

15 natural ways to beat wrinkles

You don't have to go under the surgeon's knife to look years younger. Simple changes to the way you live can stop the ageing process in its tracks

1 Wine is fine Although excessive alcohol is very ageing, a couple of glasses of red wine a day has positive antioxidant benefits. The chemical resveratrol, found in red grape skins, is a powerful antioxidant that protects your heart and blood vessels. Be sure to stick to young reds rather than oak-aged varieties, as these are the most anti-ageing.

2 Fill up on protein Feed your skin by eating plenty of protein, which plays a vital role in the production of collagen and elastin – essentials for younger looking skin. Ensure that 15 to 25 per cent of your diet consists of protein, good sources of which include meat, fish, eggs, cheese, beans, soy and lentils.

3 Quit smoking Smokers are three times more likely to get premature wrinkles than those who don't smoke, according to a study by dermatologists in Seoul, Korea. This is because it reduces the amount of oxygen that gets to your skin and triggers enzymes that destroy collagen. Meanwhile, just the action of drawing on a cigarette causes lines to be etched around the mouth. The perfect incentive to quit!

4 Up your antioxidants The most anti-ageing foods help absorb free radicals (which increase the ageing process) in the body. They include oranges, plums, red grapes, raspberries, cherries, kiwi fruit, pink grapefruit, blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, prunes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, alfalfa sprouts, broccoli, beetroot, red bell peppers and leafy greens.

5 Pop a pill A study carried out in France suggests that oral supplements of vitamins A, C and E help prevent some skin ageing changes and damage from sunlight.

6 Go nuts Just one brazil nut a day is enough to provide you with your recommended daily amount of selenium, which is one of the most powerful natural anti-ageing ingredients around, and is vital for glowing skin.

7 Calm down Stress can speed up the ageing process by ten years, according to a study at the University of California. So stop getting het up and start relaxing more – give yoga a try, go for a walk during your lunch hour at work, or have a bubble bath before you go to bed.

8 Bath-time essential oil To maintain youthful-looking skin, add five drops of frankincense oil to the bath to rejuvenate your whole body, or add a few drops to your face cream to massage away crows'-feet.

9 A taste of the sea Seaweed, which has a composition almost identical to blood plasma, is one of the richest sources of minerals and nutrients. It helps prevent ageing by detoxifying, hydrating and nourishing the skin, and by fighting free radicals. If you don't fancy munching on salty seaweed, introduce it into your diet with Seagreens capsules, which cost £14.75 for 60. For stockists, call 01444 400403.

10 Remain balanced A good anti-ageing diet will be composed of 50 per cent vegetables, 20 per cent protein, 20 per cent fruits and ten per cent grains, according to Hazel Courteney, author of 500 Of The Most Important Ways To Stay Younger Longer (Cico Books, £10).

11 Strengthen muscles One of the main causes of ageing is loss of carnosine, a substance occurring naturally in the body's muscles, which decreases with age. Boost your levels with carnosine-rich foods, such as chicken breast, lean beef, duck and turkey.

12 Say no to sugar It ages the skin almost as much as smoking and sun damage.

13 Give ginseng a go Ginseng helps prevent ageing, by protecting the brain against free-radical damage, reducing stress and helping sleep problems. It's part of a group of herbal products called adaptogens, which help to calm you down.

14 Drink plenty Overall skin health depends on proper hydration, so if you're dehydrated then you'll age more quickly. The optimum amount we should be drinking is 1.8 litres (six to eight glasses) per day, according to Prima nutritionist Fiona Hunter.

15 Feet first Walk whenever you can, even if it's just up the stairs. Exercise helps your complexion by delivering oxygen to the skin and getting blood flowing.

