

# Skin Guide

I struggled with my skin for years – acne, hives, rashes, itching, dryness, sensitivity, and more. I finally figured out the keys to getting along with my skin, and it primarily came down to: (1) gut health and (2) what I was putting on my body. I now rarely experience skin troubles – and when I do, I know what I need to do to fix it! My skin has never looked or felt healthier than it does now!

## Gut Health

In my experience, skin issues are generally connected to, if not directly caused by, gut issues. Addressing gut issues, however, is not an overnight process; it requires patience and, sometimes, a team of compassionate, thoughtful medical professionals. You may want to consider working with a gastroenterologist and/or dietician specializing in gut health to identify potential underlying issues, such as Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO), Small Intestinal Fungal Overgrowth (SIFO), hormonal issues, thyroid issues, etc. Check out the [provider directory](#) to find help!

### Nutrition

Nutrition plays an enormous role in gut health. Eating in a way that nourishes my microbiome has been one of the most important factors in improving my overall gut health – and skin health. I don't believe there is one "perfect" diet, and I don't believe everyone should eat identically. It's important to listen to your body, and do what feels right for your body, right now. Your body's needs may shift over time, and it's important to allow your diet to evolve as you do.

All of that said, I strongly believe there are some foundational elements to a healthy diet that anyone would benefit from incorporating:

- Consume a rainbow of vegetables and fruits and make sure you're consuming enough high quality protein for your needs (and your needs will vary depending on gender, size, activity, etc).
- Only eat food that your grandparents would identify as food.
- Avoid eating food about which your grandparents would say "what's that?!"

I share my tips and tricks for eating a nourishing diet [here](#).

### Hydration

Being adequately hydrated is essential for good gut health. I ensure I stay hydrated by:

- Drinking high quality water. We installed a whole-house filter with a reverse osmosis system in the kitchen. We also drink pure spring water when we have access to it.
- Adding trace mineral drops to my reverse osmosis water.
- Eating hydrating foods.

### Digestion

If you're not digesting your food well, your gut health is going to suffer. Digestive issues stemming from Gastroparesis, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, and Mast Cell Activation Syndrome burdened me for years – and it showed on my bloated belly and on my skin.

Thanks to neuro performance training, I no longer suffer from any digestive symptoms. NONE! I share lots of details about my experience with neuro performance training on my [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#) because this training approach has truly changed my life. And it's been changing the lives of everyone I introduce it to! If you want to find a neuro performance trainer to work with, check out [Z-Health Performance trainer directory](#) (I recommend working with a "master" trainer if you can find one. I work with my trainer virtually and in-person).

More digestion-related tips [here](#)!

## **Lymphatic System**

I struggled with swollen lymph nodes for most of my life, along with my digestive issues. Eventually, I noticed a correlation between worsening of my lymph swelling along with worsening of my digestion and vice versa. For years, I tried various at-home lymphatic drainage techniques (valuable resources include [Lisa Leavitt Gainsley](#) and [Dr. Perry Nicklestone's "Big 6 Technique"](#)). These approaches helped a teensy bit - and while every little bit counts, I didn't start making major lymphatic - and then digestive - progress until I began neuro performance training. The neuro performance aspect upgraded my lymphatic health by getting my entire body and brain working properly; for me, getting my shoulder mobility working properly unlocked my stuck lymphatics in a way I hadn't been able to accomplish with "just" the direct lymphatic work.

## **Stress**

Stress plays a major role in gut health by impacting the balance of "good" vs. "bad" bacteria in the gut, speeding up or slowing down gut motility, increasing gut barrier permeability, and more. For most of my life, I lived in a constant state of stress. My nervous system was stuck in sympathetic (fight-flight-freeze), and my gut felt the impact of being in that "YIKES" state all the time.

Shifting my nervous system from being stuck in sympathetic to living more consistently in a parasympathetic (rest-digest-recover) state has been a gamechanger. The key elements that have allowed me to go from YIKES to WEEEE include: medical hypnosis, neuro performance training, moving from the East Coast to the West Coast, leaving cold, temperamental weather behind for beautiful, sunny, calm weather, swapping chaotic city life for calm beachy mountain life, and incorporating various calming lifestyle practices into my routines (i.e., breathwork, meditation, mindfulness, self-compassion, etc.).

Eating when I'm in a stressed state results in digestive challenges - so I don't eat when I'm feeling stressed. I engage in practices that will calm my nervous system down prior to putting any food in my mouth. I'll do a few minutes of gentle, mindful breathing, sometimes a Qi Gong exercise called The Windmill, or I'll meditate. Incorporating mindfulness into my eating experience is also tremendously helpful. More on this [here](#)!

## **Blood Sugar**

Keeping my blood sugar levels stable helps keep my gut happy. I maintain stable blood sugar levels by doing the following:

1. I eat my food in the following order: vegetables → protein and healthy fats → starches
2. I take walks after I eat.

# What I Put On My Skin

One of the most important changes I've made that's drastically improved my skin health has been installing a shower – and now a whole house – filter. I'm allergic to chlorine and sensitive to other chemicals. The water that comes directly into our homes contains a laundry list of chemicals that I was reacting to for years without knowing it. There are lots of options for bathroom (shower and sink) filters that are reasonably priced and that are easy to install – and options for people living in rentals or apartment/condo buildings. We've also been pleasantly surprised to discover that there are reasonably priced whole-house rental or rent-to-buy systems (at least where we live in California).

The second key change was moving away from using products that are filled with chemicals and preservatives and instead using products that are more natural and made with a simpler (shorter) list of ingredients. Doing my best to eliminate coconut and coconut-derived ingredients from my skin and hair products has also been a huge gamechanger (and nearly impossible to do!).

- [The Detox Market](#), [Credo Beauty](#), and [This New Knew](#) are some of my go-to resources for “non-toxic” (which is an unregulated term, and the reason it's important to learn how to read labels) beauty products.
- My favorite brands and products include:
  - [Sangre de Fruta](#)
  - [Marie Veronique](#)
  - [Laurel](#)
  - [Province Apothecary](#)
  - [Eclat Aloe](#)
  - [Paavani](#)
  - [Skin Prophecy](#)
  - [Lerosset clay mask](#)
  - [Egyptian Magic All Purpose Skin Cream](#)

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