

Natural Lifestyle

LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL — NATURALLY

www.mynaturallifestyle.com

May 2021



Summer beauty switch

Change your regime
for a natural
summer glow

Joint lessons

Natural Lifestyle's guide to
healthy joints and bones

GOOD GUTS

AN IN-DEPTH GUIDE TO BETTER
DIGESTIVE HEALTH

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LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL – NATURALLY

Welcome



April 12, a day that will be etched in our memory for some time to come, for it was the day we could begin to feel a sense of normality returning to our lives. It was one of a number of crucial steps in our roadmap out of lockdown, but the fact we could now visit all non-essential shops, not to mention cafes and pubs outdoors, certainly offered us some hope that we were one step closer to that so commonly used phrase, 'the new normal'.

But it's so important that during this time of change, we are also kind to ourselves in how we adjust; having been under lockdown rules for so many months, it's understandable you may have become accustomed to this new way of living, and therefore, may be feeling certain anxieties about being out and about again – and that's OK. The advice from the experts is to pace yourself, ease yourself back in to socialising gradually, and don't feel pressure to do everything all at once, especially if you don't feel comfortable. You must also be sure to talk to people around you about your worries and try to vary your routine so you slowly get used to the changes.

And let's not forget that social distancing and mask wearing will remain in place for some time to come, and that we all have a responsibility to look after our own health; Coronavirus is still going to be here, even when the majority of Brits are vaccinated, and while it offers us an element of assurance and protection, you being in the best health possible remains hugely important; a strong focus on your immune system, a balanced diet, lots of colourful fruit and veg, plenty of water and easing off on your alcohol intake are all important steps. And sleep is also crucial, both for your physical and mental wellbeing.

And one final word on a slow return to normality; while non-essential shops reopening is a

fantastic step forward, we must say a heartfelt thank you to our wonderful independent health food stores, which stayed open throughout the pandemic, helping support our health and wellbeing with products, advice and a warm smile. Our independent health food stores have worked tirelessly for many months to serve us in the most difficult of times, and we hope you continue to support them as we move forward.

Rachel Symonds,
Editor



THE BEST BITS

An insight into what the *Natural Lifestyle* team have been up to this month.



As the weather warms up, there was no better time to take to the trails for our bike enthusiast Sales Exec, James.



It might have been muddy underfoot, but it was still a bright spring day for a run in the countryside for Editor Rachel.



Sunshine views on a lunchtime walk.



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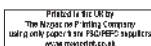
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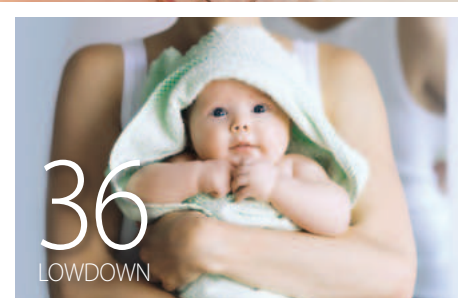
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Care for your joints and bones through the years to reduce your risk of issues later in life



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THE NUTRITIONAL SECRETS FOR HEALTHY IMMUNITY

Our immune health has never been so under the spotlight since the Covid-19 pandemic struck, and although the focus is often more pronounced during the winter, it's crucial we are supporting immunity all year round.

And to remind people of that, the British Nutrition Foundation has created a new resource, sharing the secrets to a healthy immune system for older adults, especially for those who may be experiencing low appetite or finding it hard to eat well, about what to eat to get all the vitamins and minerals needed to support a healthy immune system.

The foundation explains that as we age, our immune system begins to work less effectively, making us more susceptible to diseases and infections, such as colds, flu and pneumonia. This, combined with a loss of interest in food and poorer appetite that may occur in later life, can make it harder to eat well and get all the nutrients needed for good health.

Sara Stanner, Science Director at the British Nutrition Foundation, explained: "The immune system is a complex network of cells and chemical compounds that help defend the body against infections. There are a number of different nutrients, including protein, omega 3 fats and many vitamins and minerals that are involved in supporting our immune systems to work normally, and these are found in a wide variety of foods – there's no single nutrient or food that can 'boost' immunity.

"This means that having a healthy, varied diet is key for getting the nutrients that are most important for our immune system, as well as all the other systems of the body. Our new Nutrition and Immunity for Older Adults resource has been developed bearing in mind the challenges we face when trying to eat well and stay healthy later in life and it is important to remember that our bodies and nutritional needs alter as we age."

To download the British Nutrition Foundation's new advice, visit www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/covid19/nutritionimmunityallages.html



Prepare for the veggie challenge

May marks National Vegetarian Week and this year, we're being asked to take the Veggie 123 Challenge.

The week takes place between May 10-16 and is hosted by the Vegetarian Society. This year, there is the Veggie123 challenge, where you are encouraged to try veggie food for seven days – plus you get to challenge your friends and family.

The challenge is simple; go veggie for one week, nominate two people and donate £3 to the Vegetarian Society, a charity that is passionate about veggie food.

You can take up the challenge at www.nationalvegetarianweek.org

Inside... HEALTH

SPRING COOKING KITCHEN RULES

As life under lockdown lifts and we spend more time outside, being prepped in the kitchen with some advance planning is a good idea.

And here to help is Niki Webster, the founder of the Rebel Recipes blog and author of two cookbooks, who champions seasonal products in all her recipes and is offering tips on creating delicious seasonal recipes with zero-waste – starting with batch cooking.

Batch-cooking comes with a whole heap of benefits such as saving time, effort and food waste but is normally attributed to more of the hearty comforting dishes, but batch-cooking is not just for winter. Niki's tips include:

- **Spring is all about lighter and fresher dishes** utilising the yield of seasonal ingredients it produces, from the more classic Jersey Royal potatoes, rhubarb, asparagus and purple sprouting broccoli and even foraged delights, wild garlic and nettles. A lot of these ingredients are short-lived, so you only have a small window to enjoy them at their



Niki Webster

leeks, spring onions and asparagus, only par-cook them – by bringing to the boil and then simmering for around five to six minutes – before plunging into an ice-cold bath to shock them and help them retain their nutrients and vivid colours, let drain and dab dry before freezing.

- **If you want to batch-cook seasonal spring dishes** like risotto or grain salads that are going to have fresh peas or asparagus in, use the pea's discarded pods or the woody asparagus ends to make a stock to impart the flavour into the grains while cooking the first-time round.

best before they start to wilt and look a little sorry for themselves.

- **Cook the ingredients separately.** When batch cooking spring ingredients, it's all about keeping their vibrancy. For ingredients like fresh shelled peas, wild garlic,

Freeze and reheat them separately and add the vegetables just before serving.

- **This translates into fridge-based recipes too.** Salads are a great seasonal dish for spring, but pre-made salads can go soggy very quickly. To ensure this doesn't happen, you want to prep and store your ingredients in separate Tupperware containers and never pre-dress a salad. You can add a squeeze of lemon or lime juice over the prepared ingredients before storing to help keep them fresh and add a cheesecloth or paper towel over the top of any salad leaves and herbs to soak up any additional moisture and then store upside down so the cloth is on the bottom. Always try and keep it in the crisper drawer of your fridge where possible. Pre-cut cucumbers and peppers should also have cloth to soak up the moisture, but this time, wrap it around the pre-cut batons and store it in the door or on the top shelf. Tomatoes should be left on the counter, uncut and then cut just before adding all your pre-prepared ingredients together.

EASY LIVING

Get your skin glowing with these natural and organic selections



The new Ben and Anna hand creams are the latest addition to the popular Zero Waste range. Available in 2 varieties, Daily Care and Intensive Care the hand creams are suitable for vegans and

use only natural ingredients. The Daily Hand Cream is a light formula made with almond oil which provides intensive moisture, while the addition of cocoa butter leaves your hands feeling soft all day. Our Intensive Hand Cream is designed to provide intense moisture and protection for irritated and dry hands using nourishing avocado oil and rich shea butter.

£4.45 www.benandanna.uk



It's easy to achieve a natural-looking, sun-kissed tan, perfect for spring. The lavera Self-Tanning Lotion is a lightweight creamy gradual tanning lotion that glides effortlessly across the skin for a streak free finish. The replenishing and nourishing vegan formula with organic sunflower oil and organic macadamia oil moisturises the skin, leaving it feeling super soft, delicately bronzed and healthy – as if kissed by the sun!

£16.95 www.laverauk.co.uk

Scrub up and indulge yourself with the benecos Shower Scrub to leave your skin silky smooth and soft. This natural and organic body scrub uses apricot kernels to gently buff away and banish dry skin while elderflower extract helps to protect the skin against free radicals, leaving behind healthy glowing skin with an invigorating burst of fragrance.

£5.95 www.benecos.uk



Feeling achy and sore? Let SOiL Arnica Athletic Massage and Body Oil help. This soothing organic massage body oil is formulated with arnica which relieves joint and muscle pain; rosemary and black pepper organic essential oils promotes circulation and refresh muscle tissue while lavender soothes and relaxes the body and mind. The conditioning and nurturing base of cold pressed carrier oils nourish the body and calms the mind, promoting relaxation and helping to unwind.

£13.20 www.soilorganics.co.uk



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£12.75 www.fairsquared.co.uk

Post-pandemic posture care

Being stuck indoors more often, working from home and being less active are all issues experienced during the last year of lockdown, and could have left you needing to correct your posture.

In an era of national lockdowns and make-shift kitchen-table-desks, even those of us who have been practicing yoga or Pilates regularly may have fallen victim to 'pandemic posture', characterised by hunched shoulders, tight chest muscles, a weak and arched back and tight hips, coupled with aches, pains and a tightness you just can't seem to stretch out. These negative habits work against the natural design of our body, ultimately causing our muscles to become imbalanced and knocking posture out of alignment.

And so, David Kingsbury, Pilates coach for the Eastnine fitness app, has advised that we need to strengthen and lengthen the correct muscles. He explains that for a lot of people who sit at a desk and lead a sedentary lifestyle, aim to strengthen your glutes and back, and lengthen your chest, shoulders and hip flexors.

Eastnine is a fitness app which motivates, supports and guides people working out. It has recently launched a Pilates programme for beginners, which is available on demand any time on the app.

Inside... LIFESTYLE

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

It's never been easier to ditch throwaway plastic, such as clingfilm, thanks to eco-friendly brands like WaxWrap.

WaxWrap is a sustainable re-useable beeswax wrap designed to keep food super fresh, without resorting to clingfilm, which pollutes waterways and can poison our wild and marine life.

The wrap comes in a handy bag, pre-cut sheets and on-a-roll format, contains organic certified ingredients and the production process behind these wraps meets rigorous environmental and social standards, making them a safe and responsible choice for the home. In addition, the full range is approved by The Vegetarian Society, made from just four natural materials, organic cotton, organic jojoba oil, pine resin and beeswax, allowing food to breathe the way nature intended.

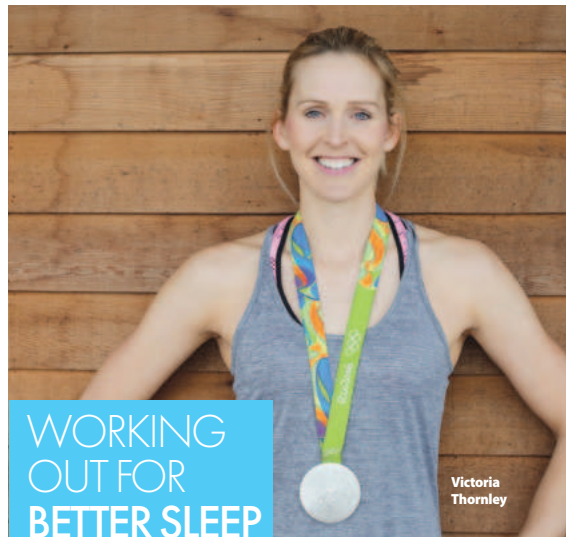


SAY HELLO TO SHO

Keep your hydration on track in the warmer weather with Sho.

