

MIND  
your  
BODY

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## Cover Story

Good genes may give a headstart in helping you to stay youthful. However, to remain in the race against time, it all boils down to the ABCs of lifestyle, say the experts

**W**hile everyone grows older with each birthday, not everyone looks – or wants to look – his age.

Some youthful lookers are blessed with good genes, others with arguably good habits.

With modern aesthetic procedures, the vain can battle age spots, varicose veins and a sagging body.

As to why some stay youthful-looking longer, Dr Caroline Low, senior family physician in anti-ageing medicine at Raffles Hospital, said: "It's 50 per cent nature and 50 per cent nurture."

Her advice to those seeking the elixir of youth is to refrain from smoking, excessive alcohol or caffeine, or eating preserved or charred food.

Also, avoid getting stressed, get eight hours of sleep every night, reduce your calorie intake and exercise regularly.

"It boils down to the ABCs of lifestyle," she said.

Other doctors MYB spoke to agreed, adding that while good genes give you a headstart, other factors that count include the rate at which your cells age, exposure to the sun and the amount of free radicals

in your body.

Consultant plastic and cosmetic surgeon Ivor Lim from The Plastic & Hand Surgery said: "Ageing is often cellular failure. The reason we get old is because our stem cells are no longer there to repair our bodies."

Dr Andrew Khoo, consultant plastic surgeon at Aesthetic & Reconstructive Centre, said the single most important "reversible" factor in the ageing of the skin is the amount of exposure to ultraviolet radiation when out in the sun.

**Dr Patricia Yuen, consultant dermatologist at Pacific Healthcare Specialist Centre, said that everyone ages at a different rate and that is predetermined by genetics.**

**"However, sun damage and environmental pollutants accelerate the rate of natural ageing," she said.**

Free radicals can also age our bodies by damaging the genetic

If you've exercised  
for more than  
**10**  
years continuously, you  
will look as young as the  
day you started regular  
exercise

