of vagal (cardiovascular) control during breathing movements.

Talk to your doctor about the benefits of exercise and which specific exercises are most appropriate to perform (and which are best to avoid altogether) during pregnancy.

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### Three Ways to Sleep Soundly

Sleep, or lack thereof, can have a dramatic effect on your overall health in the short and long term. What can you do to ensure a good night's sleep? Here are three simple suggestions to get you started:



**Stick to a Routine:** When it comes to getting a good night's sleep, conditioning your body to sleep at a certain time (and for a certain length of time) increases your chances of falling asleep quickly and waking up refreshed. Developing an evening ritual is also important in this regard: Set the stage for quality sleep with a warm

bath, a good book or soft music.

**Light and Darkness:** Sunlight helps regulate your circadian clock, the body's 24-hour cycle, and also stimulates the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates your sleep cycle. On the other hand, when you're preparing for sleep, it's vital to limit sources of light that can make it harder to doze off. That means pulling the shades, turning off all the lights and shutting doors.



**Don't Drink, Don't Smoke:** There are countless reasons not to do either of these things, but in terms of sleep, drinking alcohol and smoking can have profound negative consequences. You may think alcohol will help you fall asleep, but it won't keep you asleep, not after it's metabolized. And nicotine is a stimulant - perfect for keeping you awake all night long.

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