

Green Tea and Pineapple to Treat Acne: Studies Say 'Yes'

Dermatologist Dr. Cybele Fishman with Advanced Dermatology PC Stresses Role of Antioxidants in Skin Care

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, October 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Can application of lotions or creams containing green tea extract, or a mixture derived from pineapple waste, prove effective in treating [acne](#), a facial skin disorder affecting as many as 50 million Americans annually?

Studies suggest yes, according to board-certified dermatologist Cybele Fishman MD, who says both green tea and pineapple contain antioxidants, elements that are under increased scientific scrutiny for treating acne because of their abilities to neutralize free oxygen radicals, reduce inflammation, repair cells, and keep skin healthy.



Dr. Cybele Fishman

Antioxidant vitamins and minerals can be found in plants, foods, and other natural substances. In a study published in a 2020 edition of the Saudi Journal of Biological Sciences (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sjbs.2020.11.032>), authors report bromelain, obtained from the “core, crown, fruit, peel, and stem’ of the pineapple, “is used in alleviation of cancer, inflammation, and oxidative stress.”

“Until recently, clogged skin pores caused by excessive amounts of sebum from oil glands, accumulation of dead skin cells and dirt, and bacterial colonization, as well as hormonal imbalances, were considered primary culprits for acne. But growing evidence indicates that oxidative stress may play a significant role, too,” states Dr. Fishman.

Oxidative stress results from an imbalance between the presence and production of free radicals and the body’s natural defense system to counteract the radicals’ damaging effects on cells. Free oxygen radicals remove electrons from healthy cells and break down their structures. In skin, these radicals damage the collagen and compromise both the function of these cells and their



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capabilities in warding off bacterial invaders, explains Dr. Fishman. She is a member of the team at Advanced Dermatology PC and an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City.

Other scientists agree. “Skin and mucous membranes have a contact and defense barrier role against chemical, physical and biological aggressions...,” write authors of a report in *Anais Brasileiros De Dermatologia* (<https://doi.org/10.1590/abd1806-4841.20175697>).

“...Antioxidant mechanisms [work] by neutralizing...reactive [oxygen] molecules...Where this balance is broken, various cellular structures, such as the cell membrane, [and] nuclear or mitochondrial DNA may suffer structural modifications, triggering or worsening skin diseases,” like acne, the researchers indicate.

Judicious use of antioxidants in topical – or oral – form can help in reducing inflammation associated with acne and re-establishing a healthy skin-cell framework as a bulwark against invading bacteria. Because they are naturally occurring, antioxidants also result in few – if any – treatment side effects, Dr. Fishman says.

But she cautions antioxidants alone are not an “end-all, cure-all” for acne. They can be most effective when applied in combination with other therapies, including applications of retinoids, she says. Retinoids are the gold standard in treating acne, both topically and orally, and they are anti-aging as well.

In the *Anais Brasileiros De Dermatologia*-published study, the investigators write, “Use of antioxidants may be of great value, if they are administered, orally and/or topically, rationally. Each molecule with antioxidant action has actions in certain sites and, therefore, the association of these molecules, in smaller doses, seems to be more efficient.” Physicians also are finding antioxidant-containing therapies to be an effective alternative to long-term use of antibiotics, which can promote development of resistant bacteria, Dr. Fishman relates.

Statistics indicate approximately 80 percent to 85 percent of Americans will experience an outbreak of acne at some point in their lives. The disorder, which causes the growth of unsightly pimples and blemishes on facial skin, usually occurs during adolescence, can persist into adulthood, and primarily affects women. Although not life-threatening, acne often results in significant psychological stress and loss of self-esteem.

Dr. Fishman cites a study published in *The British Journal of Dermatology* (10.1111/bjd.16099), which found acne sufferers to have more than a 60 percent greater risk of developing depression than those without the skin disease.

Other research, conducted by the University of Limerick in Ireland and published in PLOS One (10.1371/journal.pone.0205009), determined through surveys that acne patients experience greater psychological stress and anxiety and are more prone to report a variety of physical symptoms, such as headaches and sleep disorders.

Of course, a doctor's prescription is not necessary to get a healthy dose of antioxidants.

"Skin is the body's largest organ and provides a critical, protective barrier against outside bacteria and environmental toxins," Dr. Fishman says. "That is why a healthy lifestyle, which includes consumption of foods rich in antioxidants like vitamins A, C, and E and zinc, selenium, lutein, and other like nutrients, helps maintain the integrity and immune function of skin cells." Fruits, such as plums, cherries, berries, and red grapes; vegetables that include beets, red cabbage, beans, and broccoli; dark chocolate; green tea; and even coffee are important sources of antioxidants.

But antioxidants are only part of the answer in the prevention – or at least minimization – of outbreaks of acne. Dr. Fishman offers these tips for achieving healthy skin:

- Let acne pimples heal naturally or with proper application of medicative substances. Stop picking or popping acne pimples because that action can lead to scarring.
- Do not scrub skin. Scrubbing causes irritation and inflammation.
- Wash the face once a day, preferably at night. Don't overwash your face, once a night is enough unless you do an activity where you sweat. Use a gentle cleanser that won't disrupt the skin barrier and apply recommended moisturizer.
- Use soaps and creams gentle to the skin and apply recommended moisturizers to the face.
- Avoid the inclination to put hands or fingers to the face.

"And if an acne breakout becomes serious enough, is concerning, or affects your self-esteem and self-confidence, contact a dermatologist immediately for evaluation and care," Dr. Fishman advises.

Cybele Fishman MD, is a board-certified dermatologist and clinical assistant professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Dermatology, with advanced training in melanoma and pigmented lesions. She specializes in a variety of skin disorders, including acne.

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Melissa Chefec
MCPR, LLC

+1 203-968-6625

melissa@mcprpublicrelations.com

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