

# Prevention

## Surprising Beauty Uses For Tea

By Maria Ricapito May 5, 2015



Who knew? The world's most popular beverage (after water), is also a beauty MVP, thanks to age-fighting perks like antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, says Julia T. Hunter, MD, a dermatologist and founder of Wholistic Dermatology in Beverly Hills. Harness the brew's youth-enhancing benefits, and you'll see everything from a more even complexion to no more under-eyes bags.

### **1. Fight skin cancer.**

Thanks to its polyphenols, there's evidence that sipping green tea can enhance DNA repair, which in turn fights non-melanoma skin cancers caused by exposure to UV rays, according to a study published in the *Archives of Biochemistry and Biophysics*.

### **2. Smooth skin.**

If your lotion isn't steeped in tea, you could be missing out on major moisture. In a *Dermatologic Therapy* study, volunteers who applied a lotion that contained a 6% concentration of green tea leaf extract to just one arm ended up one month later with markedly more hydrated skin on that side, plus more elasticity and less roughness. Try 100% Pure Jasmine Green Tea Moisturizer which lists organic green tea high up on its ingredient roster.

### **3. Tighten under-eye bags**

If you fall victim to a restless night's sleep, tea bags can hide the evidence. Before bed, steep green or black tea bags in hot water for a few minutes before popping them in the fridge. The next morning, place the chilled pouches on your eyes for about 5 minutes and let them work their magic: Blood vessel-constricting caffeine reduces puffiness (and the bags' cool temp compounds the fluid-reducing effect), while the inflammation-calming polyphenol EGCG helps smooth the under-eye area.

### **4. Even tone.**

Kombucha tea (a fermented beverage made by adding a yeast-and-bacteria starter to sugar and black tea) improved skin's moisture retention and elasticity and left women with more even tone and texture in a 2012 study.

### **5. Heal sunburns.**

If sun exposure has you feeling the burn, harness tea's soothing properties to feel better fast. Hunter recommends dropping at least a dozen green tea bags in cool-as-you-can-stand-it bathwater and immediately sliding in until skin feels calmer. "Green tea helps reduce inflammation in very inflamed skin," she says. She suggests opting for organic green tea, like Bigelow Organic Green Tea because "it's grown with fewer chemicals, which is important if you're soaking in it."

### **6. Revive dull hair color.**

If your color begins to look drab between appointments, use tea to brighten its hue. Tea is mildly acidic, and it becomes even more so the longer it's brewed. "