The Original 2.0 bottle is practical and will not only keep your drink refreshingly cool all day, but it will reduce your single-use plastic.

Available in a selection of bright colours, patterns and designs to suit any taste, which can be personalised with different colour lids, carabiners and even an engraved name or message, each bottle comes with a lifetime guarantee from manufacturing faults. Plus, SHO donates 10 per cent of all profits to Mary's Meals.



WORKING OUT FOR BETTER SLEEP

Victoria
Thornley

With the gyms now finally reopened, millions of us will be increasing our workouts, but it's important to make sure you're doing it properly.

For many, the return to treadmills, static bikes and rowing machines comes as a huge relief following several months of home workouts and reduced motivation, but the impact of a return to strenuous exercise on our body's sleep habits cannot be underestimated.

To help gym-goers manage the sudden change in habit, The Sleep Charity has joined forces with Team GB athlete, Victoria Thornley, to offer five top tips for harnessing sleep as a secret weapon in your workout schedule. Victoria advised:

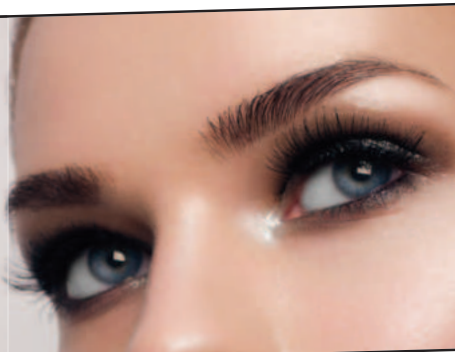
- **Experiment with your routine:** "I try to keep to a routine as much as possible each night – and bodies do crave routine – but it's important to experiment and find the routine that's best for you. Try a hot or cold bath, activities that help you wind down such as reading, and develop a routine that works best for you. Everybody is different and it's important to find a regime that works for you."
- **Manage your body's temperature:** "When I work out or train later in the evenings, then that naturally has an impact on body temperature, and it can take some time for that to return to normal levels. If I do have to train close to bedtime, then I will have a cold shower and ensure my room is cool in order to get my internal temperature to where it needs to be."
- **Apps not devices:** "Most people already understand that it's important to cut down on using devices in the bedroom when they're getting ready to go to sleep – and I certainly subscribe to this belief – but I have had some good results from using some of the sleep and wellness apps, like Headspace, that are available. Sleep stories that you can listen to without looking at a screen have helped me to nod off."
- **Cut out refined sugars:** "Nutrition and eating the right things are naturally a big part my day-to-day life and cutting out refined sugars forms a major part of that. This also has a significant impact on sleep and, because I don't have refined sugars that often, I definitely feel the impact at night-time when I've indulged – although sometimes it's no bad thing allowing yourself the odd treat!"
- **Don't let the stress get to you:** "The stress of elite sport can occupy your mind and, even though we have our own strategies for managing this pressure, it can be really helpful to switch off and spend some quality time with friends and family and relax your focus a little before heading off to bed. Similarly, I try not to stress about not getting to sleep. The more you worry about it, the harder you'll find it to nod off."



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MUST-HAVE MOISTURISATION

Treat your skin to some healthy hydration with this luxurious new addition to Weleda's range.

Inspired by succulents such as prickly pear and aloe vera, the Weleda 24h Hydrating Facial Care range deeply hydrates skin by reactivating the skin's natural ability to store and regulate moisture.

Prickly pear contains valuable vitamins, together with unsaturated fatty acids, to keep skin looking fresh, healthy and plumped with hydration, nourished, refreshed and moisturised. The texture is light, non-greasy and easily absorbed, while pure essential oils such as green mandarin, invigorating peppermint and soft floral notes of palmarosa provide an uplifting shower-fresh scent.

The intelligent prickly pear cactus can store water reserves in its broad paddle-like leaves long after other desert plants have shrivelled and withered, with this resilient, tenacious and drought-resistant plant able to withstand intense arid conditions.

The range includes 24h Hydrating Facial Cream, 24h Hydrating Facial Lotion, Hydrating Eye Gel and Hydrating Facial Mist, all of which are NATRUE-certified and vegan.



BANISH BLEMISHES, NATURALLY

Care for blemish and combination prone skin with this natural range from Lavera.

Pure Beauty has just been reformulated with carefully balanced natural formulas, featuring organic mint and natural salicylic acid, perfect for targeting the nose and chin areas, which are more susceptible to blemishes whilst mask wearing.

We love the 3-in-1 Wash-Scrub-Mask, a multi-talented all-star product, which deeply cleanses pores and regulates sebum production, whilst the peel removes dead skin cells and combats blackheads. The tube is made from 67 per cent recycled material.

You could also try the Anti-Spot Gel, described as the rapid responder, which is specially formulated with an antibacterial effect, helping spots to recede quickly and to immediately cool and calm the skin. Completing the range is Purifying Facial Tonic and Pore Refining Moisturising Fluid.



Inside... BEAUTY

Rosehip repair

With its multitude of benefits, we could all do with adding rosehip to our skincare regime.

And now, Dr. Craft has made it easier with the creation of its Bio-Bakuchiol & Rosehip Facial Oil, helping to provide hydration, improve elasticity and boost a healthy-looking dewy complexion.

Marrying science with green chemistry, this powerful facial oil is made from an impressive blend of sustainably sourced organic ingredients – just a few drops will leave skin smoother, bouncier, plumper and overall, more youthful. Rich in organic rosehip seed oil, it blends a potent antioxidant mix of vitamins A, E, C and F (that's linoleic acid, the mother of all essential fatty acids that's rich in omega 6) and as it's non-comedogenic, it sinks into skin without clogging pores.

This oil also has the added benefit of containing organic bakuchiol – a skin-friendly natural but super effective alternative to retinol (vitamin A) but without the downsides such as irritation, sensitivity and peeling, along with organic oils including apricot, grapeseed, soothing and anti-inflammatory lavender and stress busting bergamot.



Be a sustainable beauty

A natural health expert has expanded her eco-conscious range to now offer hand and body scrubs.

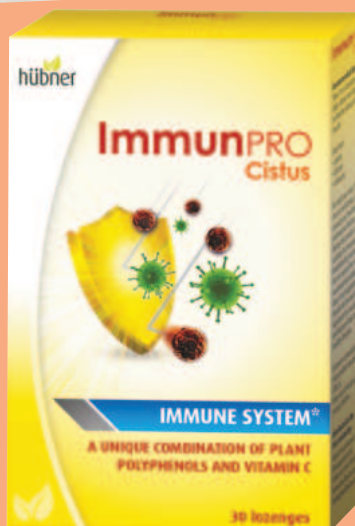
BombusLeaf (Bombus is Latin for bee and Leaf represents the life of the wood pulp of plant life) was created by Helen Kennefick at the height of the pandemic. Helen has a distribution company in the independent health sector, and when brands struggled during Covid and no longer could afford her services, Helen thought outside the box, creating BombusLeaf. The first product was Beeswax Paper Wraps, made from re-wilded meadow grass, wood pulp and beeswax, which not only work but also smell divine when you first take them out of the packed (think fresh hay and beeswax).

She has now turned her hand to the skin, with BombusLeaf Hand and Body Soap Scrubs, a range of handmade botanical multifunctional and effective hand and body soap scrubs that can be used every day as a regular hand soap or taken into the bath or shower for an all-over invigorating body scrub.

Handmade, using only 100 per cent natural and organically grown, fairly traded butters, essential oils and botanical ingredients, they are vegan friendly, have minimal recycled packaging and come in Chia and Peppermint, Coconut and Lime, Coffee Bean, Lavender, and Oat, Chamomile, and Calendula varieties.

Summer health solutions

Discover the best natural health products to support your wellbeing this summer.



STRENGTHEN SUMMER IMMUNITY

ImmunPRO cistus is a unique food supplement containing the extract from cistus plant combined with vitamin C, which helps maintain the body's immune defences.

Cistus is one of the richest sources of plant polyphenols, which are used by plants to protect themselves from ultraviolet radiation and act as a natural defence from pathogens and disease.

Produced in a dissolvable lozenge format, the active ingredients help coat the throat with these polyphenols providing additional protection during times of increased risk of infection.

Simply suck one tablet every two hours when travelling or when at higher risk of infection.

SOOTHE YOUR STOMACH

If you are doing any travelling this summer – whether at home or abroad – try The Ginger People Gin Gins.

The Spicy Turmeric variety combines the earthy goodness of turmeric with the healthy warmth of ginger to delight your palate and soothe your stomach. The benefits of ginger perfectly combine with those of turmeric, producing a delicious confection with added health benefits.

Made with fresh turmeric, it contains more fresh ginger than any other brand.



BREATHE EASY Inhalo DSI is a dry salt inhaler that provides relief of both bronchial and nasal congestion, whether from infection or allergies – so ideal for during hay fever season.

Studies carried out with COPD and asthma sufferers demonstrated their effectiveness at improving lung function, resulting a reduction in required medication.

These inhalers slip in your pocket or purse and are ready to use whenever required.



EASE DIGESTIVE DISCOMFORT

Silicea Gastrointestinal Gel provides rapid natural relief from troubles from IBS to heartburn.

Importantly, Silicea is produced without the need for preservatives, which can often aggravate digestive problems in sensitive people. Available in a 200ml bottle or handy sachet pack, it is ideal for travelling.

Silicea recently teamed up with the largest IBS charity, theibsnetwork.org, which offers advice and support to IBS sufferers. If you suffer with IBS, visit www.theibsnetwork.org for great advice to help with your symptoms.



Products featured are available from your local independent health store.
If not in stock, the store will be able to order for you.

Holistic homeopathy

Explore the wonderful world of homeopathy and discover the remedies that are right for you.

When you consider that homeopathy has been used by millions of people around the world for centuries, and the fact it can be supportive of a wide range of ailments, it's easy to see why this natural form of medicine remains hugely popular.

The principles of homeopathy are quite simple; the theory is that 'like cures like'. What this means in practice is that a substance taken in small amounts is believed to cure the same symptoms it causes if taken in large amounts. By way of example, the organisation, Homeopathy UK, cites hay fever; a patient suffering from hay fever may benefit from the remedy, *allium cepa* (onion) because it produces similar symptoms, such as watery eyes or runny nose.

Is it for you?

The good thing about homeopathy is that it can be used by everyone, right through the years. It can also be used by children and pregnant women, but it is advised this is done under the guidance of a qualified homeopath.

The beauty of homeopathy is it can be used for so many different health areas too, making it one of the most versatile of natural medicines. Areas it is specifically well regarded for includes the already mentioned hay fever, nausea, aches and pains, anxiety, and first aid emergencies.

If you're not sure what is right for you, your health food store will be able to advise of your options, and also recommend a reputable brand. If you want to take things further, we would suggest you consult a qualified homeopath, who can give you a more personalised plan based around any specific health concerns you have, taking into account all aspects of your health.

When taking a homeopathic remedy, you will find it in a variety of forms. The most commonly recommended will be as a tablet, and you can find them in different strengths, such as 30c. You may also find them in liquid, powder and cream form.

Common ailments

Homeopathy can offer gentle support to people for all kinds of common issues, with the most commonly recommended including:

- **Hay fever** – as already mentioned, *allium cepa* is ideal to ease watery eyes, and *euphrasia* is also useful in this regard. *Nux vomica* is beneficial for those with a stuffy nose, and *arundo* for itching and sneezing.
- **Digestion** – if you have overindulged, *nux vomica* is helpful.
- **Joint pain** – *arnica* is the star remedy here, and can be taken in capsule form, or massage cream into the affected area. *Rhus tox* is also known to be useful for muscles aches, strains and sprains. *Calendula* can be useful for healing and easing inflammation.
- **Anxiety** – one of the most commonly recommended by experts is *gelsemium* in times of anxiety. You could also consider *arg nit*, and, if you are nervous or restless, try *arsenicum*. If you have trouble sleeping during times of anxiety, *avena sativa* or *passiflora* are good choice.
- **For children** – if your youngster has a slight fever, *belladonna* is often recommended, and when it comes to teething, *chamomilla* is the one to choose.
- **Coughs and colds** – *bryonia* is ideal for a cough, as is *pulsatilla*. For signs of a winter cold, *aconite* is useful, while *gelsemium* can also be used.

