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## Green tea and the skin


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Plant extracts have been widely used as topical applications for wound-healing, anti-aging, and disease treatments. Examples of these include ginkgo biloba, echinacea, ginseng, grape seed, green tea, lemon, lavender, rosemary, thuja, sarsaparilla, soy, prickly pear, sagebrush, jojoba, aloe vera, allantoin, feverwort, bloodroot, apache plume, and papaya. These plants share a common character: they all produce flavonoid compounds with phenolic structures. These phytochemicals are highly reactive with other compounds, such as reactive oxygen species and biologic macromolecules, to neutralize free radicals or initiate biological effects. A short list of phenolic phytochemicals with promising properties to benefit human health includes a group of polyphenol compounds, called catechins, found in green tea. This article summarizes the findings of studies using green tea polyphenols as chemopreventive, natural healing, and anti-aging agents for human skin, and discusses possible mechanisms of action.

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