

What is Collagen?

Collagen is the most abundant protein in our bodies and accounts for about 30% of our total body protein. It is a building block for your body's skin, bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments. It provides structure, strength and support throughout our body. Together with other nutrients such as vitamin C, zinc, copper and manganese, collagen keeps you strong and youthful.

There are 28 types of collagen in your body. The four most common types are:

- Type I. - makes up 90% of your body's collagen. Type I is densely packed and used to provide structure to your skin, bones, tendons and ligaments.
- Type II. - found in elastic cartilage, which provides joint support.
- Type III. - found in muscles, arteries and organs.
- Type IV. - found in the layers of your skin.

What are the signs of low Collagen?

Our collagen production declines as we age, and our existing collagen breaks down. This happens in everyone, but females will experience a more drastic reduction after menopause. There is no method of measuring collagen in our bodies, but there are many notable signs and symptoms.

- Skin becomes wrinkled
- Hollowing of the face and eyes
- Muscles aches
- Stiff tendons and ligaments
- Joint pain

What can I do to slow the decline of collagen?

Even though collagen decline is inevitable, certain healthy habits can aid in slowing down this process.

- Avoid smoking -smoking can damage existing collagen and decrease new production, resulting in deep wrinkles and slow wound healing.
- Use Sunscreen - UV rays from the sun can damage collagen. Always use high-quality sunscreen with at least an SPF of 30.
- Sun Protection - wearing a wide-brim hat, sunglasses, light long sleeve shirts and pants
- Avoid tanning beds.
- Eating a well-balanced diet rich in vegetables, whole grains, nuts and fruits. Too much-refined sugars can result in collagen becoming weak and brittle.

What foods are high in collagen?

Collagen is a complex protein that can't be absorbed into your body in complete form. Before it can be used, it must be broken down into its building blocks, known as peptides or amino acids. Because of this, eating collagen-rich foods such as bone broth doesn't directly increase our levels. Nonetheless, many foods contain raw ingredients that support collagen production in our bodies.

- Vitamin C. Vitamin C is found in oranges, strawberries, bell peppers, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and potatoes.
- Proline. Proline is found in mushrooms, cabbage, asparagus, peanuts, wheat, fish, egg whites and meat.
- Glycine. Glycine is found in red meats, turkey, chicken and pork skin, peanuts and granola.
- Copper. Copper is found in liver, lobster, oysters, shiitake mushrooms, nuts and seeds, leafy greens, tofu and dark chocolate.
- Zinc. Zinc is found in oysters, red meat, poultry, pork, beans, chickpeas, nuts, broccoli, green leafy vegetables, whole grains and milk products.

What about collagen supplements?

Some studies have shown that collagen supplements are possibly effective in improving skin elasticity and hydration, as well as relieving pain and improving joint function. Supplementing with a high-quality product is important, as not all supplements are created equal. Since collagen can not be absorbed in its whole form, it must be broken down into small pieces known as collagen peptides. Oral collagen supplements broken down for proper absorption will be labelled as collagen peptides or hydrolyzed collagen and can contain different collagen types. Be sure to talk to your Dispensaries Pharmacist to determine which product is best for you.