TRY THIS

Helios Homeopathy
Hay Fever

Weleda Chamomile
Teething Granules

Nelsons Rhus Tox
Clickpak 30c

Ainsworths Calendula
Cream



Helios Injury

Three homeopathic remedies Arnica, Rhus tox and Ruta grav are combined to form Helios Injury. This award winning combination has a long history of traditional use for the symptomatic relief of pain and inflammation associated with joint problems, strains, sprains, bruises, trauma and can aid recovery after strenuous exercise. Helios Injury is an excellent addition to the sports bag or first aid cabinet at home and comes in organic, sucrose pill form in our easy to use single dose dispenser.



Natural Relief for Hay Fever

Award winning Helios Hay Fever combines three homeopathic remedies Allium cepa, Euphrasia and Sabadilla and has a long history of traditional use to relieve typical hay fever symptoms such as irritated eyes and nose, itching, sneezing and a dry cough. Being natural Helios Hay Fever is without any known side effects, does not cause drowsiness and is suitable

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www.pharma-hemp.co.uk



HayFever? Dust or Pet Allergy?

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www.haymax.biz



ORGANIC ASHWAGANDHA & BLACK PEPPER

The Good Guru's Organic Ashwagandha with Black pepper is a herbal supplement traditionally used in Ayurveda to support a balanced

response to stress and anxiety, it also promotes a healthy immune system. Organic Black pepper has been added to help improve the absorption and digestion of the Ashwagandha so you get the full benefits.

It may help in the following ways:

- Balance the stress and anxiety response
- Protect the immune system
- The energy levels for people who are often tired
- Assist women by balancing hormones
- Helps to calm the mind
- It has Anti-Inflammatory Properties
- Mood Booster .



Colomint

Peppermint oil is one of the natural ways to eliminate digestive discomfort associated with IBS. When swallowed, the cooling flavour of peppermint benefits the digestive system. Studies have shown that peppermint may help with IBS related symptoms, which can include bloating, trapped wind and indigestion. Some sufferers prefer to take peppermint oil capsules rather than medicated solutions, purely because they contain the natural oils from the

peppermint plant. The peppermint oil in Colomint is extracted purely from natural sources; the peppermint plant itself. To ensure Colomint capsules deliver their peppermint oil to your gut, where your body needs it most, each capsule has a gastro-resistant coating. Once in the gut, the peppermint oil is released and absorbed for the greatest benefit.



NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



Natural SPF30 Sun Protection With We Love The Planet

Vegan, sustainable and water-resistant, the We Love The Planet Sunscreen Stick SPF30 contains natural UV-filters Zinc Oxide and Titanium Dioxide with a sun protection of 97%. An environmentally-friendly alternative to traditional sunscreens, it is made from 100% natural ingredients and no chemical UV-filters such as oxybenzone. Better for your body and the planet, the outer carton is made from recycled cardboard and the packaging is (100% paper) zero waste. The formula is hypoallergenic, making it suitable for even the most sensitive skin, and the easily spreadable consistency won't block your pores. Available from all good health stores and independent pharmacies nationwide, and www.kijaniliving.com



Unplug - Night Time Supplement

Time to switch off. Sleep deep, wake up refreshed and seize your day. Unplug is your de-stressor. It eases your mind and brings you home. Welcome a new soothing mood, an unbroken peace of mind and a sense of calm vitality. Quell anxiety and sleep deeper with traditional botanical herbs scientifically combined with micronutrients for holistic stress relief. Every ingredient in Unplug is a real food supplement deeply grounded in nutritional science with excellent human clinical results and is safe for long term use. Suitable for Vegans & Vegetarians. No gluten. www.motionnutrition.com



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Nervous System Support

If you find yourself feeling pressurised or worried. Passiflora Tablets could be a good option for you. New to A. Vogel's range and containing plant-based nutrients such as Passiflora extract, Valerian extract, Lemon Balm extract, magnesium and zinc, Passiflora Tablets can help contribute to the normal functioning of the nervous system and contribute to normal cognitive function. Suitable for vegans. Always read the leaflet. www.avogel.co.uk



Natural Traditions Focus Fuel Coffee

Organic Traditions Focus Fuel Coffee is an instant coffee blend with lion's mane mushroom, gotu kola, brahmi, MCT from coconut oil and plant-based omegas. This instant coffee blend is dairy free, made with our signature

coconut milk powder and provides you with an energizing, nourishing boost. The Organic Traditions Focus Fuel Coffee consists of botanicals that are traditionally used to support focus, memory and creativity. Simply add to hot water for an instant creamy, delicious drink. Keto and vegan - friendly. Are you ready to get focused?

Available from all good health stores and independent pharmacies nationwide, and www.kijaniliving.com

Breakfast can be something that attracts mixed opinion; we're told that it is the most important meal of the day, and many people wake up starving and need to eat first thing. Yet some experts suggest that not eating immediately on waking and being more intuitive with when you are actually hungry is a better approach.

In terms of the right strategy, it is a mix of the two. Breakfast (literally meaning, breaking your fast), is important because it wakes up your metabolism after effectively fasting while you sleep. It gives you energy to fuel your day, and there is research to suggest skipping breakfast can actually make you eat more later in the day. However, we must also remember our bodies can struggle to cope with digesting food if we eat too late at night; eating late into the evening, and then eating again as soon as you wake means you have a small window for your body to repair and digest properly. So, ideally, stop eating after your evening meal, and then start again for breakfast.



A BALANCED BREAKFAST

Beginning your morning with a healthy breakfast sets you up for the day. Here's the options you could consider.

SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS

The mornings can be a busy time of day, getting ready for work and school, while prepping your food intake for the day. Therefore, planning ahead is a great idea.

We would always suggest making a weekly meal plan for all your meals, not just breakfast – this means you can ensure variety, you will have all the ingredients in the house and it will also work out cheaper as you can batch make.

Some ideas for convenient breakfast include:

- **Overnight oats** – so quick and simple, this packs a health punch, and the beauty is you can adapt it with different fruits and nuts according to your taste. You simply mix porridge oats (your health store will stock gluten-free ones if

you can't tolerate it) with your choice of milk or milk alternatives, and your fruit and other toppings of choice. Put them in a jar in the fridge overnight and by morning, the oats will have softened and it's ready to eat.

- **Healthy bars** – if you don't have time to sit down for breakfast in the morning, and instead need to take something with you, try making up your own healthy bars – you can then be sure they're not loaded with sugar and other additives. They are easy to make, and usually include a variety of oats, nuts and seeds, apricots, prunes, and dates, which keep blood sugar stable. Stocking up on cocoa powder and good oils, such as rapeseed, olive and coconut

will help keep your recipes healthy.

- **Smoothies** – stock up on ingredients you like to use, such as fruit and veg, that you can keep frozen into portions, and some milk or milk alternative. Just throw in a blender and take on the go. This means you get plenty of fruit and veg and can also add in protein powders (opt for plant-based and those with no additives).

Your local health food store is a great place to source healthy breakfast ingredients, with the key staples including porridge oats, nuts, seeds, agave syrup, as well as a range of gluten-free ingredients. Healthy oils are important if you are cooking the likes of pancakes.

BETTER BREAKFASTS

The same rules apply to every meal you eat, and that it should be balanced, and include variety and colour. When we talk about balance, this means including the key macronutrients you need for good health, including protein and good carbs. We also need micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals.

Starting with protein, this can be obtained in all kinds of breakfast foods, including eggs, nuts and seeds, and tofu. Fruit such as berries topped on Greek yoghurt is also a good choice.

When considering carbs, you want to avoid white and refined foods, so wholemeal or sourdough bread instead of white, and opt for foods that are low GI and so will keep your blood sugar levels sustained through the day. We love porridge topped with berries or nuts and seeds, or a healthy granola – homemade is best and there are many recipes you can find online. If you do buy any breakfast cereals, get familiar with labels – many can have added sugar, which is the worst choice for breakfast as it will send your blood sugar spiralling and then lead you to crave more sugary foods.

Breakfast is also a good time to up your fibre intake; nuts, seeds such as chia and flax, and porridge are good choices here, while some fruits, such as berries, also contain fibre. And don't forget to stay hydrated too; start your morning with some water, a herbal tea or an effective cleanser, such as hot water and lemon.

TRY THIS

Clearspring Bio Kitchen
Organic Peanut Butter
Smooth

Good Earth Ginger, Turmeric
& Lemon Tea

Suma Premium Muesli Organic

Organic Traditions
Antioxidant Berry Blast

Freee by Doves Farm Gluten
Free Organic Porridge Oats

Summer skincare switch-up

Our skincare routine may need to change with the seasons, but how? Beauty experts offer their advice on how to achieve a natural glow.

Whether it's protecting your skin from the effects of the sun's rays or switching up your make-up routine to stop it melting off your face in the warmer weather, your beauty approach may change with the seasons in the same way our diets do.

At the heart of changes, you rid your routine of excess chemicals in products you use on your skin, and instead, opt for natural and organic choices. That, combined with a focus on internal health, can help to ensure your skin is glowing this summer.

Summer skin needs

So, why is it that we might have differing skin needs during the warmer months?

Elizabeth King, Skincare Expert at Weleda, which has launched its 24h Hydrating Facial Care range, explained: "In the summer, our skin – like nature – is in full bloom. With more outdoor activity and warmer temperatures, blood circulation increases, in turn, increasing the skin's activity, in particular, sweat and oil glands. Good cleansing is, therefore, an essential part of summer care. An effective cleanser should deeply cleanse pores while leaving your skin's own natural protective layer intact."

Ingrid Hume, from Pravera, which specialises in natural beauty with brands including lavera, ORGANii and Ben & Anna, went on: "During summer, our skin tends to become dehydrated due to spending a lot of time in the sun, exercising or drinking alcohol. Dehydrated skin can cause dark circles around the eyes and increase fine lines and wrinkles on the skin, making it look dull. Hydrate skin from the inside out by drinking plenty of fluids throughout the day. With a hydrated body, your skin will look and feel healthy, refreshed and radiant. The heat and humidity can cause breakouts and acne, more so in oily prone skin."

And Carla Smith, UK Head of Brand at Natura Siberica, added: "The increased warmth and humidity can play havoc with our skin, leading to increased breakouts and even red rashes. This could be something often referred to as sun allergy (its proper name is PLE (polymorphic light eruption), miliaria (prickly heat), which is caused when excessive sweating leaves sweat trapped under your skin, or a reaction to UV light. To avoid this, look for a lightweight moisturiser and only apply it in the morning. If skin is especially dehydrated and you need extra hydration, look for lightweight serums with hyaluronic acid and apply at night."

Don't forget your hair needs nourishment too, with Joanna Morris, UK Brand Manager for Naturtint, explaining: "Help to prepare hair for the drying effects of more sun and, if you're lucky, perhaps even pool swimming, with an intensely nourishing conditioning mask. This will help to combat the UV damage and keep your hair looking and feeling soft and hydrated."

Try this

- ★ ORGANii Everyday Organics SPF 15 Facial Sun Cream
- ★ Balade En Provence Eye Contour Serum
- ★ Lavera Self-Tanning Lotion
- ★ Terranova Nutrition Beauty Complex
- ★ Emani Flawless Matte Foundation

Simple switches

You might want lighter products during the warmer months, and this is one of the most common shifts people make in seasonal skincare changes.

"During winter and spring, we tend to nourish our skin more due to the colder weather and therefore use a rich moisturising face cream, in the summer, our skin doesn't require as much nourishment so change to a light face cream, one with an SPF is essential to protect sunspots, freckles and early signs of ageing," Ingrid advised.

"Exfoliate your skin once a week during the summer to remove the build-up of dead skin cells and help to keep pores clear. Doing this helps to keep skin bright, rejuvenated and softer."

