

## Should You Be Using Omegas on Your Face?



by NATASHA BURTON



We all know that eating foods rich in omega-3s can reduce inflammation in our bodies and support healthy blood flow, but these fatty acids are now becoming an increasingly popular beauty ingredient. To find out what they can do for your skin, we chatted with board certified cosmetic surgeon Dr. Yael Halaas MD, FACS, who specializes in facial plastics and has heavily researched topical facial treatments in order to pass the on information to her clients.

### **Beauty High: What are the benefits of using omega-3s?**

**Dr. Yael Halaas:** Fatty acids — omega-3 and -6 in particular — decrease skin inflammation, help with maintaining a healthy skin moisture barrier and play a role in getting rid of unhealthy cells.

On a deeper level, fatty acids are showing promise as safe supplemental treatments for many skin disorders, like atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, acne vulgaris, systemic lupus erythematosus, nonmelanoma skin cancer and melanoma. They help maintain the stratum corneum (the outer layer of our skin), formation and secretion of lamellar bodies (which help promote skin barrier function), inhibition of proinflammatory eicosanoids (the hormones that cause inflammation), aid with wound healing and help kill malignant cells, including melanoma.

### **On which skin types do fatty acids work best?**

All skin types can benefit from omegas, but because of the moisture protection qualities, they're particularly helpful for dry skin.

### **Are there people who should avoid using omegas?**

Omeegas should be well tolerated by most people — even those with oily or acne-prone skin — but because they can cause an increased risk of bleeding, people who take blood-thinning medications (like aspirin) or have bleeding disorders should not take extra omega-3 fatty acids.

### **How should topical use of omegas change with age?**

Often, women experience increased dryness as they age. So, generally, using moisture-rich products can be helpful though it really depends on the individual skin type. In addition to omegas, Retin A is an extremely useful ingredient that helps combat the aging process.

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