

LOOK YOUNGER Special

STOP the clock!



Follow our anti-ageing health tips now to reap the rewards for years...

With 500 new diagnoses of dementia daily in the UK, half of over-55s having arthritis and 80 per cent of bone fractures occurring in over-50s, it's easy to assume it's all downhill after a certain age. But latest research reveals that's far from true. 'The science of ageing shows us that how you age is not all down to luck or genes – it's 75 per cent up to you,' says Patrick Holford, author of *The 10 Secrets Of Healthy Ageing* (£14.99, Piatkus).

Boost brainpower fast

Do the stopwatch challenge

Focus on your mobile's clock for 60 seconds. Then, eyes closed, try mentally timing a minute. Open your eyes to check – and repeat until you can time exactly a minute without looking. 'This is a great way of developing general mental acuity,' says Joel Levy, author of *The Brain Power Workout* (£9.99, Cico Books).

Take royal jelly
'It's a rich, natural lubricant for your brain, enabling it to file new memories more efficiently,' says Harley Street nutritionist Lisa Smith. 'Deficiency can lead to short-term memory problems

such as trouble remembering names, and may contribute to the symptoms of Alzheimer's.' Lisa recommends high quality **BioBees Fresh Royal Jelly** (£40.84 for 30 one-a-day capsules from health stores). Or try **Healthspan Royal Jelly** (90 two-a-day capsules, £10.45, healthspan.co.uk)

Swap hands

'Using your left hand if you're normally right-handed (or vice versa) stimulates interaction between the two parts of the brain, creating new nerve pathways that improve memory and thinking speed,' says Dr Lynda Shaw, a chartered psychologist. Do it for five minutes daily when cooking, writing, cleaning or gardening.



Protect joints

Banish pain now

To target the exact spot, use **Phytodol Joint Care** (£14.80, 200ml, Holland & Barrett). 'This spray contains glucosamine, arnica, ginger, and cinnamon oils, all of which are naturally soothing and anti-inflammatory,' explains Harley Street GP Wendy Denning.

Pop this pill

'New **GOPO** (£21.45, 120 capsules, Boots) – a unique extract from rose hip – is scientifically proven to keep

arthritic joints pain-free, with studies showing half of users cut back on prescribed medication within three weeks,' says Dr Rod Hughes, a leading UK rheumatologist at St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey. 'Trial it for three months, with three capsules daily for five weeks, and then two a day.'

Move well

Qigong, the ancient Chinese form of exercise, is great for gently rotating and 'oiling' your

joints. To get started, place hands on knees and squat as if you're about to sit on a chair, then move your knees in circles, changing direction after about 30 seconds. For more, put 'qigong exercises' into the YouTube search box. And to find a local class, go to naturaltherapy pages.co.uk.



How to have happy feet

Degenerative foot problems, such as bunions, affect about 50 per cent of women, the risk increasing with age. 'But spending just 12 minutes a day doing three simple exercises to work the muscles and joints can help,' says Dr Tariq Khan, consultant podiatrist at London's Marigold Clinic.

1 Sitting on the floor, back to the wall and feet out, put a rubber band around both big toes and, with your heels about

5cm apart, use your toes to stretch and release the band. Do twice daily for two minutes.

2 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, use your toes to scrunch up, then release, a piece of tissue. Do for two minutes twice daily.

3 Stand facing a wall, arms at shoulder level and touching the wall, and feet 20cm apart. Rise on to your tiptoes and stay there for two minutes. Do twice daily.

Safeguard your sight

Swap to wholegrains

'In a study of 4,000 people, those who regularly ate high GI white rice, pasta and bread were at the greatest risk of Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), which causes gradual loss of central vision, with 20 per cent of cases being preventable,' says Patrick Holford. So aim to stick to wholemeal foods.



Exercise eye muscles

Wear pinhole glasses, (£10.95, jdharris.co.uk), which are like shades with a grid of tiny holes, to read for 15 minutes a day. 'These build up the eye muscles and help with focusing problems, such as far and near-sightedness and

presbyopia (trouble reading small print),' says Patrick. Or give your eyes a yoga workout. Look to the furthest corners of the room and without moving your head, look up to the right, down to the left, up to the left, down to the right. Repeat three times daily.

See ahead

One in three of us will get cataracts – which can cause blindness – after the age of 65, so take action now. 'The herb eyebright is used to prevent cataracts,' says Patrick. Try **Solgar Eyebright** (£9.60 for 100 one-a-day capsules, nutricentre.com). Another wise buy is coenzyme Q10. 'It's been shown to help cataracts and AMD,' he adds. Try **BioCare Vitasorb CoQ10**, £17, 30ml, health stores.

EAT YOURSELF YOUNGER



◆ **Shop like you're on holiday**
A Mediterranean-style diet (mostly fish and fresh veg – see our diet on page 22) can add three years to your life and increase your chances of living longer by 20 per cent.

◆ **Slice up some watermelon**
Its juice could cut fatty deposits in arteries in just eight weeks.

◆ **Pick a pomegranate**
'It will prevent sun damage, the biggest cause of ageing skin,' explains Dr Howard Murad, associate clinical professor of medicine (dermatology) at UCLA. 'Eating a whole one daily improves your inbuilt sun protection by over 20 per cent in just two months.' Of course, you will still need to use sunscreen.