And it doesn't end there, with Ingrid adding: "Using a toner twice a day helps to remove excess oil on the skin. The astringent properties of the toner help to soothe and cool as it closes the pores and controls oil production. Sun damage can lead to premature skin ageing, wrinkles, pigmentation, dry and uneven skin so we need to keep skin protected from these skin damaging UV rays. No matter what skin type you have, the sun will react with it and you should always wear sun protection with a minimum of SPF 15 should be applied to skin daily."

Hydrated skin is also important: "You may find yourself turning from a cream to a lighter lotion, as your skin requires summer hydration rather than winter nourishment," Elizabeth explained.

And Carla suggested: "Look for gentle foaming cleansers to care for it without stripping it of its essential oils. And, if you've enjoyed a day in the sun (SPF-protected, naturally!), then remember to moisturise your arms and legs to avoid dry, cracked skin."



Nature-loving ingredients

Opting for natural products, free of harmful chemicals, is the best thing you can do for your skin, but what are the best ingredients that nature has given us? Of those to avoid, Ingrid explained:

- **“Mineral oils like petroleum** – these can irritate the skin and cause sensitivity. Clog pores and interferes with the skin’s ability to eliminate toxins, promoting acne and skin complaints.
- **Sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS) and sodium laureth sulfate (SLES)** – synthetic chemicals that foam, for example, cleansers, shampoos, and shower gels. SLS can irritate the skin.
- **Toxic sunscreens, which include oxybenzone and octinoxate** – when these chemicals are exposed to sunlight, reactions occur, causing inflammation, irritation and allergic reactions.
- **Aluminium/aluminium chloride** – found in conventional deodorants. Aluminium compounds found in conventional deodorants blocks the sweat duct and stops the flow of sweat to the skin’s surface, which then forces toxins to flow back into the bloodstream. These toxins can cause skin sensitivity, irritations and rashes.”

In terms of the ingredients we do want, Elizabeth highlighted prickly pear.

“Mucilage from this desert plant’s leafy stem is rich in polysaccharides, which bind and hold onto moisture throughout the day,” she advised. “Refreshing and cooling ingredients like cucumber and aloe vera extracts help soothe, while at the same time instantly invigorates the eye area.”

Ingrid added: “Use products that with natural ingredients such as plant extract/shear butter, calendula, aloe vera, jojoba oil as these nourish, moisturise and care for the skin. It also keeps the skin hydrated and avoids drying out.”

Carla also suggested: “Hyaluronic acid is a must – it helps plump up dry and dehydrated skin without overloading. Try a vitamin C loaded cream or moisturiser, packed full of anti-pollution antioxidants.

“Betulin is known for its powerful anti-inflammatory, soothing, anti-blemish and antioxidant properties, to help prevent acne without over-drying your skin. Lactic acid is great for treating blackheads and surface blemishes. Salicylic acid, naturally found in willow bark, and glycolic acid perfectly brightens, tones up and evens out the skin texture.”

When it comes to nourishing hair, Joanna added: “Shea butter nourishes with its high concentration of vitamins and natural fatty acids, while also encouraging growth due to its high mineral content. It helps to prevent breakage, keep moisture in the hair and increase its natural softness. Milk thistle is a natural silicone substitute to leave hair feeling silky, shiny and manageable.”

Nourish your skin

If you have a poor quality diet, lacking in nutrients, this will show in dull, problem skin. So, what do you need to know?

Ella Owen, Nutrition Advisor at Kinetic, which has brands including Nature’s Answer and Garden of Life, explained: “The skin is the largest organ in the body, it acts as a barrier and has many important functions, including protecting us from pathogens. Skin conditions are often caused by imbalances within the body, such as nutritional deficiencies. A healthy gut microbiome is also key to good looking, problem-free skin.

“Skin or hair that look dull or are excessively oily or dry could be a sign they are not in the best of health. Any irritation, inflammation or outbreaks are tell-tale signs. Nutritional deficiencies may leave hair prone to brittleness or excessive hair loss. Common skin issues include dermatitis, eczema, zits, acne, and rosacea. Many nutrients contribute to the health of our skin and hair, these include vitamin C, zinc, vitamin D, omega 3, gamma linoleic acid, vitamin E, silica, sulphur, flavonoids and carotenoids, lycopene and B vitamins such as pantothenic acid (B5), nicotinamide (B3), and biotin.”

So, how do we know we are lacking important

nutrients?

Ella advised: “Smoking can reduce the amount of vitamin C the body gets from food, certain medications can affect absorption of nutrients and alcohol can also have an impact on the level of nutrients available for the body to use. Stress and illness can put greater demands on our need for nutrients.”

And what diet should we follow to nourish the skin?

“Refined sugar acts as an anti-nutrient in the body when it comes to beauty. Sugar and refined carbohydrates can feed unfriendly bacteria on the skin. We may lack vitamin C and other important nutrients if we do not have any fresh fruits and vegetables in our diets for a while,” Ella advised.

“Summer fruit smoothies high in antioxidant superfoods such as anthocyanin-rich blueberries will support skin health and radiance. Superfood smoothie mixes such as blueberry powder concentrate, especially those with added probiotics, are a convenient and delicious way to top up skin nutrients. In addition, we may need to up our intake of water in the warmer months to keep skin hydrated and prevent it from drying out.”

To top up your essential fats, Ella suggested: “Hemp oil

or ahiflower oil added to salads or smoothies, or as capsules, supply both omega 3 and GLA, important for healthy skin and hair. Ahiflower oil is the richest and most effective combined omega 3 and 6 (GLA) fatty acid source from a single non-GMO plant found in nature. The skin lacks enzymes to convert linoleic acid (typically found in nuts and seeds) into GLA (gamma linoleic acid), so this must be obtained from the diet directly.”

There are some supplements you might want to consider.

“As the body’s natural collagen production falls by 1.5 per cent a year after the age of 25, some may benefit from taking a quality collagen supplement. The specific amino acids found in collagen are often lacking in our diet so a collagen supplement will provide these in an easily absorbable form,” Ella recommended.

“As vitamin C is necessary for collagen production, supplementing this may have a positive impact, and will also support the immune system. Imbalances in the gut microbiome can have a direct impact upon the health of the skin microbiome. Taking a quality probiotic supplement for a period of time may help significantly.”

NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



Certified organic protection from UV rays and ageing in one handy tube.

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Advanced Synergy Multivitamin

Advanced Synergy Multivitamin This 'next generation' formulation is the most technologically advanced formulation in the Terranova range. Boasting almost 40 vitamins, minerals and nutrients, this formulation provides the intense synergy of Magnifood as found in Terranova's Living Multinutrient, but with the addition of potent coenzymes (such as CoQ10, lipoic acid, NADH, P 5-P, pantethine, riboflavin 5-phosphate, methylfolate, methycobalamin) a wide range of phytonutrients and essential minerals. Advanced Synergy Multivitamin may support multiple health and metabolic pathways not only through its comprehensive nutrient profile, but also due to the inclusion of a multitude of phytonutrient-rich compounds within the Magnifood Complex, as well as the addition of carotenoids, coenzyme Q10 (as ubiquinone) and resveratrol. All ingredients are free from gluten and dairy, contain no colours or flavours and are suitable for vegetarians and vegans.



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NeoCell Super Collagen Powder

NeoCell Super Collagen Powder offers 6600mg of BioActive NeoCell Collagen Type 1 & 3. NeoCell is the world's leading collagen brand and also a pioneer in the field of nutritional science. They are committed to finding the most innovative and effective nutraceutical supplements - for beauty from the inside out. Neocell Super Collagen powder is highly bio-available to the body and has been clinically tested for results. It is also gluten-free, non-GMO, paleo-friendly and free from artificial ingredients. Available from all good health stores and independent pharmacies nationwide, and www.kijaniliving.com



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Action on IBS

Nutritional Therapist, Alice Bradshaw, guides us through how to ease symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome.

Bloating, excess gas, heartburn, constipation, stomach pain – these symptoms are becoming constant companions for an alarmingly increasing number of individuals. While the interest in gut health continues to grow, so does the number of people who feel that something is just not right with their digestive systems. It is perfectly normal, of course, to feel a bit bloated and gassy after a particularly lavish meal (maybe accompanied by a rich dessert and alcohol), but many people are living with debilitating gastrointestinal problems that limit the quality of their lives.

Any new or ongoing changes in digestive health should be assessed by a healthcare professional. Typically, if upon examination and testing, no serious anomalies are found, the given

diagnosis is usually irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

IBS is an umbrella term that describes a pattern of symptoms, including altered bowel habits, abdominal pain, excess gas, reflux and bloating. However, because the health of the digestive tract governs the health of the whole body, systemic problems such as brain fog, sinus infections, mood disorders and many more can be attributed to imbalances within the gut.

Personalise your nutrition

The plethora of self-help information for the IBS sufferer may be both a blessing and a curse. A Google search for IBS will result in literally thousands of suggestions, ranging from special diets, supplements, herbs, prebiotics, probiotics, fibre, fermented foods,

enzymes, fasting, bone broth, and many, many more.

While most or perhaps all of these interventions may play a role in aiding gut health, there's often no guidance on how to sequence these tools into a meaningful protocol – hence many people give up after randomly trying several so-called solutions.

Rather than taking a scatter gun approach to managing gut health, adopting a personalised approach will invariably offer better relief and symptom management. This is due to the fact that IBS causes and triggers do vary from person to person. A round or two of antibiotics can disrupt the delicate balance within the microflora (the beneficial bacteria residing in the intestines). Similarly, too many bacteria in the wrong part of the intestines may be a trigger for symptoms. Low stomach acid or a lack of digestive enzymes will result in poor digestion, as ►



Facts about FODMAPs

While there are many diets purported to relieve IBS symptoms, the low ^{*}FODMAPs diet is backed by clinical research and has a good reputation for offering real relief

FODMAPs are fermentable sugars/carbohydrates found in a wide range of foods (many of which are healthy foods). For some individuals with an imbalance in their gut bacteria and/or too much bacteria in the small intestine, these FODMAPs-containing foods are rapidly fermented by the bacteria, resulting in bloating, gas, distention and altered bowel movements. Many experts are now exploring the link between dysbiosis (a disturbed balance of gut bacteria), high FODMAPs intake and gastrointestinal reflux disease (GERD), histamine intolerance and inflammatory conditions.

The FODMAPs diet is an elimination diet, rather than a diet intended for long-term use as paradoxically, these fermentable carbohydrates are crucial to healthy gut function in the long-term. Additionally, sensitivity to FODMAPs is very individual so a person may or may not react to many of these foods. Typically, the foods that cause most symptoms are wheat-based foods, garlic, onions, apples, and pears. To prevent nutritional imbalances and deficiencies, the low FODMAPs elimination diet should only be undertaken with the guidance of a trained nutritional practitioner.

^{*}FODMAPs are Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides and Polyols



Supplements to support

While there are literally hundreds of digestive health supplements available now, perhaps the most fundamental supplements to initially consider are beneficial bacteria (aka probiotics or microflora), digestive enzymes and the many herbs and spices that offer gentle, yet effective digestive support.

- **Probiotics** are live micro-organisms that help to restore and repopulate the gut with the beneficial bacteria that are naturally found there. Food sources include yogurt and other fermented foods. Supplements providing microflora (probiotics) containing both *Lactobacilli* and *Bifidobacteria* can significantly benefit the environment of both the small and large intestine. The gut microbiome needs to be in a state of balance for good health and a lack of beneficial bacteria can exacerbate an overgrowth of yeast or detrimental species of bacteria.

- **Prebiotics**, which include inulin, fructooligosaccharide (FOS) and larch tree arabinogalactans are a special category of dietary fibre, which support the growth of beneficial bacteria within the gastrointestinal environment. After consuming prebiotics, gut bacteria produce short chain fatty acids – compounds known to support gut integrity. Food sources of prebiotics include onions, cocoa and garlic, so you won't be including large amounts of these foods if you are on a low FODMAPs diet. Research suggests that many IBS sufferers do benefit from the small amounts of prebiotics that are found in supplements, although it is possible to experience some bloating initially. It's commonly recommended to see how you respond as an individual to these interventions.

