

Prevention

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Photo by RBOZUK/Getty Images

You know your beloved [java boosts your mood](#), but this antioxidant-packed multitasker can also help improve your hair, skin, and more. Check out these pretty perks of your morning brew (and just be sure to stick to the recommended limit of 400 mg of caffeine per day to avoid dehydrating yourself).

1. Brighten your face

When it comes to antioxidants, [Julia Hunter, MD](#), a dermatologist at Wholistic Dermatology in Beverly Hills, CA, believes in doubling up. "Drinking coffee is one piece of the puzzle; another is putting it on the surface of your skin," she says. A coffee facial scrub can help brighten skin, prevent clogged pores, and soften lines. The acid in coffee gives you some chemical exfoliation on top of mechanical exfoliation, says Hunter. It also helps bolster skin's protective barrier. "That's what keeps you healthy when bacteria, viruses, and fungi are landing on your skin 24/7," she says. To make the coffee scrub:

In a bowl, soak coffee grounds in warm, filtered water (coffee grounds will sink to the bottom of the bowl), and add epsom salts. Rinse your face with the water from the bowl, then scoop up the grounds to gently scrub skin. Finish by rinsing with more of the water from the bowl.

2. Boost your hair color



Photo by Tisha Snaps/Getty Images

Maybe you've heard of the DIY hair-brightening trick favored by blondes: washing hair in chamomile tea or champagne. Well, if you're a brunette, consider using espresso. "Coffee grounds mixed with water into a paste and applied to damp, freshly shampooed hair will add some depth to your color," says Doug Macintosh, hair colorist at Louise O'Connor Salon in New York City. "The acidity of the coffee will also smooth the cuticle of the hair, giving it extra shine."

3. Help ward off skin cancer

According to the results of a 2011 study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, you may someday slather coffee on your burn-prone parts to protect your skin from sun damage. Researchers found that topically applied caffeine helped protect against some skin cancers at the molecular level by inhibiting a protein enzyme in skin. In the meantime, protect yourself from [melanoma](#) by reducing sun and UV exposure," says Erikka Loftfield, study coauthor and doctoral student at the Yale School of Public Health.



4. De-puff tired eyes

Any eye cream that promises to unpack your under-eye bags or lighten up dark circles probably contains caffeine. "If you put coffee on the skin's surface, it dehydrates and constricts blood vessels," says Hunter. "The area under your eyes is a lymphatic channel that drains poorly, and caffeine helps remove water from the system." As for dark circles, she says, "As we age, under-eye skin gets thinner, making it easier to see the blood vessels. The vessel-constricting effect of coffee could temporarily

help—expect to see results for 30 minutes to an hour."

MORE: [9 Tips For Younger Looking Eyes](#)

5. Reset your olfactory nerves



Photo by John Shepherd/Getty Images

Trying to choose from among several perfumes? Give coffee beans a quick sniff in between. Smelling coffee between spritzes of eau de cologne and the like helps prevent nose fatigue, according to research by University of California, Berkeley neuroscientist Noam Sobel. In other words, it serves as a sort of palate-cleanser or reset button (that's why you often see beans at the fragrance counter of fancy department stores).

6. Exfoliate

If you find coffee at the spa, it's most likely in a body treatment. "The BodyCoffee Vichy Scrub is one of our most popular exfoliating scrubs," says Karen Sevene, body therapies director at the Cal-a-Vie Health Spa in Vista, CA. The treatment mixes coffee extract with Dead Sea salt and energizing essential oils for a sloughing ritual that, she says, targets cellulite and rough skin. For similar results at home, try BodyCoffee Invigorating Body Polish (\$38 for 16 oz, bodycoffeestore.com), made with ground arabica beans, Dead Sea salt, moisturizing jojoba oil, and invigorating mint and rosemary oils. Or, make your own with this recipe from the Mohonk Mountain House Spa in New York: Mix ½ c sugar (or ½ c epsom salt for a more vigorous scrub), 1 c cooled coffee grounds, 1½ Tbsp jojoba oil, and tea leaves from 2 green tea bags. Gently rub the mixture onto your body in a circular motion before stepping into the shower. After your shower, pat skin dry and apply moisturizer.

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