

by **GLYNIS BARBER**

**I**T MAY not feel like it every time we look in the mirror, despairing at grey roots and each wrinkle, but ageing is a privilege. The process comes with so many benefits: life experience, wisdom and resilience.

I have accrued some 40 years worth since Dempsey And Makepeace, the ITV crime drama in which I starred as Sergeant Harriet Makepeace and where I met my husband, my co-star Michael Brandon.

Back then, I started taking care of myself, from the inside as well as the out, long before healthy living became a trend.

Now, as I leave Hollyoaks after two years playing crime boss Norma Crow, I believe I'm in the prime of my life – at 68. People often ask what my secret is when it comes to ageing.

For me, it's about living and eating healthily, reducing stress, having a positive mindset and knowing a few handy make-up cheats! I share many a health and fitness tip on my website and YouTube channel, Ageless By Glynis Barber.

So here are my most valuable secrets for ageless ageing.

#### 1 APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

BEFORE a big meal, I drink two teaspoons of apple cider vinegar dissolved in a glass of water.

Why? Well, the vinegar slows the digestion of starch in the food, which in turn lowers my blood sugar levels by preventing glucose spikes – an effect that can last for 12 hours.

Apple cider vinegar is a wonder ingredient. You can also use it to rinse your hair after shampooing (to reduce frizz) or put a few teaspoons in the bath to moisturise your skin.

#### 2 TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES

I'M always slipping my shoes off, as being barefoot – at home, on the beach or in the garden – grounds us with the Earth, physically and mentally. It is also said to reduce inflammation across the whole body, while soothing muscles after exercise.

#### 3 DRINK MATCHA TEA

I'VE been drinking green tea for years. I love the subtle taste and the gentle caffeine hit never affects me in the same jittery way as coffee.

Matcha, a powdered, unfermented tea, is like green tea on steroids. It's a powerhouse of nutrients and antioxidants that fight inflammation, speed up your metabolism and help to maintain healthy cholesterol levels.

#### 4 INDULGE GUILTY PLEASURES

WE are all juggling so many balls, and it's important to prioritise stress management, especially at the end of a long, busy day.

I always make self-care top of my agenda – even if that means a glass of wine on the sofa while watching my guilty pleasure: Married at First Sight Australia.

#### 5 VIRUS-BUSTING SUPPLEMENTS

I HAVE quite a strong immune system and my virus-slaying arsenal of supplements can fend off most bugs in under 48 hours.

Daily, I take magnesium glycinate and vitamins D3 and K2, all of which you can buy over the counter.

If you're coming down with something, try taking oregano oil, which has strong anti-viral qualities, as well as quercetin, a powerful antioxidant that is also a natural antihistamine. I take this throughout the winter, as well as vitamin C and zinc.

#### 6 TRY TEABAGS FOR PUFFY EYES

IF you've got dark circles or puffy eyes, try putting a cold teabag on the area – it'll soothe sore peepers in minutes.

This works because the tannic acids in tea encourage the blood vessels to shrink. Put them in the fridge before use for a more refreshing effect.

#### 7 DITCH BLACK EYELINER

AS you get older, wave goodbye to harsh black-lined eyes – which makes them look smaller and duller – and instead opt for a softer look with greys and browns.

I like Studio10's Perfect Lash Mascara, I-Lift Longwear Eyeliner Pencils and Brow Lift Perfecting Pencil and Charlotte Tilbury's Eyeshadow Palette.

#### 8 NO PHONES IN THE BEDROOM

LIVING in the modern age of smartphones and social media means fewer boundaries and less downtime. All this blue light affects our ability to sleep well. I never have my phone by the bed,



# Walk around barefoot, never think you're old, and yes... indulge in the odd 'tweakment'

Just some of the simple rules Dempsey and Makepeace star **GLYNIS BARBER** swears by to look this good at 68

unless I'm using a meditation app to de-stress, and I switch off my devices at least an hour before sleep to help me to unwind.

#### 9 TAKE COLLAGEN

THOSE lines that start to appear in our 40s are a sign of declining collagen, as are thinning hair and achy joints.

Bone broth, a hearty soup made by simmering meat bones in water, is a good source of collagen.

I also take Collagen Shots by Rejuvenated, a powder that makes a pleasant-tasting drink, every day. They do a vegan version for inflamed skin.

