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DIANNE BUSWELL

'I'm so much more comfortable in my skin now'

The *Strictly* pro shares her beauty and wellness secrets



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MY LIFE IN HEALTH

‘LOOKING AFTER MYSELF FOR STRICTLY IS A YEAR-ROUND JOB!’

Professional dancer Dianne Buswell, 35, talks to Joanna Ebsworth about the confidence-boosting power of having good skin, her passion for wellness, and why taking care of her body and mind for *Strictly Come Dancing* starts long before the show kicks off.

Having great skin is really important to me. When I was younger, I couldn't leave the house without at least putting on some foundation, and that's probably because I didn't feel comfortable in my own skin. On the flip side, I never did much with skincare. Growing up in Australia, I didn't realise at the time how much damage the sun could cause my skin. You just think you're invincible and that your skin will be fine forever. And then you start to get older and realise you really need to make more of an effort.

I work in an industry where I always have to look at my face. I'm always in front of a mirror or on TV, and that means I see everything. So, it's important to me that I feel comfortable and confident in my skin. These days, I don't feel the need to go out wearing foundation all the time, but I think that has come with age, and looking after my skin more. I love the feeling of a "no make-up day" and letting my skin breathe when I've got

‘Wearing heavy make-up and sweating through two shows a day, every day, can really take its toll on your skin’

time off from dancing. Wearing heavy make-up and sweating through two shows a day, every day, can really take its toll on your skin. Sure, I get the odd breakout, but that's down to hormones and can't be helped.

Nowadays, I stick to a very simple skincare routine. Like I said before, I never really did skincare when I was younger so I could never start a 20-step routine because I wouldn't stick to it! But give me a few good products and I'll use them religiously. I've been using the New Nordic Hyaluronic Skincare range for two years and I love it because it adds moisture into my skin and works on fine lines and wrinkles. Not that I'm saying I have loads of fine lines, but the hyaluronic acid is excellent for prevention.

I used to feel so self-conscious about my undereye area. I'd put make up on for a show and, because the skin under my eyes was so dry, my undereye area would look



wrinkly. Honestly, ask anyone who used to do my make-up and they'll tell you I always asked for no make-up under my eyes. But that's why I love using the amazing New Nordic Hyaluronic Eye Cream (£29.95, newnordic.co.uk) so much. It's changed my life because now I can actually put concealer underneath my eyes and feel okay about it! I also use the Hyaluronic Active Serum (£34.95), and the Hyaluronic Active Cream (£39.95), on my face morning and night and I'm genuinely so much happier with the texture and moisture of my skin. It gives my skin the glow I've always wished I'd had.

I also like to look after my skin from the inside out. The one thing my mum taught me when I was younger was to take my vitamin C, so I always took it religiously. Now, however, I take it in the form of the New Nordic Hyaluronic Shot (£33.95 for 15 sachets), because it contains vitamin C along with hyaluronic acid, marine collagen and sea buckthorn. I'd say it's my hero product, because it improves my skin elasticity and keeps my skin healthy from

'I love to move my body – it's more of a mental health and endorphin thing for me'

within, rather than just on the surface. It blows my mind that I'm happy not to wear make-up now, but when I do put my foundation on, it looks so much smoother and glossier. It's music to my ears when people tell me my skin looks great.

Looking after myself for *Strictly Come Dancing* is an all-year-round job. Before a new series, I like to make sure my hair, skin and nails are looking good because once it starts, self-care goes out the window – and that's a true story! You're constantly teaching or thinking about choreography and how you can make a dance better, so I like to take care of myself and prep my body before it all kicks off. When you feel good in yourself, you execute happiness, so I love doing all the things I know my body will love me for.

I love anything wellness based. Like, I'm really into it. I love going to cryotherapy chambers and infrared saunas and hot yoga, and I've been having Body Ballancer sessions for lymphatic drainage. I also go to this little meditation pod as it gives me a chance to be





‘Dancing provides an amazing endorphin rush, and learning a routine is great for keeping your memory ticking away’

calm and think and enjoy the quiet moments, because quiet moments are just as important as all the busy moments, if not more so.

Journalling is important too, especially when I’m having a day where lots of things seem to be going wrong. Looking back over my journal and seeing everything I’ve achieved that week, or even that day, helps me to feel happiness and gratitude, which genuinely changes your state of mind.

When I’m doing *Strictly*, dancing is more than enough to keep me fit. But when I’m not doing the show, it’s crucial that I keep moving and stretching to prevent injuries and stop my body from seizing up. Luckily, I love to move my body – it’s more of a mental health and endorphin thing for me! I honestly don’t have a set routine and prefer to play it by ear. I like to do less impactful activities, so I alternate between walking, swimming, yoga and Pilates. I also love running but I don’t like the feeling of it on my joints, so I only do it every now and then.

I can’t believe *Strictly* is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year! I mean, I’ve been on the show for eight years and the time really has flown by. But I think it goes to show how important the show is to so many people, including everyone who watches it. It really is the most magical thing to be a part of, and it still feels very surreal every year they invite me back. I’m always grateful to be a part of one of the biggest shows on TV and I get massive goosebumps every time I hear the theme tune. I’ve loved every single season I’ve been a part of and have so many fond memories. The best thing is that each year is different, and I have learnt something new from every single one of my partners.

My absolute favourite part of *Strictly* is being in the training room with my partner. Usually, I show them a routine at the beginning of the week, and they’ll be full of doubt saying they’ll never be able to do it. But by the end of the week, they’re a completely different person, and it blows my mind to think I helped them achieve that. And then you get to the studio, and you just have this amazing team of people that puts

another layer on top of the dance with beautiful lighting and costumes and the band – and the props are just insane! Never in my life did I imagine being able to do a dance and have it filmed so beautifully and then put all over TV. It’s a really cool experience to see something go from zero to a hundred in a week.

Dancing is so much fun and has so many benefits. It’s a real workout that uses so many muscles, and I know many physically fit people who will start dancing and be dripping in sweat within 10 minutes. It also provides an amazing endorphin rush, and learning a routine is great for keeping your memory ticking away. If you always feel inspired to try dancing after watching *Strictly* but are too self-conscious to go to a class, I’d suggest trying some online tutorials first to give you a bit more confidence about taking instruction and moving to the music. But I would say there’s nothing like going to an actual class, having a teacher in front of you, and feeling the energy in the room. I can guarantee everyone won’t be looking at you because they’ll be too busy focusing on themselves and having a good time!

The future is looking very busy. After this year’s series of *Strictly*, I’ll be doing my very own UK tour with [fellow pro dancer] Vito Coppola called *Dianne & Vito: Red Hot and Ready* (dianneandvito.co.uk). There will be lots of dancing, singing and acting, which I’m very excited about. I’ve been having one-to-one acting lessons with a coach for a couple of years now, and the thought of potentially doing a TV series or movie would be my absolute dream.

I also have a strong passion for helping people with eating disorders, so I’d be interested in doing a documentary that delves into dancers with eating disorders because I think it’s still very common and something we should talk about more. I’d love to study more about the subject, so who knows what could happen next!

● Dianne Buswell is brand ambassador for Scandinavian health and beauty brand New Nordic (newnordic.co.uk).