

Transcript

LISA: I'm Lisa Birnbach for howdini.com. We all know the best way to prevent wrinkles is to stay out of the sun, but it's not the only way. There are preventive steps we all can take starting at an early age to fight wrinkles. Dermatologist Dr. Nicholas V. Perricone whose latest book is called Ageless Face, Ageless Mind is joins me know to talk about what works and what doesn't. Thank you for being here Dr. Perricone.

DR. PERRICONE: Thank you.

LISA: What causes the skin to wrinkle?

DR. PERRICONE: Well skin wrinkles because of a very low grade, invisible inflammation. And that inflammation is created by things that we do everyday: eating the wrong foods, emotional stress, excessive sunlight, air pollution. We even guess that video display units cause inflammation in the skin, and a latest study shows that even gravity pulling on the skin creates inflammation. But inflammation goes on everyday in our skin, and therefore we want to control it. So the first and most important therapeutic intervention we can do is an anti-inflammatory diet. It's foods that actually prevent inflammation systemically inside you and therefore they affect the skin in a positive way. And we start you off on what I call a three day "facelift in a fridge." It's a couple of servings of salmon per day, fresh fruits and vegetables and stay away from fast things like sugars and carbohydrates that are fast, but not good carbohydrates which we need everyday. That's the step number one. Step number two is that there are certain nutritional supplements that we can take, they're usually in pill form, that have powerful anti-inflammatory activity like alpha lipoic acid, which you've probably never heard of. Astaxanthin, DMAE, Vitamin C ester: these are powerful anti-inflammatories and that's an extra layer of protection against inflammation. And then, of course, the third layer (I'm a dermatologist and I spent twenty-five years researching this) putting topical creams or lotions directly on the skin that have anti-inflammatory activity, and also the ability to penetrate the skin to bring that anti-inflammatory activity to the cells. So it's actually a simple process and it may sound complicated, but it's not. It's eating lots of good healthy fresh food everyday, taking your nutritional supplements, applying a couple of good topicals, and then reducing stress. Those are the strategies...

LISA: Here's a crazy question: genetics must enter into wrinkling...if your mom or dad or grandpa wrinkled a certain way, aren't you likely to inherit that pattern?

DR. PERRICONE: Genetics is only about forty percent of the equation, and the rest is up to you. My patients love to use their ticket called genetics to excuse themselves from changing their habits. Okay, so, let's make it clear. You can have absolutely beautiful skin if you do the right thing, and the right thing is not difficult to do. So, you know, genetics covers everything. If you have an increased risk of heart disease in your family, then certainly you want to follow the anti-inflammatory diet because we know that inflammation causes heart disease.

LISA: Mm-hmm.

DR. PERRICONE: And all of the other age-related diseases are mediated by inflammation, so this is important. Genetics, important, know your genetics because then you can do the preventative thing.

LISA: Mm-hmm. What about repetitive motion? I smile a lot, despite my miserable life--

DR. PERRICONE: [Laughs]

LISA: --wouldn't that increase wrinkling around my eyes?

DR. PERRICONE: Well certainly, smiling, moving the face a lot does cause folds and wrinkles, but also exercises those muscles. What really makes you look young is not the lines and wrinkles, it's the loss of the muscle mass and the fat that gives you convexities.

LISA: Mm-hmm.

DR. PERRICONE: Because, you've, we've all seen famous people who've had several plastic surgery procedures that don't have a line or wrinkle on their face, but they don't look young and they don't look like they're from this planet.

LISA: [Laughs]

DR. PERRICONE: So, I also have patients who are twenty-five or twenty-six or twenty-seven who are blonde-haired, blue-eyed and have lines and wrinkles, but they still look twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven because of those convexities.

LISA: Mm-hmm.

DR. PERRICONE: So how do we maintain those convexities? Good food. Protein nourishes muscles, exercise, getting enough sleep. Using DMAE topically increases tone. Electric stimulation to face can increase tone. And stay away from those things that can decrease tone. Poor diet, stress, injections that paralyze muscles. Very bad.

LISA: Now finally, a lot of us learned bad habits when we were younger. Can we arrest them, halt them? Is there anything we can do, or are we, are we sort of cursed by our earlier habits-- sunbathing and so on.

DR. PERRICONE: Um, a couple of things. First of all, you can start this program at any time. I've had patients come in my office in their eighties start the three care anti-inflammatory program, the anti-inflammatory diet, nutritional supplements, as well as topicals, as well as life style changes and they benefit. It's never too late. Habits are habits and we have to learn how to break those habits by repetition. Secondly, there's an absolute obsession about not getting any sunlight because the dermatologist, and I'm guilty, know that sunlight equals aging. Just five minutes in the sun starts the inflammatory process. However, with that being said, we do need some sun exposure unprotected by sunscreen.

LISA: Well, are we supposed to put sunscreen on before we go about our day even if we live in a city?

DR. PERRICONE: Well, that's the common thing dermatologists will tell you.

LISA: Right.

DR. PERRICONE: As far as you do need to get ten or fifteen minutes of sun without sunscreen, without covering, to get your vitamin D on a daily basis, and you can't get that same impact from dietary vitamin D. I think those studies show that. So there may be a lot of controversy about what I'm saying, but I'm not giving you a ticket to go sit in the sun for hours. That's crazy too. You're going to get skin cancer, you're going to get wrinkled.

LISA: Thank you so much Dr. Perricone--

DR. PERRICONE: My pleasure.

LISA: --for being here. For howdini.com I'm Lisa Birnbach.