- **Many gut-related symptoms** and disorders are associated with digestive enzyme deficiencies or imbalances, therefore, digestive enzyme supplements are often essential tools in dealing with such problems. Any number of food components can trigger symptoms, so the best results are likely to be achieved with broad-spectrum products providing a wide variety of enzymes.

Supplemental digestive enzymes typically provide a range of macro-nutrient digesting enzymes, including amylase, protease and lipase. They may also contain lactase for those who struggle to digest with dairy products

and alpha galactosidase, which specifically targets the difficult to digest carbohydrates that beans and pulses contain.

- **Herbs and spices** are often overlooked for their health-giving properties. They are hugely beneficial to many aspects of health and numerous botanicals are specifically supportive to digestive health. Ginger root is perhaps the most well-known digestion-supporting spice. Studies have shown that it can help to soothe the intestinal tract, reduce spasms, expel excess gas, relieve nausea and encourage gut motility (peristalsis). Fennel bulb and its seeds are great to include at mealtimes for their digestive properties, which include reducing intestinal gas, bloating and cramping. Cardamom is a highly pungent and aromatic spice and has been used since ancient times as a digestive tonic. It is thought to soothe the digestive tract and help to expel excess gas from the intestines.

- **The mineral magnesium** is proven to be a gentle, yet effective support for those who struggle with poor motility or constipation. It is thought that it helps to draw water into the colon to hydrate and soften the contents, while encouraging gentle peristaltic action of the intestinal wall. Many people who have tried dietary changes, laxative medications etc., to no avail, experience gentle relief when adding a daily magnesium supplement.

There are a wealth of resources, dietary interventions and natural supplements that can be used to manage gastrointestinal health issues and IBS. Always start with the foundational behaviours that support digestive health, such as hydration, proper chewing, stress management, movement and sleep hygiene. An interesting theory relating to gut function, known as the polyvagal theory, suggests that supporting and balancing the nervous system (via stress/emotion management techniques) may be crucial to optimising digestive health. There are lots of available resources to refer to, if this is something that you feel may be of interest.

Working with a natural health practitioner can be helpful if you're feeling overwhelmed but many simple diet/supplement and lifestyle changes can be tried and very often they are all that are needed to bring the digestive system back into balance.

► will stress, poor dietary choices, excess alcohol and even a lack of sleep.

The first step to take is to assess your diet and lifestyle to see if there are any obvious triggers to poor gut health. Keeping a food diary which records food intake and correlating symptoms can give a useful insight as to whether or not dietary patterns are contributing to symptoms. Do wheat, gluten or dairy products feature in every meal? Do you drink juices or carbonated beverages? Do you snack constantly or leave large gaps between meals? Do you grab a sandwich at lunchtime while continuing to work at your office desk? Do you eat dinner late at night or snack just before bedtime – or even in bed? All these habits stress the digestive system and may contribute to symptoms as much as or even more than the actual food choices that you are making.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ALICE BRADSHAW is a qualified Nutritional Therapist with a passion for health writing. She has worked in the natural health industry for 25 years and is Head of Education and Nutrition Information at Terranova Nutrition.

Reader offer

Terranova Digestive Enzymes with Microflora combines two of Terranova's international best-selling products, Digestive Enzyme Complex and Microflora Complex with FOS and more. The formulation features BioCore Optimum Complete enzyme pre-blend from National Enzyme Company (NEC). The enzymes in this blend not only provide one of the widest varieties of digestive enzymes in one formulation, but also provides enzymes that are stable within a pH range two to eight – greatly enhancing their digestive efficiency. The Magnifood Complex includes both digestive/carminative botanicals and bifidogenic foods to support the activity and function of the enzymes and beneficial bacteria. Fructo-oligosaccharides have also been included for their microflora-enhancing properties. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of 25. Turn to page 38 to enter.





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Support your gut, support your immunity

What role does gut health play in immunity and why is it so important for our wellbeing? Nutritionist, Adrienne Benjamin, explains.

Our immune system is a huge, dynamic network of cells, tissues and organs that work together to defend the body against harmful substances. It is extremely complex and can recognise and remember millions of different attackers and produce cells and other compounds to kill specific germs.

One of the key elements of a healthy immune system

is the ability to distinguish between the body's own cells ('self') and foreign cells ('non-self') and to attack organisms marked as 'non-self' and not those that are part of us.

Our immune system is constantly under attack by a wide range of factors, including genetics, infection, stress, a diet high in sugar and alcohol, lack of sleep, smoking, lack of exercise and poor hygiene, but as long as it is working properly, we won't even notice it. If it fails for any reason, however, we will become unwell.

The gut and immunity

With its selective barrier, thick mucous layer and large numbers of immune cells, our gastrointestinal tract (GIT) and gut microbiota are closely involved in the body's immune function – around 80 per cent of our immune system resides in our gut.

Our GIT is the main site of interaction between our immune system and both beneficial and pathogenic microorganisms and the development and function of the immune system depend on these interactions. The GIT is a dynamic structure that recognises commensal ('self') bacteria and helps to regulate the particles that pass through our intestinal lining into our bloodstream and body.

A healthy digestive tract will allow minuscule particles of digested food and nutrients to pass through the gut wall and will keep out larger food particles and pathogens. If the gut wall is damaged, these large food particles and pathogens can enter the blood, where they are treated as foreign invaders by the body, which produces an immune reaction that causes inflammation and pain and can lead to inflammatory conditions, such as arthritis, acne or eczema.

The gut microbiota is established at birth, when bacteria are transmitted from mother to baby and during the first year of life as the baby is exposed to different external factors. The diversity and number of bacteria in the microbiota increases over this period to support the development of the immune system and ensure that the bacteria are recognised by the immune system as 'self'.

A child's microbiome and immune function are both generally established by the time they are three-years-old, although the gut microbiome will continue to refine the immune system throughout our life based upon what we put into our bodies.



GUT-FRIENDLY SUPPORT

A diet high in plant foods is key to keeping our gut healthy, but it is important to understand that there are many nutrients and chemicals required for optimal digestion and absorption.

Two key supplements to be aware of are digestive enzymes and betaine HCl (stomach acid), which can be particularly useful as we get older and our levels of stomach acid decrease, which then impacts our ability to produce digestive enzymes (including lipases for fat digestion, amylases for carbohydrates and proteases for protein).

A good multivitamin and mineral complex might also be beneficial, as these nutrients are used in many pathways both in the gut and throughout the body and minerals, in particular, are lower in our foods today, due to depletion of these nutrients in the soil. Key minerals for gut health include zinc, selenium, magnesium and manganese.

And the importance of the microbiome in gut and immune health means that, as well as eating fermented foods, taking a probiotic supplement can help to support the levels of friendly bacteria and to maintain gut bacterial balance.

Gut healthy diet

The key to supporting immunity is to ensure that our digestive system is functioning optimally, from our mouth to our anus, so that we are both digesting and absorbing all the nutrients that we get from our food.

Eating the right foods in the right way can help to support our digestive system and this starts even before we eat with what is known as the cephalic phase, where the smell and anticipation of our food initiates saliva production and primes our digestive system for what we are about to eat.

Sitting down to eat and chewing our food properly is key and it is important to note that smoking and alcohol consumption can disrupt many of the processes involved with digestion, including the production of stomach acid and digestive enzymes and the numbers and diversity of bacteria in our microbiome.

When thinking about gut health, it is beneficial to base our diet around the following foods:

- **Vegetables of all colours** and varieties help to provide fibre to support motility, stool bulk and consistency, and to feed our gut microbiome. They also provide key nutrients, such as minerals from the soil, which are required for our gut function. Similarly, fruits contain fibre and vitamins to support gut health and integrity – including a wide variety of different fruits and vegetables in our diet each week helps to support optimum health.
- **Prebiotics** are fibres that are indigestible to humans but provide 'food' for the friendly bacteria in our guts. They are found in a wide variety of foods, such as vegetables (particularly onions, leeks and garlic) and legumes.
- **Fermented foods** are naturally rich in friendly bacteria and including foods like sauerkraut, live yoghurts, pickled vegetables and kombucha drinks in your daily diet can also help to top up 'good' bacteria and to maintain diversity.
- **Foods containing essential fatty acids** that our bodies cannot make for themselves, including oily fish, such as salmon, mackerel and sardines, and seeds, such as chia, flax and pumpkin.
- **Good quality protein** is also important as this is needed for cell production to ensure the integrity of the gut wall, where cell turnover is high. These protein foods include fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, seeds, beans, legumes and vegetables.

It is also important to remove foods that are detrimental to gut health, including processed foods such as cakes, biscuits, sweets and chocolate and any foods containing high levels of sugar, which feed the pathogenic species of bacteria and can lead to digestive symptoms such as gas and bloating.

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

As well as diet, general lifestyle factors also impact our gut health. These factors include stress, lack of sleep, medications (particularly antibiotics), infections, lack of or too much exercise and exposure to electromagnetic frequencies (EMFs).

Stress, in particular, has a significant effect on our digestive system as it involves a biochemical reaction that initiates a 'fight or flight' reaction so that we either run away from the stressor or fight it. To enable us to run or fight to the best of our ability, any non-essential bodily systems are downgraded until the stress is over – this includes both our digestive system and our immune system.

In today's society, where stress is often both long-term and psychological or emotional, there is no off switch and this can lead to ongoing problems with both our digestion and immunity. Lack of sleep also contributes to stress and has been shown to lead to an increased appetite, which may affect our digestion and the foods we choose.

Certain medications have been shown to impact both the gut wall and the gut bacteria themselves. Antibiotics work to kill bacteria and often do not discriminate between the 'bad' bacteria they are targeting and our own commensal bacteria. This can lead to an imbalance in our gut bacteria, which may not return to normal following the antibiotics and can lead to lowered gut and immune function.

Similarly, infections and EMFs may influence the gut, either directly or indirectly through additional stress on our body and both too much or too little exercise may also have a detrimental effect.

And there is one action that can help to reduce stress, thereby helping to improve mood, gut health and immunity – that is, spending time outdoors in nature (and even more so if we incorporate exercise and don't worry about getting dirty).

Focus on probiotics

As described previously, our gut bacteria play a key role in supporting our health in general and our digestive and immune health, in particular. They produce B vitamins and vitamin K in our body and help in the production of key hormones and neurotransmitters. In relation to immunity specifically, they form part of the protective barrier at our gut wall to help prevent toxins from entering our bloodstream and also provide signals to our immune system.

Probiotics are known as 'proxies' for the friendly bacteria in our gut. They often include strains of bacteria that are naturally present in our digestive system provided in high numbers in supplement form – generally between five and 50bn. They are designed to boost the numbers of friendly bacteria in our gut and to 'crowd out' the pathogenic types of bacteria to help prevent them from growing and causing an imbalance in our gut, known as dysbiosis.

If we are already experiencing gut symptoms, such as gas, bloating, constipation or diarrhoea, it may indicate that we are suffering from dysbiosis and adding in a high strength friendly bacteria supplement may help to restore balance.

There are a number of things to look for when selecting a good quality probiotic supplement. They include the following:

- **Clearly defined strain numbers** – every reputable strain will be given a unique number.
- **Guaranteed bacteria count** to the expiry date of the product (and not at the date of manufacture).
- **Research supporting the individual product** and the bacterial strains it contains.
- **Evidence that the bacteria** survive both stomach and bile acids and reach the intestines where they can be utilised.
- **Survival at room temperature** – this capability is now well-established and most commercial products should ensure survival of their bacteria at ambient temperatures.
- **Bacterial strains** that are found naturally in the human gastrointestinal tract.
- **Evidence of safety** both via research and positive independent customer reviews.
- **Manufactured** to current good manufacturing practice (cGMP) guidelines.