#### 10 HOW I GET MY BEACH WAVE

I'M lucky that I have naturally thick hair, which I wear in a bob. It became quite famous in its own right when I did Dempsey And Makepeace. I prefer it messy and undone with a beach-type wave. I have a slight natural wave but it needs some help.

I'm no hair whizz but I've devised a method – which involves twisting and scrunching sections to give beachy waves – and made a video on my YouTube channel about how to do it. Organic prod-

ucts, such as Green People Scent-Free Shampoo, keep my hair shiny and healthy.

#### 11 LIFT WEIGHTS

SOME people – Madonna, for example – seem to just look at a weight and get ripped.

Not me. I have to work very hard just to stay toned. As we get older we lose muscle.

But muscle mass is linked to longevity (the protein reserves held in our muscles are needed to survive diseases), so it's important to include weight training in your fitness regime.

Two to three 20-minute sessions a week will do the trick. Yoga can also strengthen your arms, legs and core.

#### 12 EAT HEALTHY FATS

STAYING healthy doesn't mean maintaining that 24in waist of your 20s – but it does mean eating the right things.

When I indulge (and I'm human, so I do), I always feel terrible. I recommend cutting out all processed foods: these are full of trans fats and vegetable oils, which will inflame your body and age

it quickly. Healthy fats, on the other hand, such as olive oil, butter, avocados and nuts, are vital to well-being and – contrary to popular belief – will not make you fat if eaten in moderation.

#### 13 THINK YOUNG

SOME people think that, at a certain age, they're old – and they start acting old. They live in the past, reminiscing and talking about times gone by.

I'm a great believer in embracing the present and finding new challenges to keep my mind and body young.

#### 14 MANUKA HONEY

MANUKA honey is magic: antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and great for the gut. It can be especially helpful to menopausal women who are experiencing bloating or constipation.

I use it to ease a cough or

a sore throat, by adding it to a drink of freshly sliced ginger and hot water.

**15 MEDITATE DAILY AND BREATHE**  
MEDITATION can lower blood pressure, reduce the stress hormone cortisol and is a wonder-

**ACTION GIRL:** Glynis Barber with Michael Brandon in the drama Dempsey And Makepeace



ful way to process the turmoil and challenges of life.

Similarly, take deep breaths through your nose and into your belly to help reduce the stress hormones that are released when we're anxious.

Try doing this several times before bed, or when you first wake up in the morning. I've done a special video on breathing to help reduce anxiety, which is on the Ageless YouTube channel.

#### 16 YOUTHFUL BROWS

I MAY be into health but I'm as vain as the next girl, especially when it comes to my eyebrows.

Over-pluck them and they'll make you look a decade older, but thick brows will overwhelm your face. Instead, you want to frame and lift your features.

I used to tattoo my thin, tadpole-like brows but since the pandemic I just use a pencil – a brown-grey colour that suits nearly everyone.

#### 17 A RETINOL ALTERNATIVE

RETINOL, a form of vitamin A, is one of the most effective anti-ageing treatments. It increases cell turnover and collagen production, while reducing fine lines and wrinkles. But many people – myself included – find it hard to tolerate, with side effects including dryness, peeling and redness.

I use a completely natural alternative, called Bakuchiol, which does the same thing without increasing sun sensitivity, making it ideal for summer.

#### 18 RESEARCH TWEAKMENTS

I'M a baby when it comes to skin treatments: I don't like pain, the thought of post-surgical swelling, or the idea that I might not look like myself afterwards.

But I have had several non-surgical 'tweakments', including radio frequency laser treatment to tighten skin on my face and Profhilo, whereby hyaluronic acid is injected to hydrate and plump up the skin. Shop around and speak to experts before choosing what's right for you.

#### 19 BODY BRUSHING

USING a soft-bristled body brush, made with natural fibres, all over your body just before you take a shower or bath is a brilliant way to exfoliate dead skin cells, improve circulation and stimulate the lymphatic system, which gets sluggish as we age. Start on the lower part of your body and work up, using circular, upwards movements towards your heart.

#### 20 GET A PET

MY dog Gigi, a maltipoo, is the love of my life. She puts a spring in my step and helps keep me young.

Caring for pets can lower blood pressure, improve prognosis post-heart attack and increase production of the hormone oxytocin, linked to happiness.

● Find more of Glynis's secrets at: [agelessbyglynisbarber.com](https://agelessbyglynisbarber.com) and [youtube.com/agelessbyglynisbarber](https://youtube.com/agelessbyglynisbarber)