

NATURAL BEAUTY

With their 6 grams of energizing protein, 4 grams of hunger-fighting fiber and nutrients including magnesium and vitamin E, it's no wonder that almonds are known for being one of the healthiest snacks around. **Did you know that almonds could be one of the tastiest steps in your skincare routine, too?**



ALMONDS: A BOOST FOR YOUR BEAUTY ROUTINE

Several key nutrients found in almonds are linked to skin health, making them a delicious addition to daily beauty regimens:

- Almonds are rich in antioxidant **vitamin E**, which may help protect cells from the damaging effects of free radicals caused by pollution, UV rays from the sun, cigarette smoke and other environmental and intrinsic factors. One serving of 23 almonds (about an ounce) provides 50% of your daily recommended vitamin E needs.
- You'll find 8% of the Daily Value for **zinc**. Zinc contributes to the integrity of healthy skin.
- Two B vitamins contribute to the maintenance of normal skin. Almonds offer 25% of the Daily Value for **riboflavin** and 6% of the Daily Value for **niacin**.
- Almonds are a good source of **copper**, which plays a role in skin and hair pigmentation.
- **Linoleic acid**, an essential fatty acid, helps prevent skin dryness. A one-ounce serving of almonds has 3.5 grams of linoleic acid.



The influence of food choices on skin health and appearance continues to be a growing field. Our findings emphasize the need to look at almonds as a whole food with multiple nutrient components, rather than oversimplifying potential benefits due to one nutrient.

- Dr. Raja Sivamani, dermatology researcher



SKIN-DEEP FINDINGS

Researchers at the University of California, Davis, investigated the effects of daily almond eating on facial wrinkles and skin pigmentation.

Forty-nine healthy postmenopausal women with Fitzpatrick skin types I or II (the skin types most susceptible to sunburn) completed this six-month study. The women were randomly assigned to one of two groups:

- The intervention group, which ate almonds as a snack, accounting for 20% of total daily calorie intake, or 340 calories per day on average (about 2 one-ounce servings).
- The control group, which ate a nut-free snack that also accounted for 20% of calories: a fig bar, granola bar or pretzels.

Aside from these snacks, study participants ate their regular diets and did not eat any nuts or nut-containing products.

Skin assessments were made at the start of the study and at 8 weeks, 16 weeks and 24 weeks. At each of these visits, facial wrinkles and facial pigment intensity were assessed using high-resolution facial imaging and validated 3-D facial modeling and measurement. Skin hydration, transepidermal water loss (TEWL) and sebum excretion were also assessed. **Researchers found significant reductions in wrinkle severity and in overall facial pigment intensity in the group consuming almonds:**

- Wrinkle severity decreased by 15% at week 16 and by 16% at the end of the study.
- Overall facial pigment intensity decreased by 20% at week 16 and remained so at week 24.

Transepidermal water loss, skin hydration and sebum excretion were measured on the forehead and cheeks in both groups during the study:

- There were no changes in transepidermal water loss at any time point among the almond and control groups.
- At the end of the study, there were increases in skin hydration among both groups.
- Looking at sebum excretion, both groups showed a significant increase on the cheeks, but only those in the control group showed a significant increase in the forehead excretion rate.

There are a few limitations of the study to note: results do not provide insight into durations of eating almonds longer than 24 weeks. Additionally, the study participants were postmenopausal women with sun-sensitive Fitzpatrick skin types I and II, so results cannot be generalized to younger, male or higher Fitzpatrick skin type populations. And, although the snacks in both groups were calorie matched, they were not macronutrient matched.

Source: Rybak I, Carrington AE, Dhaliwal S, Hasan A, Wu H, Burney W, Maloh J, Sivamani RK. Prospective Randomized Controlled Trial on the Effects of Almonds on Facial Wrinkles and Pigmentation. *Nutrients*. 2021; 13(3):785. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nut13030785>