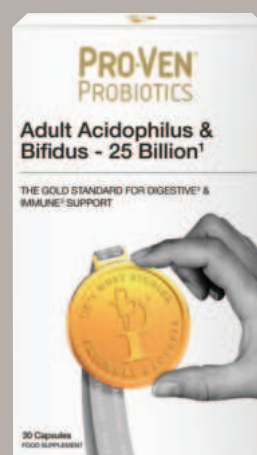
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ADRIENNE BENJAMIN is a Nutritionist at ProVen Probiotics and is committed to understanding (and sharing) the ways in which the gut and the microbiome support health.

Reader offer

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with ProVen Probiotics to offer readers the chance of winning one of three packs of ProVen Probiotics Adult Acidophilus & Bifidus – 25 Billion.

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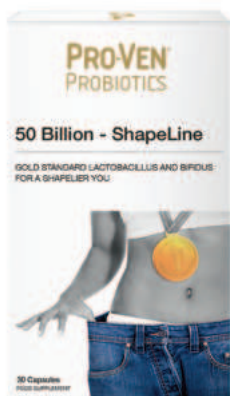


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Ask the experts

THE LOWDOWN ON VITAMIN D...

by Keeley Berry

Why is vitamin D so important for our health?

Vitamin D is one of the main nutrients for building strong bones and muscles through the regulation of calcium and phosphate in the body, with too little vitamin D causing soft and misshaped bones. Research has also suggested a correlation exists between adequate vitamin D intake and a lower risk of diseases such as depression, autoimmunity, weight gain and some forms of cancer, to name a few.

Is it still important to take vitamin D during the summer, when there is more sunshine, and if so, why?

During the summer months, even though we tend to spend more time outside, many of us try to reduce our exposure to UV rays by covering our skin, sitting in the shade, wearing sun creams with SPF, and avoiding being outside between 11am and 3pm when the UV rays are at their strongest. Our body's ability to make its own vitamin D declines as we opt to protect our skin from UVB rays. This is because UVB rays are required to convert cholesterol in the skin cells into our very own self-made vitamin D. It's important then to receive adequate vitamin D from other sources, including oily fish, red meat, egg yolks and supplements.

Would you recommend a supplement to ensure we're getting enough and what should we consider when choosing a supplement?

There are many foods that naturally contain vitamin D, but these contain very low levels that would be unlikely to sustain our body's demand. Many of us are also opting to remove animal products from our diet, which further limits the amount of dietary vitamin D available to us. Taking a supplement is an ideal way to keep vitamin D levels at their optimum and choosing a supplement in relation to your current vitamin D levels is key. At-home finger-prick test kits are available, which provide a rapid insight into your vitamin D status, allowing you to make an informed decision about your vitamin D supplementation thereafter. Choosing a supplement for your needs is also important – for some, tablets and capsules may not be suitable as many of us can struggle to absorb nutrients through the gut. Alternatives, such as an oral spray, are a fantastic way to supplement vitamin D all-year round.



Why is calcium important for my bones, and are there any other minerals I also need?

Dr Omar Milhem advised: As we age, the way our body maintains healthy bones changes. In our 20s, we reach peak bone mass, so our bodies after this point require a little more support to ensure long-lasting bone strength. Calcium is the key mineral involved in helping to strengthen our bones and help them to remain durable throughout our lifetimes.

The bones are made up of a mix of tightly woven elastic collagen fibres, and strengthened by predominantly calcium, but also other minerals that help the calcium to bond to these fibres. This allows the bones to be lightweight, but also strong and flexible, and provide the body with a great frame to build muscle and other tissue on top of. As such, maintaining a good level of calcium, particularly past our mid-20s and beyond, is essential for maintaining bone health and strength as we age.

In addition to calcium, we need a good level of vitamin D, as this helps to transport calcium into the blood, as well as enable the body to utilise the calcium effectively. Another really useful mineral is magnesium as it can help the body to utilise both calcium and vitamin D more effectively.

Gaining these core elements can be achieved with a healthy balanced diet, but supplementation can be an effective way to help. I would recommend a high-quality daily supplement that utilises marine plant-derived ingredients, providing a highly bioavailable source of calcium and magnesium and with added vitamin D. I would suggest a supplement that is supported by clinical research too, so you can be sure you're finding something effective.

About the experts



KEELEY BERRY is a nutritional expert and Product Developer at BetterYou. She studied Biomedical Science before starting her career as a Molecular Biologist. Keeley has been a member of the product and technical department at natural health brand, BetterYou, for over three years and is key to developing and delivering innovative, world-leading pill-free supplements in the UK.



ELEANOR HUNT is a Marketing and Sales Executive at organic and natural period care brand, Natracare. Natracare developed the world's first organic and natural period products in 1989. Today, the range includes organic and plastic-free protection for periods, incontinence, parents and babies.



DR OMAR MILHEM is the Medical Director of LithoLexal, a supplement brand targeted at supporting joint and bone health.



MARTIN WATSON is the Country Manager for Solaray, a brand specialising in natural supplements, vitamins and minerals.



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Ask the experts

LET'S TALK PERIOD CARE...

by Eleanor Hunt

When looking at conventional period products, what commonly used materials should we be concerned about?

It's not a legal requirement for period brands to list the ingredients that make up their pads or tampons, so it's no surprise that many people aren't aware that the products they use contain materials that could be harmful to their intimate health. Many non-organic, conventional period products are made from a cocktail of plastics and other unnecessary ingredients like perfumes, dyes, and chemicals from chlorine bleaching. Conventional tampons are often made with a highly absorbent material called rayon, but it's so absorbent that it can dry out the walls of the vagina. Conventional pads are often made using latex, which is a known irritant and allergen. Superabsorbent gels are used to enhance absorption, but these can irritate the skin by wicking away moisture.

What effect can these have on our health?

Many people suffer from intimate irritations around the time of their period, and this could be down to the period products they're using. Plastic isn't a breathable material and can create a sweaty and uncomfortable environment when kept in close contact with intimate skin. Not to mention plastic

isn't biodegradable, which causes enormous problems for our planet. Bleaching is often used for the materials in pads and tampons, but some methods create dioxin residues, which are known carcinogens and harmful to human health. Synthetic fragrances and dyes can further irritate the skin and can make period products uncomfortable to wear, especially for those with sensitive skin.

What should we consider when choosing an alternative?

When choosing alternatives, look out for products that are made from natural and organic materials. Natural period care is the best option for allowing your skin to breathe as it's often made without plastic, synthetic fragrances and dyes. Organic is a proactive choice for reducing exposure to pesticides and harsh chemicals. By opting for period products made with certified organic cotton, you're making a healthier choice for you, workers, and the planet. It's also a good idea to choose products that are made using a totally chlorine free process, which eliminates the risk of exposure to chlorine or its by-products. Not only are organic, natural, and plastic-free period products kinder to your body, they're also kinder to the planet as they will biodegrade back into earth when you're done.

Q Is there anything I can do to support my health as I start to do more this summer, post-lockdown?

Martin Watson suggested: This summer will be a very different one in terms of health requirements. After a year of lockdowns, we haven't been exposed to the environmental factors that we ordinarily would and so our immune systems will be weakened.

We expect to start seeing a lot more people suffering from seasonal bugs because we haven't been building up our immune system or generating any natural immunity in the community. As we start mixing and travelling again, it's going to be vital that people give their immune systems a boost if they are to stay well and enjoy the summer.

I'd recommend supplements that contain natural ingredients that regulate the immune system and stimulate white blood cells, as these are essential for fighting off harmful bacteria or viruses. Fungi such as chaga and cordyceps are great for immune health, as is olive leaf extract, which is an antioxidant that supports the immune system, and oregano oil, which contains the natural antifungal, thymol, which protects against toxins.

Vitamin D3 also supports the healthy white blood cells that boost your immune defence and vitamin C is always an excellent go-to. It's particularly effective when combined with quercetin, which helps immune cells attack pathogens.

There are plenty of ways to start boosting your immune system now, but the options can be a bit overwhelming and we're all unique. I'd always suggest people chat to their local health food store about the options available, so they can make the best choice for their individual needs.

"I'm now able to support and empower clients to make positive changes"

Izzy Walton, CNM Health Coach Graduate, explains the motivation behind her health coach training.

Most people already know the answers and what changes they need to make, but they don't know how. As a health coach, I help facilitate change using all my coaching, nutrition and fitness knowledge.

I've always had a strong interest in natural health, which evolved alongside my interest in yoga. Many years ago, I studied complementary therapies, reflexology, reiki and aromatherapy. These brought me closer to my interest in nutritional therapy. I was already working in wellness running corporate wellness events, yoga retreats and wholefood catering, so studying to become a health coach was another step towards practicing naturopathic wellness. I wanted a course that offered holistic health, comprising both food, nutrition and mindful movement for physical and mental health support.

For the first time, I feel I've found where all my previous studies and qualifications have been leading me to. I always knew I wanted to help people achieve optimum health, whether through diet or yoga practice. Now, with all my competencies, I have the skills and knowledge to do this with health coaching.

The content on CNM's Health Coach diploma was very in-depth and each module explored all parts of health coaching, including business, marketing and promotion modules; this is something other courses didn't seem to cover. The course was immersive, and I got to experience everything first-hand. When we explored a topic, such as fasting, cleansing or fitness routines, we completely embedded ourselves in that topic and were encouraged to experience and practice

for ourselves. This experience was invaluable and helped cement the knowledge.

Since graduating, I've been working with clients remotely and I have a few collaborations lined up. I'm also still teaching my regular yoga classes.

What I love most about practicing is being able to offer my clients' space. Many people just don't honour themselves the time to really enquire into their own health and understand why they are manifesting their symptoms. As a health coach, I help facilitate change, and use all my coaching, nutrition and fitness knowledge to best support and empower them towards achieving their health goals.

CNM's Health Coach diploma is a unique course which has naturopathic principles at its heart, something most health coaching courses don't offer.



Izzy Walton

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BUILD BETTER JOINTS AND BONES

There's much you can do to keep your joints and bones strong and healthy, especially with a focus on nutrition and lifestyle.

Here at *Natural Lifestyle*, we're advocates of a balanced approach, from the food we eat to our lifestyle choices. It is achieving balance that helps support many aspects of health and wellbeing, ensuring important systems function and keeping us in good health as we get older.

This balance is especially key when we consider our musculoskeletal system, which incorporates joints and bones, ligaments, tendons and muscles. Poor quality diet and lifestyle plays a huge role in how well this system ages and on quality of life.

Lindsay Powers, Nutritionist and Health Coach at Good Health Naturally, pointed out: "It is widely accepted that age is a big risk factor when it comes to joint problems, especially osteoarthritis. This is apparent in the widely held belief that this relates to 'wear and tear' on the joints and is an inevitable part of the ageing process. However, this doesn't necessarily have to be the case as there are a number of modifiable risk factors, such as diet and lifestyle. There are factors thought to

increase risk of osteoporosis, which relate to our lifestyle. Being overweight or obese, excessive alcohol or caffeine consumption, lack of exercise and poor dietary choices can all increase our risk."

Diane Scott, from Healtharena, which specialises in collagen with its Flexicoll product, added: "These days, joint and bone related issues are increasingly common. The NHS states more than 10m people in the UK have arthritis, (causing pain and inflammation in a joint), or other similar conditions that affect the joints.

"Furthermore, the impact of lockdown has shown, in some cases, to have worsened symptoms for people with bone, joint and muscle pain. As Government restrictions were introduced last year, the amount of outdoor time we had for exercise was limited. A study released in last September by University of East Anglia showed the majority of people with musculoskeletal issues reported increased symptoms, such as greater pain, stiffness and poorer general health."

CUT YOUR RISK FACTORS

There is a genetic element to some joint and bone conditions, but there are risk factors within our control.

Phil Beard, Technical Educator at Viridian, advised: "Nutrient deficiency can seriously impact our bone and joint health, leading to degradation of joints and demineralisation of the bones, leading to inflammation, pain and brittle bones. In those looking to prevent joint conditions, there are a few obvious risk factors – being overweight or obese, long-term infections, joint injuries from sport or occupation etc., and smoking can majorly increase your risk if left unmonitored."

