**Things to consider**

Although your first thought of [tomato](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/foods/tomatoes) may be as food, many people use it as part of their skin care routine, claiming its strength in helping the skin on your face by:

* clarifying
* healing
* evening skin tone
* rejuvenating
* reducing oil
* tightening

**What does the research say?**

Tomatoes are considered a healthy food, containing [vitamin C](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/vitamin-c-benefits) and other [antioxidants](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/foods-high-in-antioxidants).

These include:

* [b](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/10-proven-magnesium-benefits)[eta carotene](https://www.healthline.com/health/beta-carotene-benefits)
* lutein
* [lycopene](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/lycopene)
* [magnesium](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/10-proven-magnesium-benefits)
* [potassium](https://www.healthline.com/health/potassium)
* [vitamin A](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/vitamin-a-benefits)
* [vitamins B-1, B-3, B-5, B-6, and B-9](https://www.healthline.com/health/food-nutrition/vitamin-b-complex)

Although anecdotal evidence suggests that tomato is beneficial for your skin via topical application, there’s little clinical evidence to support those claims.

According to a [2012 reviewTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3583891/) published in the journal Dermato-Endocrinology, clinical studies have focused more on consumption than topical application.

**How might tomato benefit your skin?**

Advocates of using tomato on your face suggest that it should be part of your regular cleansing, toning, and moisturizing skin care routine.

Beyond anecdotal evidence, there’s *some*scientific reasoning behind claims that tomato’s ingredients could aid in:

* exfoliation
* fighting cellular damage
* moisturizing
* reducing sunburn risk

**It may aid in exfoliation**

[Exfoliation](https://www.healthline.com/health/beauty-skin-care/meaning-of-exfoliating) is the removal of dead skin cells to improve the health and appearance of facial skin.

Promoters of natural healing suggest that the pectin and flavonoids in tomatoes have cleansing and antioxidant ingredients that can complement skin texture, as indicated in a [2011 study](http://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ac9f/1f8a23b3b64f83173bafce942d307afba3ea.pdf) of herbal exfoliants.

**It may help fight cellular damage**

According to a [2012 articleTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3299230/) published in the journal Dermatology Research and Practice, free radicals can damage skin cells. This can increase your risk for [premature signs of aging](https://www.healthline.com/health/beauty-skin-care/premature-aging).

Advocates of natural healing suggest that the antioxidants in tomatoes — such as vitamin C and lycopene — can help fight free radicals. There is, however, no clinical evidence that the topical application of tomato provides these antioxidants for your skin.

**It may have a moisturizing effect**

There are both commercial treatments and traditional remedies for treating the itching, flaking, and cracking of dry skin.

According to a [2012 studyTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22464763) published in the Journal of Dermatological Science, a decreased level of potassium may contribute to dry skin in people with a [type of eczema](https://www.healthline.com/health/eczema) known as atopic dermatitis.

Since tomatoes are a good source of potassium, many natural healers suggest that the application of tomato directly to the skin will address dry skin issues.

There’s no scientific evidence, however, that shows that the topical application of tomato will provide the same benefits as a traditional moisturizer.

**It may help reduce your risk of sunburn**

A [2006 studyTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16465309) published in the journal Photochemical and Photobiological Sciences concluded that consuming lycopene-rich plants — such as tomatoes — could contribute to lifelong protection against harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

During the 12-week study, researchers observed decreased sensitivity among volunteers who had eaten tomato-derived products rich in lycopene.

It was unclear, however, if the results from consumption could be replicated with topical application directly on your skin.

**Are there any risks to consider?**

There’s no question that tomatoes can be a healthy addition to your diet, but if eating them results in an [allergic reaction](https://www.healthline.com/health/allergies/allergic-reaction), so will applying them to your face.

The sensitive skin on your face might also have a reaction to the fruit’s high natural acidity, resulting in:

* redness
* rash
* itching

Before using tomato on your entire face, do a patch test. Pick a small area of skin and apply the tomato. Monitor the area for the next 24 hours for signs of an adverse reaction — such as redness, itchiness, and swelling — before performing a full facial application.

**The bottom line**

There isn’t enough clinical research to fully support the anecdotal benefits associated with topical facial application.

If you’re thinking about adding tomato to your skin care routine, talk to a dermatologist or other healthcare provider to learn how it might affect your specific skin type and its overall condition.

Medically reviewed by [Cynthia Cobb, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC, FAANP](https://www.healthline.com/reviewers/cynthia-cobb-dnp-aprn) — Written by [Scott Frothingham](https://www.healthline.com/authors/scott-frothingham) on December 15, 2019