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There are tricks and treats to preserve "those lips that Love's own hand did make". And you don't have to go the full guppy with collagen implants

I can't have escaped anyone's notice that Mick-the-lips-Jagger recently turned 60. A fact in itself shocking enough for those of us who remember him as young, pouting and exhorting us to get off of his cloud.

Even more shocking is what has happened to those famous lips. I have been studying closely a series of photographs of Mick through the years - I know, it's summer, I haven't got a lot on - and if you compare his 60-year-old lips with his 20-year-old ones, the diminishment of that once full-to-bursting mouth is significant. Yup, lips, like the rest of us, lose pigment, colour and definition. Cheers God, thanks a lot, or, as Mick himself might once have said, "Nice one".

But there are tricks and treats to preserve "those lips that Love's own hand did make". And you don't have to go the full guppy with collagen implants. You can improve the contours of the mouth and restore definition with semi-permanent make-up, where pigment is placed under the skin. I once had this done on my eyebrows, to fill in the gaps left by youthful over-plucking and waxing. I found the procedure more painful than childbirth and recall begging for a general anaesthetic.

However, **TRACIE GILES** [selected salons in London and the South East; 07973 639792] assures me her state-of-the-art digital machine from Germany causes so little vibration that her clients have been known to nod off during treatment. She offers a **LIP BLUSH** treatment for between £600 and £700; it takes around two hours and you'll need a follow-up treatment and a retouch every 12 to 18 months for 50 per cent of the original cost of your treatment.

She feathers the line into the body of the lip and gives a soft flush of colour going into the mouth. Lyndsay Whitburn, herself a beauty therapist, is one of Tracie's clients and vouches for the results. "It's slightly uncomfortable, but

not painful and Tracie is an excellent technician," she says.

Now you have to keep lips soft and supple. US Kentucky-based plastic surgeon **DR GREG BROWN** is the inventor of **RÉ VIVE**, a range of skincare containing the miraculous Nobel Prize-winning substance, Epidermal Growth Factor (EGF). Dr Brown's mellifluous Southern telephone tones explained how it all works.

EGF is a protein that we all have and release when wounded. Now, thanks to recombinant DNA techniques (cloning), it can be made in large quantities. Having observed its effects in speeding up the healing process, Dr Brown patented the cosmetic use of EGF and developed Ré Vive to help reverse ageing. EGF stimulates cells to divide more quickly, so on a molecular level, Ré Vive restores radiance and gives you "dewy, fluid-filled skin": an appearance to the skin that you cannot achieve surgically.

Although he does lots of face-lifts, Dr Brown is certain that as these sorts of creams grow in sophistication, they will make surgery less necessary. **RÉ VIVE LIP AND PERIORAL RENEWAL CREAM** is available in the UK, at SpaceNK (£78; 020-7299 4999). Dr Brown ploughs the proceeds into research, which is good; as I've told him, I'm counting on him to keep us young. By the way, the perioral area is that between nose and mouth, which is prone to those vertical lines that we women get more than men (again, cheers God). Ré Vive has a range of creams to avoid that Julio Iglesias/George Hamilton look and keep lips in the peerless, poreless face they deserve.

There's nothing quite like a new lipstick to lift

the spirits. My mother would never let anyone outside the family see her bare-lipped. If the doorbell rang, she would rush, as obediently as one of Pavlov's dogs, to reapply. Small wonder then that I am of the belief that lipstick is important in a girl. First apply **LIP PLUMP!** by **BENEFIT** (£13.50; 0901 113 0001), a thick base coat that adds volume and fills in the cracks.

Make sure that lip liner matches the colour of your lips or I will have to arrest you and clap you in irons. **SISLEY'S BOTANICAL LIP LINER IN NATURAL** (£19; 020-7491 2722) should do the trick. Follow with **SHISEIDO'S SHEER GLOSS LIPSTICK** for moisture and shine, available in 12 shades (£14; 020-7630 1515). I'm also a big fan of **STILA CONVERTIBLE LIP COLOR** (£18; 01730 232566), a dual-ended tube, one side matt, the other sheer. Try, too, **PRESCRIPTIVES TINT BALMS FOR THE LIPS** (£12.50; 01730 232566), fruity, sheer lip balms with SPF15.

Now spend the rest of the summer looking pout-perfect and lip-smackingly good. I certainly plan to. ●

Hannah Betts is away

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