

# SkinHealth

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MAGAZINE

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# DRINK UP

Is Water The Secret to Clear, Glowing Skin?

By Shari Shallard

Earlier this year, *New Scientist* magazine ran an article called “Good Hydration: Do I Need 8 Glasses of Water a Day?” Of course, we took notice. The drink-eight-glasses-of-water-a-day mantra is pretty much ingrained in our DNA.

**W**e see strong, beautiful celebrities touting its benefits all the time. Cameron Diaz says she starts each morning with water because it turns her “from being a wilted plant to one that has been rejuvenated by the rain.” Beyoncé told *Vogue* that she drinks at least a gallon — with lemon — a day. Jennifer Aniston claims she drinks 100 ounces of Smartwater daily. (Okay, Aniston is a paid ambassador of the Smartwater brand; but we believe her anyway.)

Yet the *New Scientist* piece questioned some of the conventional wisdom around water, claiming that those eight glasses are an arbitrary measurement and that water doesn't actually improve the complexion in any visible way. Wait, what? We'll buy the “eight is a random number” theory, but the latter suggestion — that water doesn't improve our skin — just felt wrong. So we turned to a married pair of skin experts to hear the truth for ourselves.

Doctors Kristina and Gary Goldenberg are the husband and wife team behind Goldenberg Dermatology, based just off Madison Avenue in New York City. As board certified dermatologists, the Goldenbergs provide compre-

hensive dermatological care in medical and cosmetic dermatology, including everything from performing fillers and laser surgery to treating acne, rosacea and skin cancer. While they believe some water is good, more water isn't necessarily better. “Although drinking water is important for the overall health of the skin,” says Dr Kristina Goldenberg, “there is little evidence that extra water intake improves the appearance or texture of the skin.”

But, Kristina cautions, insufficient water will take its toll. “This has manifestations not only in the proper functioning of our bodies but also on the appearance of the skin,” she says. “Dehydrated skin feels dull, fine, itchy and less supple — and fine lines become a lot more apparent.”

Dr Gary Goldenberg feels many people wrongly rely on water as a cure-all. “There's a belief that if your skin is dry, you simply need to drink more water,” he says. In reality, though, “skin hydration is related not only to having internal hydration, but also to hydrating your skin by applying moisturisers and avoiding harsh chemicals.”

Kristina agrees. “I don't recommend over-hydration,” she says. “It is more important to

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hydrate the skin topically with a good moisturiser and with skincare products containing Hyaluronic Acid and antioxidants.”

Gary follows a rather specific routine for hydration, beginning with his first glass of the day. “Every morning starts with a tall glass of room temperature water with a half-to-whole lemon squeezed in,” he says. “This has been shown to alkalise your body.”

The alkaline state, he explains, helps decrease acidity in the body. “An alkaline state has been associated with an anti-inflammatory state,” Gary says, “and helps with acne, rosacea, eczema and psoriasis.”

All of the water Gary drinks through the day — which includes another glass before leaving the apartment for work, at least a litre throughout the day, and a couple more glasses at night — is at room temperature. “I only drink room

temperature water,” he says, because “it takes your body less energy to absorb.”

Whatever routine a person chooses, Kristina says, drinking enough water to quench thirst is generally enough. And while she echoes the popular recommendation of six-to-eight glasses each day, she says it's important to remember that each person's needs vary daily; we

should adjust our water intake based on our activity level and the temperature outside.

If you have been following the mantras rather than the science, you might not be getting the skin results you desire. “The good news is,” says Kristina, “this is easily reversible with proper hydration.” So, drink the water your body says it wants. But remember that much of the hydration your skin needs can only be found in your skincare drawer.

Hydrate the skin topically with a good moisturiser