Healthy Skin Challenge

Week 6 - Toxins, Toxins Everywhere
Achieving Healthy Skin in a Toxic Environment

Did you know that your skin is a super absorber? As we discussed earlier, your skin is a major component of your immune system and acts as your first line of defense against environmental toxins. It is also a method of absorbing both good and bad compounds. Vitamin D is made in our skin as a result of exposure to sunlight – a good thing. Many people also take bio-identical hormones topically because by taking them this way they are absorbed directly, alleviating some burden on the liver. Your skin can also absorb harmful, toxic chemicals as well.

Harmful toxins can be taken into the body both through the foods we eat, which can be contaminated with pesticides, and also through the things we apply to our skin. Think about your typical day – how many health and beauty products do you apply to your skin during your morning routine? Shampoo, conditioner, soap, shaving cream, body lotion, facial moisturizer, eye cream, makeup, mousse, hairspray, perfume... you get the idea. Some products contain harmful toxins which can enter our bodies and weaken our immune system and affect our skin too. Do you really know what’s in the products you apply to your body? There's a great organization called the Environmental Working Group who has tested thousands of products and rated them according to their toxicity. You can find the list on their website www.EWG.org in the Skin Deep Cosmetics Database.

The Environmental Working Group also tests foods to determine which are the most contaminated with pesticides. They publish two lists, which are updated annually. They are called the “Dirty Dozen” and the “Clean Fifteen”. The Dirty Dozen lists the most contaminated produce items. I recommend that you always buy organic when eating these foods. Buying organic can be expensive. If it is just not in your budget, then focus on eating from the “Clean Fifteen”. These are the least toxic produce items.

Challenge This Week

Clean up your body! Check the resources on the Skin Deep Cosmetics Database and elsewhere to see if the products you apply to your skin are poisoning you. Also check out the “Dirty Dozen” and make an effort to buy organic or eliminate these foods from your diet.

Later this week I’ll provide more information on the types of harmful chemicals to watch for when reading labels and buying your health and beauty products. Let’s keep the momentum going with the healthy eating choices and good stress management lifestyle changes we’ve adopted so far, add to it our commitment to reducing toxins in our bodies for healthy skin!