# Dietitian warns some popular summer foods may accelerate skin ageing



Dietitian Michelle Slowey is shedding light on the surprising skin-damaging effects of some foods typically viewed as healthy, particularly those popular during the summer months. According to Slowey, while summer ushers in an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables, certain seemingly nutritious snacks—often staples at outdoor gatherings—might contribute to inflammation, puffiness, and even breakouts, ultimately accelerating the skin’s ageing process.

Recent research underscores a widespread issue, with a study revealing that more than half of individuals diagnosed with acne vulgaris reported worsened skin condition during summer. Of the 452 participants surveyed, 56.33% indicated that their acne symptoms intensified with the change of seasons, compared to just 11.35% who noted a deterioration in winter. These figures, reported by Surrey Live, highlight a critical need to reconsider dietary choices in the warmer months, as various foods might be exacerbating skin issues rather than alleviating them.

One particular food that Slowey cautions against is corn. While it is often perceived as a wholesome vegetable, she notes that in nutritional terms, corn is more accurately classified as a starch. It can break down quickly into glucose, leading to blood sugar spikes when not accompanied by protein or healthy fats. This spike can trigger systemic inflammation, which may manifest visibly on the skin as redness and dullness. “That kind of spike often leads to systemic inflammation, which can manifest on your face as redness, puffiness, or dullness,” Slowey explains. Her advice is not to eliminate corn entirely but to consume it mindfully and in appropriate combinations.

Conversely, other health sources highlight the benefits of summer crops such as blueberries and strawberries, known for their high levels of anthocyanins, which can support cardiovascular health and improve blood vessel flexibility. Additionally, corn does contain beneficial compounds like lutein and zeaxanthin, which may protect eye health by filtering harmful rays and reducing the risk of cataracts. This duality in nutritional value underscores the complexity of summer dietary choices, suggesting that while some foods may pose risks, others distinctly benefit overall health.

In considering the balance of foods that can protect or harm the skin, certain items like watermelon and tomatoes emerge as protective allies against sun damage. Wealthy in lycopene, these foods not only provide hydration but also serve as powerful antioxidants that may mitigate the effects of UV exposure. Experts from various health publications advocate for their inclusion in summertime diets, emphasising their role in nourishing skin and preventing premature ageing. Nuts and seeds, praised for their omega-3 fatty acids, also feature prominently, offering anti-inflammatory properties that can aid in skin recovery and overall health.

As the discourse around nutrition and skin health evolves, it becomes increasingly vital for individuals to critically evaluate the impact of their dietary choices. By being aware of the potential drawbacks of seemingly healthy summer staples while also recognising the benefits of other foods, individuals can make informed decisions that support both their skin health and overall well-being.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2063522/4-healthy-foods-sabotaging-us-disguise), [[4]](https://www.redbookmag.com/beauty/makeup-skincare/advice/g1776/good-skin-foods/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2063522/4-healthy-foods-sabotaging-us-disguise), [[2]](https://www.cnn.com/2014/08/15/health/healthy-summer-foods/index.html), [[5]](https://www.acquablumedicalspa.com/blog/7-foods-eat-protect-skin-sun-damage/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.healthline.com/health/food-nutrition/foods-reverse-sun-damage-skin-protection), [[6]](https://riordanclinic.org/2024/07/dietary-interventions-to-support-skin-health-recommendations-beyond-sunscreen/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.cnn.com/2014/08/15/health/healthy-summer-foods/index.html), [[7]](https://www.rebootwithjoe.com/foods-that-help-to-protect-against-sun-damage/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2063522/4-healthy-foods-sabotaging-us-disguise> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.cnn.com/2014/08/15/health/healthy-summer-foods/index.html> - This article from CNN highlights several summer foods beneficial for health, including blueberries and strawberries, which are rich in anthocyanins that may reduce blood pressure and keep blood vessels flexible. The piece also discusses the benefits of sweet corn, noting that it contains lutein and zeaxanthin, compounds that act like internal sunglasses, filtering harmful rays and protecting the eyes from free radical damage that can cause cataracts. The article provides insights into the nutritional value of these foods and their role in promoting overall health.
3. <https://www.healthline.com/health/food-nutrition/foods-reverse-sun-damage-skin-protection> - Healthline's article discusses foods that can help repair and protect skin from sun damage. It highlights watermelon, which contains lycopene, an antioxidant that absorbs both UVA and UVB radiation, potentially acting as a natural sunblock. The piece also mentions nuts and seeds, rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which have anti-inflammatory properties that can help repair sun damage and may protect against certain types of skin cancer. The article emphasizes the importance of incorporating these foods into the diet for skin health.
4. <https://www.redbookmag.com/beauty/makeup-skincare/advice/g1776/good-skin-foods/> - Redbook's article focuses on spring and summer superfoods that benefit skin health. It discusses tomatoes, noting that their lycopene content can offer extra protection against UV damage. The piece also covers yellow corn, rich in beta-carotene, which helps protect skin against sun damage. Additionally, it highlights watermelon, which is hydrating and contains lycopene, and kale, rich in carotenoids that can give skin a healthy glow. The article provides insights into how these foods contribute to skin health during the warmer months.
5. <https://www.acquablumedicalspa.com/blog/7-foods-eat-protect-skin-sun-damage/> - Acqua Blu Medical Spa's blog post lists seven foods that can protect skin from sun damage. It mentions tomatoes, which contain lycopene known for its antioxidant and anticancer properties, and carrots, rich in beta-carotene that can protect skin from sun damage. The article also highlights sweet potatoes, which contain beta-carotene and vitamins C and E, promoting collagen production and improving skin texture. Additionally, it discusses red, orange, and yellow peppers, which are high in beta-carotene and can help protect skin from sun damage.
6. <https://riordanclinic.org/2024/07/dietary-interventions-to-support-skin-health-recommendations-beyond-sunscreen/> - Riordan Clinic's article discusses dietary interventions to support skin health beyond sunscreen. It highlights lycopene, a red-pigmented antioxidant found in tomatoes and watermelon, which may help protect skin against sun damage. The piece also covers vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant found in oranges, lemons, limes, strawberries, raspberries, leafy greens, broccoli, and bell peppers, which supports collagen formation and skin health. Additionally, it mentions vitamin E, found in almonds and other nuts, sunflower and other seeds, spinach, soybeans, and wheat germ, which helps protect skin by preventing damage from free radicals.
7. <https://www.rebootwithjoe.com/foods-that-help-to-protect-against-sun-damage/> - Joe Cross's article lists foods that help protect against sun damage. It mentions tomatoes, particularly cooked or stewed, which contain lycopene offering long-term protection against UV radiation and sunburn. The piece also discusses carrots, which may help protect against sun damage due to their beta-carotene content. Additionally, it highlights sweet potatoes, which are a good source of beta-carotene and ellagic acid, a nutrient that can prevent tumor growth. The article emphasizes the importance of incorporating these foods into the diet for skin health.