

Prone to sprains? Here's how you can avoid (and fix) a weak ankle



When Chris Peterson sprained his ankle playing football in high school, he brushed it off as a minor injury. His ankle hurt for a couple days, but no one suggested he see a doctor, and soon enough, it felt better. "I got back to playing as soon as I could," said Dr. Peterson, now a physical therapist at Washington University in St. Louis. However, although his ankle didn't hurt, it just wasn't the same afterward. "I'd step wrong, and my ankle just wasn't there," which often led to falls, he said.

Sprained ankles are among the most common musculoskeletal injuries. Official estimates are that two million people in the U.S.

We have the ankle exercises to help strength and prevent injury

sprain their ankle every year, but the real number is likely much higher, as many people never seek care for their injury. Although an ankle sprain may seem like a minor injury, suffering one leads to a much higher chance of doing it again. In a study of military cadets, those with a history of sprained ankles were 3.4 times more likely to sprain their ankle during the course of the study, compared with those with no history of sprained ankles. For an estimated 40 per cent of people, a sprained ankle

can lead to chronic ankle instability, characterized by repeated rolling of the ankle, a general feeling of wobbliness and instability, and occasional pain, tenderness or swelling. If you've sprained your ankle in the past, that doesn't mean that you are destined to go through life with an achy, wobbly joint, fearing the moment when it will give way. Experts recommend a number of exercises to strengthen the ankles, which in turn reduce the chances of sustaining a sprain, whether for the first time or the 10th.

"The biggest reason people have recurrent ankle sprains is that they never do rehabilitation," said Dr. Michael Fredericson, a sports physician at Stanford University.

The ankle is a complicated patchwork of bones and ligaments stitched together, connecting the tibia and fibula of the leg to the delicate bones of the foot. It has to do a lot of work, bearing the full weight of the body while also bending and flexing in many directions. It's this versatility, along with a constant workload, that makes fully recovering from an ankle injury so difficult and critical, since it's very easy to reinjure an ankle. "There's not a lot of room for error, particularly if you do sports," Dr. Fredericson said.

The key is exercise. In a recent meta-analysis of 14 randomized controlled trials, exercise-based interventions were more effective at reducing the risk of recurring sprains than usual care, which often consists of rest, ice, compression and elevation.

"We do know that exercise therapy works," said Jente Wagemans, a graduate student at the University of Antwerp and the lead author of the study. "We know that it is effective for the prevention of a secondary injury."

Even in the first few days after a sprain, it can help to move the ankle. Dr. Alysia Robichau, a sports physician at Houston Methodist Hospital, often recommends very light, non-weight-bearing activity, such as tracing the alphabet with the foot, in the days after a sprain. "That helps with gentle range of motion," she said.

Once the ligament has started healing, which happens in the first

few weeks after a sprain, the next step is weight-bearing exercise. Like bones and muscles, Mr. Wagemans explained, ligaments become stronger when you apply increasing amounts of force.

Unlike bones, ankle ligaments need to be strengthened in multiple directions, because the joint is so mobile. One simple ankle-strengthening exercise is to loop a resistance band around the foot and attach it to something heavy, like a table leg. Then flex the foot forward, backward and sideways, aiming for three sets of 15 repetitions each.

If you are trying to prevent ankle injuries, these exercises should be done three to four times a week. If you are recovering from a recent ankle sprain, any exercises should be under the guidance of a physical therapist, who will tailor them to the injury.

Every time you step on an uneven surface or have to place your foot quickly, tiny nerves in your ankle automatically help it remain steady rather than rolling or twisting. Think of them as the lane-assist feature in

some cars, which make tiny steering corrections to avoid drift, Dr. Peterson said, except the nerves bring your ankle back to a neutral position. One major cause of wobbly ankles is when sprains also damage these corrective nerves.

"Without that feedback system, you are more likely to roll your ankle again," said Jeff Harvath, a physical therapist at Washington University in St. Louis.

If your ankle feels wobbly or unstable or has a habit of rolling, you need to retrain the nerves in that area. "It's about teaching the muscles and the ligaments to coordinate in the right ways," Dr. Robichau said. One of the best ways to do this is a single-leg balance exercise. To start, balance on one leg, reaching out with your arms in different directions, aiming for one set of 20 repetitions. It's important to use a lot of varied movements, such as reaching out for something with your hands, shifting your weight, closing your eyes or even standing on one leg while brushing your teeth. —Reuters



How do these age-defying celebrity mums stay looking so good?