Dr Marilyn Glenville PhD, one of the UK's leading nutritionists and author of *Osteoporosis, how to prevent, treat and reverse it*, continued: "The greater risk for women for osteoporosis is because of changes in hormones as women get older. Changes in hormones may increase the risk of osteoarthritis as oestrogen is anti-inflammatory and there will be a drop in oestrogen as women get older. Being pregnant can put stresses and strains on joints and also other hormones, such as thyroid or adrenal hormones, may affect the joints."

Nutrition expert and author, Patrick Holford, added it can be a combination of factors: "I believe occurrence of symptoms of arthritis, or any type of arthritic disease, is the result of an accumulation of stresses that eventually cause joint, bone and muscle degeneration. Some likely factors are poor lubrications (in between joints is a substance called synovial fluid), good nutrition is needed to make sure that the synovial fluid stays fluid and able to lubricate. Hormonal imbalance (hormones control the calcium balance), allergies and sensitivities, free radicals (causes inflammation) so low intake of antioxidant nutrients can make arthritis worse, high homocysteine, stress and poor diet (too much refined sugar, too many stimulants, too much fat and protein are all strongly associated with arthritic problems)."

Diane highlighted collagen, explaining: "Collagen is vital for joints, supporting formation of bones, cartilage, tendons, and connective tissues. The many collagen fibre types perform various jobs within the body; some for strength, some for shock absorption and others as a web on which other structural components can build giving elasticity and tensile strength. After the age of 25, our body's natural collagen levels deplete. In addition, eating too much sugar and refined carbohydrates can interfere with collagen's ability to repair itself. Then lifestyle habits, like smoking, drinking alcohol, and too much exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays further reduce collagen production."

UNDERSTAND THE SYSTEM

Our musculoskeletal system is an extensive network that plays a role in movement and flexibility. If we look at issues commonly affecting it, there are obvious ones to note.

Phil commented: "According to a recent review, osteoarthritis is the most common form of joint arthritis and the biggest cause of disability in the UK in secondary care. It is estimated that 8.5m people have painful joints attributed to osteoarthritis, with 50 per cent of people over the age of 65 having evidence of osteoarthritis."

Dr Trygve Bergeland, Vice President Science at Kappa Bioscience, went on: "Bone and joint health concerns used to be commonly associated with a senior demographic. Yet, modern habits, sedentary lifestyle and poor nutrition contribute to poor overall health, and in particular, bone and joint health. The pandemic probably will have an impact; the home office 'new normal' makes us spend too long in front of computers, often in wrong postures, have more snacks and not necessarily taking the time to cook proper meals. We've spent less time outdoors, which impacts vitamin D synthesis."

Symptom wise, Wendy Atkinson, founder of Modern Herbs, which has the Syno-Vital range, advised: "Symptoms include stiff and painful joints, reduced mobility, and there is also a knock-on effect on other areas and organs of the body, such as ageing skin and dry eyes."

Dr Glenville continued: "With arthritis, there will be obvious symptoms of pain and tenderness in joints and stiffness and lack of flexibility. With osteoporosis, there may be no symptoms; it is often called a 'silent disease', bone loss happens gradually over time, without any symptoms. A fracture maybe the first sign that there is a problem with bone density."



THE ROLE OF FOOD

The modern diet can create inflammation, which should be avoided as it can exacerbate joint problems.

"Diets high in refined carbohydrates and sugar are big culprits when it comes to promoting inflammation, which can affect joints, so keep these out of the diet as much as possible. Aim to follow an anti-inflammatory diet, with lots of brightly coloured fruits and vegetables, legumes and pulses, nuts, seeds, tofu, avocados, good quality meat, and oily fish," Lindsay explained.

Alice Bradshaw, Head of Nutrition Education and Information at Terranova Nutrition, continued: "A diet high in pro-inflammatory foods such as refined carbohydrates, excess sugar, poor quality oils and processed foods will exacerbate any joint related health issues, whereas omega 3 fats (from oily fish or flaxseeds) and a diet rich in plant foods will support healthy joints.

"A diet to support bone health needs to be rich in fresh, whole foods and low in sugar, soft drinks, caffeine and alcohol. Some research suggests a diet high in animal protein results in an acidic body chemistry, which causes the body to attempt to buffer the acidity by withdrawing alkaline minerals, (i.e., calcium), from bone. One of the most important dietary components for bone health is a good intake of green leafy vegetables. These provide a wide range

of bone-supportive nutrients, including calcium, vitamin K and boron."

And Dr Glenville advised: "Pay particular attention to keeping blood sugar in balance because if you are on the rollercoaster of blood sugar swings, the increase in cortisol as blood sugar drops can produce inflammation.

"Omega 3 fats help control inflammation because they produce anti-inflammatory substances. Omega 6 fatty acids can produce more substances that produce inflammation. Research has shown people with diets high in omega 6 (found in vegetable oils and evening primrose oil) and low in omega 3 produce more inflammation."

Keeley Berry, Nutritional Expert and Product Developer at BetterYou, added: "Abundant in most western diets, calcium is important for keeping bones strong, but magnesium should also be considered in order to help the body utilise this essential calcium, so foods such as whole grains, nuts, seeds and even dark chocolate should be included in the diet."

Martin Watson, Country Manager at Au Naturel UK, which has the Solaray brand, continued: "In order to ensure healthy bones, a calcium-rich diet is essential. Calcium can be found in milk, cheese and other dairy foods, green leafy vegetables, such as broccoli, cabbage and okra and any fish where you eat the bones, like pilchards and mackerel."

LIFESTYLE CHECKLIST

You don't need to totally overhaul your lifestyle to see beneficial effects on your joints. Simple changes include:

- **Smoking:** Keeley commented: "Smoking can contribute to poor joint health, as nicotine constricts the tiny blood vessels that supply blood to the joints, as well as discs in the spine, so if you're serious about the health of your joints, the time to quit smoking is now."
- **Move more:** "Anyone who has ever had a 'desk job' will know it requires sedentary working, sitting still for a large portion of the day. These long stretches can cause slow blood flow to joints and can contribute to obesity, which is another factor when it comes to the health of joints and bones. As non-use of joints sends the wrong signal to the body, stemming nutrient flow to that area, it's essential to take regular movement breaks during the day and, where possible, make time for daily exercise," Keeley explained.

- **Maintain a healthy weight:** Phil explained: "For those with joint conditions, reduction in weight seems to be the most effective way of reducing the severity of symptoms. By controlling weight and building up muscle, you can help support joints and prepare them for everyday use."
- **Work out:** Dr Glenville advised: "You may think exercise could make joint pain worse, but it is lack of exercise that may make joints more painful. When you are not exercising, muscles can weaken, causing more stress on joints. Exercise will help increase strength and flexibility. It is crucial for osteoporosis as it is an issue of use it or lose it"
- **Manage stress:** "The release of stress hormones, adrenaline and cortisol, can increase inflammation in your body, including your joints," Dr Glenville advised.
- **Watch alcohol:** "Alcohol may increase inflammation in the body, and some research suggests it may worsen joint pain," Lindsay explained.

Try this

- ★ Good Health Naturally
- ★ Curcumin X4000
- ★ Flexicoll Collagen Drink Mix
- ★ A.Vogel Atrogel
- ★ NutraTea NutraJoint Tea
- ★ Natural Health Practice Osteo Support

CHOOSING A SUPPLEMENT

We can lack key nutrients for joints and bones, so you may want to add supplements.

Rachel Bartholomew, Nutritionist and Health Writer at Nutri Advanced, suggested: "Pure omega 3 fish oil is one of the most powerful supplements to support inflammation, as the majority of us are omega 6 fatty acid dominant, which fuels inflammation. Omega 3 helps swing the balance back to where it should be. Serrapeptase is a proteolytic enzyme that provides natural support for inflammation, that also may help to relieve pain.

"MSM is a crucial structural component of all connective tissue in the body, as it's part of the body's 'scaffolding'. Glucosamine sulphate is also a building block needed to make cartilage and connective tissue."

Alice suggested vitamin D, omega 3 essential fatty acids, quercetin, boswellia, ginger, turmeric, and tart cherry, adding: "Proteolytic enzymes are also worth considering. These are essentially digestive enzymes that break down dietary protein, however, when taken away from food, they enter the bloodstream, breaking down foreign proteins that are responsible for inflammation.

"Zinc is needed for bone homeostasis and appears to promote bone regeneration. Manganese, boron, vitamin C and silica also play important roles in supporting the formation and stability of bone tissue."

Dr Glenville added: "With omega 3 supplement, look

for the amounts of EPA and DHA in the capsules, not just total amount of fish oil. Aim for 770mg EPA and 510mg DHA per day. And botanicals which contain turmeric (which has a long history of use in Ayurvedic medicine for helping inflammatory problems), black pepper (which acts as an anti-inflammatory and helps reduce the perception of pain), olive leaf, ginger, hops and quercetin."

Minerals are crucial, with Keeley highlighting magnesium.

"Magnesium stimulates activity of cells critical to bone formation. Magnesium-deficient bones can become more brittle and susceptible to fractures," she advised. "Often hailed a magic mineral, magnesium influences the types of cells the body requires for bone growth and repair, such as osteoclasts and osteoblasts. It assists with activating vitamin D to absorb and utilise calcium."

Alice highlighted confusion around calcium.

"Calcium is central to bone health as this is the mineral that bone is predominantly composed of. However, other nutrients are vital for proper distribution and deposition of calcium into bone tissue. Vitamin D promotes calcium absorption and regulates blood levels of calcium. Vitamin K ensures calcium is deposited in bone (rather than other body tissue) by activating a protein known as osteocalcin that directs calcium to the bones and teeth."

Martin added: "Combining high-potency natural source vitamin D3 cholecalciferol, the type of vitamin D made by the skin when exposed to sunlight, with vitamin K2 Menaquinone-7 (MK 7), is extremely effective. MK 7 is more easily absorbed into the body than MK 4 and is biologically active for longer when taken at nutritional level."

And Phil suggested: "Black seed oil has shown to reduce inflammatory markers and improve function, both topically and orally applied."

Collagen is also critical: "A supplement enables convenient and efficient absorption of collagen, specifically bioactive hydrolysed collagen peptides which are easily absorbed," Diane advised. "Other supplements that work in synergy with collagen are vitamin C, which is proven to aid collagen formation."

Hyaluronic acid (HA) is important, as Wendy explained: "When joints are dry and brittle, there is little or no hyaluronic acid within the synovial membrane. By supplementing with HA, this will enter the joint, making a viscous fluid within joint capsules, providing cushioning at the end of the bones, reducing pain and inflammation. We have high levels in younger life, but as we age, HA decreases, especially after age 40. The best way to have enough is to eat foods such as green leafy vegetables and sweet potatoes, take an HA supplement and increase water intake."

NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



Don't let your joints go into lock down

For healthier joints and better mobility, more and more people are turning to award-winning Collagen Plus. A proven and natural way to support and strengthen joints and muscles. The secret lies in the ingredients: 7,500mg collagen, 1,000mg glucosamine and 800mg chondroitin. Easy to take as part of your daily routine. Collagen Plus is the best-selling health supplement from ArthroVite – the UK's No 1 collagen specialist. Available from good independent health food stores or via www.arthrovite.com (0800 0181 282).



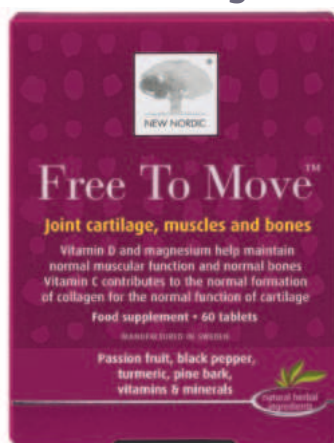
Paradox Omega

Joint pain can be extremely bothersome and can always benefit from a little extra care. The best supplement to help fight inflammation and joint pain naturally is a good quality stabilised Omega 3. Paradox Omega is a natural anti-inflammatory, helps improve blood flow and reduces the wear and tear of joints. Paradox Omega unique formula takes the best from the Arctic and Mediterranean diets

www.paradoxoil.com

Available from health stores

Joint cartilage, muscles & Bones



Joint cartilage and bone health is important for maintaining an active lifestyle. Free to Move tablets contain passion fruit, black pepper, turmeric and pine bark. The content of copper and manganese contribute to the normal formation of connective tissue. The tablet also contains vitamin D and magnesium, which help maintain and normal muscle function and normal bones.

www.newnordic.co.uk

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A special multivitamin and mineral supplement formulated to help maintain strong healthy bones.

