

'Being healthy is such a wonderful feeling'

Actress Glynis Barber feels best when she does something active every day

We didn't have a television when I was growing up in South Africa, so I would run around morning, noon and night. I haven't always been a healthy person in terms of eating and lifestyle, but I've always been active. And health is a huge part of my life now.

'If I didn't exercise, I would probably be huge'

As you get older, you have a vested interest in wanting to remain good-looking, healthy and disease-free. Obviously, there is a degree of luck, but lifestyle is crucial to how you're going to age, too. At the top of any list of must-dos for ageing well is exercise. The benefits are incredible.

I started doing yoga when I was filming *Dempsey And*

Makepeace in the mid-1980s - and I've kept it up ever since. I do hot yoga once or twice a week, go to the gym and do weights, Zumba classes or work out with a trainer. I think it's good to do a few different classes because your body does get used to things and you need to mix it up a bit. I try to do something active six days a week, with one day off. I also arrange meetings for later in the day as I like to exercise in the morning. It's worth it, though - being healthy is such a wonderful feeling.

I'm currently in rehearsals for *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. Being in a play is a bit like being an athlete: you do eight shows a week and you have to be in the best possible shape to get through it. Doing theatre is a pretty unhealthy lifestyle because of the late nights and the way it disrupts all your routines.

Last year I'd gained a bit of weight, so I overhauled the way I eat. I worked with a nutritionist who told me I wasn't eating enough protein. She put me on a diet of lots of fish, chicken and eggs - I got through at least a dozen eggs a week.

I was never hungry - my biggest problem was struggling to eat everything. The first week was horrible but I ended up having the most enjoyable six weeks because I felt amazing.

I am far from perfect, though, and I have a very sweet tooth. I adore chocolate and gluten-free cake. If I didn't exercise, I would probably be huge.

Mixing it up: 'I think it's good to do a few different classes because your body does get used to things,' says Glynis