Recently, a team of researchers in the Babraham Institute in Cambridge claimed to have successfully rejuvenated a 53-year-old woman's skin cells to look and behave like a 23-year-old's.

Sounds too good to be true? As expected, there's always a catch to feats like this — it seems the technique employed in accomplishing it may increase the risk for cancer, which means there's no way for it to be put into actual use.

Humankind's pursuit of eternal youth may not yet be entirely successful, but there are still many ways with which one can extend it, even if holding on to it forever looks set to be a dream that may never come true. Just take a look at these celebrity mums in their 30s to 50s, who look like they have secret access to the fountain of youth.

What have they been doing to preserve their looks? Quite a lot, it seems — putting in effort is a must if one wishes to continue looking good. Here are some of their personal beauty secrets that help them deflect the ravages of age and remain youthful and shapely.

Renewing your passport? Style tips on how to take a great passport photo in a studio or on your phone

Life beyond sneakers: How to build a chic capsule shoe wardrobe for every occasion

Longtime spokesperson for Korean skincare brand The History of Whoo, the 51-year-old Jewel In The Palace star exemplifies what ageing gracefully means with her well-maintained skin and natural beauty.

The mother of 11-year-old twins is in favour of harnessing the power of nature — in fact, she even started her own botanical-based beauty brand, Lya Nature, in 2015. She's known to be a fan of a few natural beauty remedies, such as



From Zoe Tay and Fann Wong to Lee Young-ae and Barbie Hsu, CNA Lifestyle takes a look at their beauty secrets, which range from the typical (like exercising) to the downright strange (pig trotter's mask, anyone?)

applying raw potato slices to her face as a mask. It seems that potato contains anti-inflammatory components and vitamin C, which can calm and brighten the skin, respectively.

In a previous interview, the star divulged that she relied on grapes to shed her postpartum weight — she would have only a bunch of grapes for dinner over a period of time. The fruit is low in calories and contains resveratrol, which can boost the body's metabolism of fatty acids.

This Chinese actress and mum of twins has some truly eyebrow-raising personal beauty secrets up her sleeve, revealing them on her social media accounts and on TV shows — to shocked reactions.

These bizarre beauty tips in-

clude consuming enzymes she made out of rotting fruits, concocting a body mask out of soybean powder and expired yoghurt, and a traditional beauty secret that she claimed that the Empress Dowager Cixi once practised, which involves slathering on a paste made from pig trotter stew.

At 47, Taiwanese model-actress Lin (who became a new mum earlier this year), remains very much the picture of youth with her enviable figure and crystal-clear skin. Beyond pampering her skin with the right skincare products, she goes the extra mile to prevent moisture loss from her skin.

Lin is known to avoid air-conditioning as far as possible, as it can dehydrate the skin. She also brings a humidifier along wherever she goes — an essential tool for upping moisture levels in rooms.

Once is not enough when it comes to applying serum and moisturiser — she apparently puts on two applications of these two products every time she goes through her skincare routine, in order to make doubly sure that her skin is sufficiently hydrated.

The Taiwanese actress-host is a mother of two and also the author of two beauty books, in which she dispensed personal skincare and body-care tips that have helped her maintain her youthful good looks.

The 45-year-old swears by washing her face with very cold water — doesn't matter whether it's in the summer or winter — saying that it helps tighten the pores and gives her skin a refined appearance. While it's true that cold water can have an astringent effect on skin's pores, it's important to

note that this practice may not be advisable for those with sensitive skin as it can cause a flare-up.

Hsu also loves keeping skincare products — sheet masks, particularly — in the fridge, for that same pore-tightening and skin-cooling effect.

Barbie's celebrity sibling, Dee, on the other hand, is known to be obsessed with neck care. She's expressed that the signs of ageing are often the most apparent in this area, and often can betray the real age of a woman, no matter how youthful her face looks.

Besides making sure to extend moisturiser application to her neck and décolleté on a daily basis, the 43-year-old host and actress has the habit of doing neck and facial exercises to tighten the area whenever she finds herself with a few free moments. Want to maintain a taut jawline like Hsu has managed to do? You might want to follow her lead.

Can anyone believe that the eternally baby-faced singer is just three years away from turning 50? The mother of one is quite the exercise fanatic, as observed from her Instagram posts.

