

# AGE-PROOF your body

*Stop the clock with these simple tips and tricks*

**U**nwanted niggles, such as aching joints and constant tiredness, making you feel old? You're not the only one. But while getting older is inevitable, looking and feeling your age isn't. From doing jumping jacks to help your bones stay strong to eating berries to boost your brain, there are plenty of tweaks you can make to protect your body for years to come. Here's everything you need to know.

## FOR YOUR EYESIGHT...

### Eat leafy greens

Forget carrots, it's these super veg that will boost your eye health, according to optometrist Sona Thakerar. Green leafy veg, like spinach, kale and broccoli, contain an antioxidant called lutein, which helps protect against eye damage. Eat it raw and with dairy foods to increase absorption. Blend some greens with either milk or yogurt for a refreshing smoothie first thing.

## FOR YOUR JOINTS...

### Keep moving

'Regular gentle exercise helps to improve muscle strength, which supports your joints and reduces pain,' says GP Dr Alastair Dickson. Aim for 30 minutes a day - swimming and yoga are great joint-friendly options. Try wild swimming (check out gov.uk for a list of designated spots) or discover free yoga classes on YouTube.

## FOR YOUR BRAIN...

### Choose berries

They're bursting with carotenoids and flavonoids, known for their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, which can delay ageing. Blueberries are especially rich in the anti-ageing flavonoid anthocyanin. They're in season right now, so aim to eat around 100g of fresh berries each week.



## FOR YOUR STRESS LEVELS...

### Get outside

Stress can cause our bodies to produce more cortisol. This breaks down collagen, which is essential for keeping our skin wrinkle-free and tight. Being in nature has been proven to reduce blood pressure, heart rate and the production of stress hormones. So head out for a walk, picnic or a trip to the beach and feel your stress levels plummet.

## FOR YOUR BONES...

### Do jumping jacks

As bones are living tissue, they get stronger with use. Weight-bearing exercises, such as jumping jacks, running, skipping or hopping, can all help to stimulate bone growth.

## FOR YOUR HEART...

### Know your blood pressure

This is an important guide to your heart's general health. High blood pressure (hypertension) raises the risk of a heart attack, but most of us don't know we have it. Get yours checked by a GP or practice nurse, at a pharmacy or use a home monitor. 'Over 140/90 is considered high, but, as we age, up to 150/90 may be allowed,' says GP Dr Gill Jenkins. Worried about yours? Talk to your GP and take steps to reduce it with regular exercise and by eating more fruit, veg and wholegrains and less salt and saturated fats. Your GP may also recommend medication.



## FOR YOUR LIVER...

### Don't drink over 14 units a week

On warm summer evenings it can be tempting to crack open a bottle of rosé or mix up a jug of Pimm's. But enjoying too many tipplers could age you. Protect your liver by sticking to no more than 14 units of alcohol a week - that's six pints of average-strength beer or 10 small glasses of lower-strength wine. Have at least a couple of alcohol-free days each week too.

