

STEP 1 Eat smarter

YOUR 7 DAY LIVE LONGER DIET



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Good Housekeeping
HEALTH WATCH

Certain foods are better than Botox at helping prevent the visible signs of ageing – not to mention fighting disease. Try nutritionist Anita Bean's ultimate youth boosting plan

The food key to eternal youth seems to be a Mediterranean-style diet rich in fruit, vegetables and oily fish. There's convincing evidence it lowers the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes, and may protect against some cancers and dementia.

Then there are the beauty benefits. A large Australian study found those whose diets were rich in fruit, veg, nuts, beans, lentils and wholegrain bread had fewer wrinkles than those who feasted on fatty and sugary foods.

So which foods have the greatest anti-ageing power? According to scientists at the US National Institute on Aging, those with the highest ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) score – or antioxidant power – are more likely to keep you looking youthful. Beans, lentils, green leafy vegetables, fruit that's red, orange-yellow or blue-purple, and dried fruit rank highest.

TOP 10 ANTI-AGEING FOODS

1 ORANGES Like clementines, kiwi fruit, peppers and broccoli, oranges are rich in vitamin C, which may protect against ageing by mopping up damaging free radicals. A British study of 4,025 women aged 40 to 74 found vitamin C-rich foods reduced the risk of wrinkles by 36%.

2 NUTS Most are a good source of selenium, a potent antioxidant that reduces signs of ageing. Brazil nuts contain most – just two or three will provide your daily needs.

3 SPINACH Green leafy veg such as spinach, rocket and watercress have high levels of lutein, which helps prevent age-related eye conditions – and may reduce wrinkles, too.

4 BLUEBERRIES These have the highest ORAC score of all, so are good at preventing cellular damage. Like strawberries, raspberries, plums and blackberries they're also packed with anthocyanins, which protect against heart disease and cancer.

5 CHICKPEAS Beans and lentils rank high on the ORAC scale, and may also help prevent certain cancers due to their high content of phytoates and phytoestrogens.

6 YOGURT One (150g) pot delivers a third of your daily calcium needs (cheese, milk and almonds are also good sources). A healthy calcium intake (with vitamin D and weight-bearing exercise) helps

maintain bone strength and prevent osteoporosis.

7 TOMATOES The lycopene in tomatoes, tomato paste and sauce can help protect against wrinkles. University researchers in Manchester and Newcastle found that adding 5tbsp of tomato paste to your diet boosts skin's levels of pro-collagen (which keeps skin firm) and improves its ability to protect against UV rays by 33%.

8 OATS These contain a soluble fibre called betaglucan that mops up cholesterol precursors and whisks them out of the body. Eaten daily, oats can help lower cholesterol and prevent blood vessels furring up.

They're also a source of silicic acid, needed to make the spongy cells that lie between skin's collagen and elastin and which help reduce the appearance of lines and wrinkles.

9 OILY FISH Salmon, sardines and mackerel are stocked with omega-3 fatty acids, which help lower blood cholesterol and lower your chances of a heart attack or stroke. They may also help prevent memory loss and alleviate inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, as well as reducing your number of wrinkles, according to a British study.

10 OLIVE OIL People who regularly use olive oil for cooking or dressing

were 41% less likely to have a stroke, according to a French study of more than 70,000 over-65s. It's protective effect is thought to be due to its high levels of monounsaturates.

THREE TO AVOID

1 SUGAR Each 50g increase in your carbohydrate intake (the amount in two 250ml soft drinks) increases your risk of wrinkles by 28%, according to a British study. The link may be molecules made from sugars and proteins that attack collagen as well as elastin, the fibres in the skin that keeps it smooth, elastic and youthful.

2 SATURATED FAT In a large-scale dietary study, more skin wrinkling in the elderly was associated with higher intakes of meat (especially fatty processed meats such as sausages and burgers), butter, hard fats and full-fat dairy products.

3 ALCOHOL It dilates small blood vessels and increasing blood flow near the skin's surface. Over time, these blood vessels can become permanently damaged, creating a flushed appearance and broken vessels on the skin's surface. Alcohol-induced dehydration also makes skin more prone to fine lines and wrinkles.

WHAT TO EAT THIS WEEK

Day	Breakfast	Snack	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
1	Porridge made with milk, topped with sliced banana, blueberries and a few chopped almonds	Raw veggies with houmous	3 chicken or turkey slices with grated carrot and baby spinach, drizzled with olive oil dressing, and a small baked sweet potato	Small handful** of walnuts, Brazils and cashews	Salmon Fish Cakes with Mango Salsa* and wholegrain rice. Dessert: ½ mango
2	A 125g pot plain yogurt with honey, strawberries and a tablespoon of chopped nuts	2-3 oatcakes with a little peanut butter	Watercress, spinach and rocket salad with a salmon fillet and ½ avocado; 1 slice oatmeal bread (such as Hovis or Hearty Oats)	An orange	Chicken leg; a baked potato and roasted vegetables such as courgettes, peppers, onions, aubergines, tomatoes cooked in 1tbsp olive oil and garlic. Dessert: Apple and Blackberry Oat Crunch*
3	Muesli with milk, low fat yogurt and a grated apple	Small handful** almonds and raisins	Greek salad (chopped tomatoes, cucumber, 25g feta and 1tbsp olives with a drizzle of olive oil dressing) plus 1 wholewheat pitta	Clementine; slice of Cheddar	Roast Mackerel and Simple Veg*, served with wholegrain rice
4	Fruit smoothie (50g blueberries, 50g raspberries, 1 small banana, 125ml orange juice and a cupful of crushed ice)	Granola bar (such as Nature Valley)	Tomato and basil soup with 1 wholegrain roll; 125g pot yogurt	Small handful** pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds and dried cranberries	Chicken, Bean and Spinach Curry* with wholegrain rice
5	Oatbix with skimmed milk, plus 2tsp mixed seeds and 1 orange	Small handful** dried apricots, prunes and figs	4 falafels (such as Cauldron) with spinach, rocket and watercress salad, drizzle of olive oil dressing, ½ avocado, cherry tomatoes and 1 wholewheat pitta	2 squares (25g) plain chocolate (70% cocoa)	Vegetable Pasta*. Dessert: fresh fruit served with sorbet
6	About 4tbsp granola with milk, a banana, and a few chopped apricots	A cup of hot cocoa	Pepper and Lentil soup* with 2 or 3 oatcakes, a 125g pot Greek yogurt	A kiwi fruit and red grapes	Pan-fried tuna with spinach and a baked potato. Dessert: ½ cantaloupe melon
7	Oatmeal toast (such as Hovis or Hearty Oats) with honey; plus an orange	Small handful** pecans, chopped dates and pumpkin seeds	Wholewheat wrap with 3 slices turkey, tomato, rocket, ½ avocado and a little light mayonnaise	½ mango and raspberries	Turkey, Broccoli and Lemon Stir-Fry* with wholewheat noodles. Dessert: Oaty Plum and Walnut Crumble*

*Approx 25g-40g
**See goodhousekeeping.co.uk for recipes

DRINK YOURSELF YOUNG!

GREEN TEA In a Chinese study, people who drank three or more cups of green tea daily were biologically five years younger than those who drank less than a cup a day.
COCOA A cup of cocoa every day may help maintain brain health, according to US research. This is thought to be due to the naturally high levels of antioxidants it contains, known as flavanols.
ORDINARY TEA Drinking 3 cups a day can reduce the risk of heart disease by 11% and lessen the build up of plaque in the arteries, thanks to its high levels of flavanoids, according to an Australian study.