Earlier this year, she shared how she dropped nine kilograms in weight within 10 months, with a picture of a now-ridiculously-loose pair of pants she used to wear some time ago. Hsu purportedly works out without fail every single day, even though the duration of each session may vary and her choice of activity may vary from swimming to pounding the treadmill or Pilates.

When it comes to her diet, she cuts down on carbs (but doesn't abstain from them) and believes in not stuffing herself at each meal. Instead, she stops eating when she feels about three-quarters full. Hydration is key, too, as she tries to drink two litres of water every day.

The My Love From the Star actress and mother of two will be 41 this year, but can easily pass for someone in her late 20s. Not only is she known for her many iconic fashion looks, particularly those seen in the aforementioned drama series, she's also beloved by beauty brands (having fronted names including Hera and Laneige) for her "glass" skin and knack for pulling off edgy makeup looks.

Jun is known to place a lot of emphasis on her facial-cleansing ritual — she starts with warm water to "soften" and "loosen" sebum in pores, puts on cleanser but doesn't apply it to her skin for too long to avoid stripping it of moisture, and then finishes by rinsing with cold water to help tighten pores. It's also been widely reported on the Internet that she uses a special DIY mask to achieve her glow. —

10 of the best F&B places in Singapore for late nights with friends (because you now can)



With no more 10:30pm drinking restrictions and no limits on the size of dining-in groups, hanging out with friends and family no longer need to be rushed affairs. Here are the latest exciting places to enjoy camaraderie and conversation over creative tipples, delicious bites and happy beats.

For those who get cravings for an izakaya supper, the newly revamped Akanoya Robotayaki & Bar is the answer. It's reviving its popular supper club and Highball Around The World menu. Expect classic Japanese highballs to the bar's unique take on sake For Goodness Sake, which includes sake and homemade white peach kombucha. The grilled platter menus start from S\$55 per platter with signature robotayaki items such as kurobuta pork and Kuruma ebi.

This former Amoy Street rum-focused pub by Jigger & Pony Group is now a vibey space on the second floor of a 1920s heritage building near Raffles Place.

Spot the entrance at the back alley with the original signage, and step into a dark wood-furnished dining room illuminated by fairy lights. Classics here are jazzed up (like a spicy gingery Dark & Stormy and a heady Daiquiri with two rums and a fresh citrus spin), the rum flights are great value for exploring premium labels, and the punch bowls the perfect liquid fuel to light up conversations.

Pub grub here gets a fine-dining edge with mod-Californian restaurant Rosemead just downstairs. Executive chef David Tang proves he can also whip up tasty casual plates such as Korean sweet and sour fried chicken and a snapper and laver pie with peas. This mid-century modern Roberston Quay opening by the team behind award-winning Barbary Coast pays homage to art styles such as Neoclassicism and Romanicism through its bespoke cocktails and unique spaces: The Main Room, The Garden with a glass canopy and members-only The Sanctuary.

Chichi highlights include Pathway in Monet's Garden, a concoction of Beefeater and Hendricks Gin, elderflower liqueur, honeysuckle, jasmine, lemon and egg white, and Portrait of Pablo Picasso, a blend of Beefeater Gin, Campari, Fernet, Suze liqueur, sweet vermouth, neroli and cassia.

If fine sakes and spirits are your thing, the House Bar is home. Discreetly hidden on the ground floor of Regent Singapore (we almost couldn't find the door until someone came out), the intimate contemporary lounge exudes upscale izakaya vibes. You won't find the usual mass labels here; only the likes of "La Isojiman" Junmai Daijinyo and Teeda Aged 5 Years Japanese craft rum.

There are also easy-going cocktails such as Chu-Hai with shochu and fresh grapefruit and Rum Old Fashioned with Teeda rum and coffee bitters. The food menu is pricey but surprisingly extensive and well done for the small space.

There are delicious small bites such as Fatty Tuna Aburi and Negitoro Monaka (a crisp sandwich with ikura and avocado) to more filling Miyazaki beef sandos and clay pot rice with Miyazaki wagyu or snow crab. The fun people at Low Tide along Club Street have launched P&C (Punch & Consequence) a chef-led concept on the second floor together with chef Pete Smit of Dirty Supper and Tiffany Chua of ceramics company Dirty Hands Only. —CNA

F&B outlets are rolling out new food and drink concepts and reviving popular pre-pandemic supper clubs to enliven those long-awaited gatherings with your tribe