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- Calcium citrate NOT carbonate for good absorption.

Free From Sugar, Gluten, Starch, Wheat, Dairy, Soya, GMOs, Fillers, Binders, Anti-caking Agents, Artificial Sweeteners, Flavours, Colours, Preservatives.

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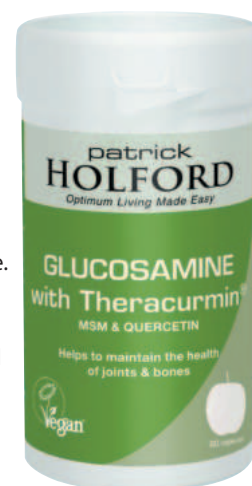
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Glucosamine with Theracurmin®

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www.holfordirect.com



Could this be the perfect joint health solution for you?

I was diagnosed with inflammatory arthritis at the age of 29. Over the years, I tried many different supplements as they emerged on the market. All the prescribed medications that my consultant gave me failed to work or gave me horrendous side effects. I was determined to find a natural solution for my problem.

I was introduced to Flexicoll Platinum 8 years ago and it has transformed me! I was 58 years old at this point and had increasing joint pain in ankles, knees, back, shoulders wrists and hands, particularly my thumbs.

At one stage surgery was considered as a treatment to replace the damaged joints.

I started taking Flexicoll Platinum which is a soluble powdered form of Collagen, taken as a drink with liquid, and the results were amazing! After only 3 weeks, I noticed that the joint stiffness that I usually encountered when trying to get out of bed had improved greatly, and after 6 weeks the results were phenomenal, with virtually no stiffness at all. My ankles and knees were much more mobile and my fingers were much more flexible. I have continued to take Flexicoll Platinum every night and now at the age of nearly 67 I continue to enjoy an active life.

If you like me have tried various other products, and you didn't get the results you expected, give Flexicoll Platinum a try!



Linda Rollinson, Northumberland

Why is collagen important?

Collagen is "the glue that holds us together"

All of our tendons, muscles, skin, ligaments and bones need collagen.

As we age, our collagen levels deplete and by the time we reach the age of 60 we are down to only 50%.

What happens when our collagen levels drop?

This is when we notice **aching joints, sagging skin, fine lines and wrinkles.**

We can look at our diet and lifestyle.

It may also be the time to consider a good quality collagen supplement.

Flexicoll Platinum is the Ultimate Collagen supplement. Not only is it the highest strength bioavailable collagen, it also has been enhanced with clinically proven digestive aids and hyaluronic acid.

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SOOTHING YOUNG SKIN

Young skin is sensitive and can be especially prone to eczema. Here's how you can take steps to protect the skin of your little ones.

We know that struggling with your child's sensitive skin is one of the worst feelings in the world. And when they have eczema, a condition that, according to the NHS, affects one in five children in the UK and most before the age of five and leaving skin red raw, it can make you feel awful.

There are a plethora of articles online, with different advice and recommendations, and it can be overwhelming to know what's right so here, we give you the clear facts.

GENTLER OPTIONS

There are some great products with gentle, natural ingredients that are ideal for daily use on babies, children and even adults with sensitive skin.

Two favourite natural ingredients are calendula and chamomile extract. Calendula is a gentle soothing ingredient with an anti-inflammatory effect on skin, helping reduce skin inflammation and discomfort, while chamomile is a powerful anti-inflammatory, which not only reduces and soothes inflammation but also cleanses and moisturises the skin.

Another great natural cleansing ingredient is cornflower extract. Not only is it an effective cleanser, it has a natural dandruff removing effect and is anti-inflammatory for irritated skin. Additionally, mallow leaf extract is fantastic for sensitive skin and is moisturising and soothing, while marshmallow root extract is an effective anti-irritant and antibacterial, helping relieve itching, swelling and redness.

Another ingredient for dry skin is shea butter. Used either on its own in raw form or as the base of a moisturiser, it nourishes skin while helping to retain hydration by forming a protective barrier on the surface.

When it comes to nappy rash, non-nano zinc oxide is a key ingredient as it acts as a physical barrier against damp and moisture and, unlike petroleum-based products, will not clog the skin.

A WORD ON THE SUN

Sunscreen is essential but most sun products are made of synthetic ingredients and can cause skin irritation, inflammation and rashes.

Synthetic sun protection is absorbed into the skin and, after 20-30 minutes, works through a chemical reaction where UV rays are absorbed into the skin and converted into heat, which is then dissipated from the skin. These synthetic ingredients can cause irritation and reactions like prickly heat. There are over 30 synthetic sun filters used in sun protection products, the most common including oxybenzone, avobenzone, and octocrylene.

We recommend mineral sunscreen with zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide. Unlike synthetic sunscreens, mineral sun protection works by sitting on top of the skin, creating a protective 'shield' to reflect UV rays. An organic or natural product will be formulated with natural SPF ingredients, such as avocado oil, coconut oil, almond oil, karanja oil and carrot seed oil to reach the desired factor.

CHECK THE CONTENTS

Some skincare products, even those for children, can contain undesirable chemicals.

Harsh foaming agents such as sodium laureth sulfate (SLES) and sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS), sensitising preservatives, such as parabens, methylisothiazolinone and phenoxyethanol, and synthetic fragrances can aggravate baby and children's skin. The main issue with SLS and SLES is they are harsh on skin. They may make it feel squeaky clean, but the consequence is natural oils have been stripped, drying out skin and impairing its protective barrier.

Similarly, studies have shown skin can become sensitised to products containing parabens, which can trigger irritation and allergic reactions, especially to sensitive skin and those with psoriasis, eczema or contact dermatitis. Methylisothiazolinone and phenoxyethanol are known allergens and methylisothiazolinone has been found to cause contact dermatitis.

The main issue with fragrance is the precise ingredients are 'commercially sensitive' and will not be listed in any ingredients list. Synthetic fragrances are much cheaper than plant-based scents, mostly made up from petroleum and natural gas and can cause health issues, including irritations, allergies, asthma, eczema, headaches and much more. Even products marketed as unscented can include fragrances to mask an unpleasant base formula.

We recommend avoiding products with a mineral oil base as these can be comedogenic, creating a barrier on top of the skin, stopping it from breathing, clogging pores and upsetting its natural functions. Instead, look for those with a vegetable oil base as, by using the right plant oils, we can support skin's natural functions, protecting, while calming and soothing and keeping skin balanced.

Reader offer

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with ORGANii to offer readers the chance of winning one of five ultimate bundle of everyday organics for top-to-toe care for little ones. Ideal for

cleansing, nourishing, moisturising, protecting and freshening baby skin, ORGANii Baby Bundle includes multi award-winning products to support babies and children's skin; Fresh Foam Bath & Shampoo, Protective Nappy Cream, Nourishing Baby Cream, Fresh Scented Water and the new Softening Dry Baby Oil, and certified organic and natural, vegan and cruelty free. Turn to page 38 to enter.



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Fast, effective
immune support
– in a spray



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and all good pharmacies, health stores and online at [betteryou.com](https://www.betteryou.com)

NATURAL LIFESTYLE Giveaways

Natural Lifestyle is about giving back to our readers, and each month, this page will showcase a selection of giveaways.



MOTION NUTRITION UNPLUG AND HORMONE BALANCE

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with Motion Nutrition to offer readers the chance of winning one three-month supply of its Unplug and Hormone Balance stress busting, sleep boosting, award-winning supplements.

Feel OK again with Hormone Balance and ease yourself into deep sleep with Unplug. Taken together an hour before bed, these carefully formulated capsules will help your mind step away from the bustle of the day and into a haven of rest and restoration.

SO SQUALANE

Squalene is one of the highest quality and most versatile emollients on the market due to its sensorial profile, biocompatibility and sustainability credentials. It is a non-polar, fully saturated, and very stable hydrocarbon, which also happens to be naturally present in the skin. It is an exceptional moisturiser, preventing moisture loss and imparting suppleness and flexibility to skin. And *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of five bottles of So Squalane. The 100 per cent sugar beet squalane provides a silky, smooth, and luxurious touch, without a greasy, heavy after feeling.



BIOCARE NUTRISORB BIOMULSION D

BioCare Nutrisorb Liquid BioMulsion D is a high potency vitamin D3 in a great tasting natural lemon flavoured liquid, providing 1000iu of this must have vitamin in one single drop. The pure and simple liquid format can be taken directly under the tongue and is handy for on-the-go. The unique BioMulsion technology increases the absorption of the vitamin D, for maximum effect. Vitamin D helps form and maintain strong



bones, helps maintain blood levels of calcium and phosphorus and is required for the normal functioning of the immune system. Now available in recyclable glass packaging, *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of 10 packs.



ORGANICUP

OrganiCup is the award-winning menstrual cup made from 100 per cent soft, medical-grade silicone, no leaks, no worries, no dryness, no infections. Reusable for years equals no constant waste, and it is registered with The Vegan Society and AllergyCertified. Available in three sizes, A: pre vaginal birth, B: post vaginal birth, and Mini: teens or those who need a smaller cup. OrganiCup is the easier, healthier and greener period solution and *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of five.

EMANI HYDRATING LIPSTICK

Emani Hydrating Lipstick has a super creamy texture, infused with high impact pigments, which glides on effortlessly and dispense rich, gorgeous colours. Formulated for longer lasting comfort wear that hydrates, leaving lips soft and never drying, drench your lips with delicious colours and unstoppable hydration, 100 per cent vegan and absolutely brilliant! This revolutionary-hybrid lipstick is formulated with vitamins, natural/organic lip conditioners and long-lasting mineral pigments. And *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of three Devotion pink lipsticks, worth £19 each.



ENTER HERE Please indicate below which giveaway you are applying for, complete form and post back to us at 'Reader Offers', *Natural Lifestyle* magazine, The Old Dairy, Hudsons Farm, Fieldgate Lane, Ugley Green, Bishops Stortford CM22 6HJ. Closing Date: June 1, 2021. **Or you can enter online – visit www.mynaturallifestyle.com**

Please tick: ☐ So Squalane ☐ Motion Nutrition ☐ OrganiCup ☐ BioCare ☐ Emani ☐ ORGANii ☐ Terranova ☐ ProVen

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The Menstrual Cup

Easier

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no worries**

OrganiCup holds 3 tampons worth and can be worn for up to 12 hours. Forget about your period during the day and night. OrganiCup is the only menstrual cup on the market that is AllergyCertified.

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**No dryness,
no infections**

OrganiCup is made of 100% medical-grade silicone that doesn't mess with your body. While tampons and pads absorb natural secretions, OrganiCup simply collects, which eliminates dryness.

Greener

**Save money,
spare our planet**

OrganiCup is reusable for years – not hours. No more constant waste and no monthly purchases. OrganiCup is registered with The Vegan Society.

OrganiCup is available in 3 sizes.

Available at Holland & Barrett, Superdrug, WH Smith Travel stores, Planet Organic and all leading independent health food shops.

www.organicup.com | [@organicup](https://www.instagram.com/organicup)  



Learning to cook low carb

Discover these dishes from *The 30 Minute Diabetes Cookbook: Eat to Beat Diabetes with 100 Easy Low-carb Recipes*, packed full of quick and delicious recipes to help beat type 2 diabetes.

Flaxseed oatcakes

Serves 6/makes 36 biscuits

I was tempted to suggest that this was a rare Scottish recipe from the Highlands, but in fact it is simply my way to reduce the carbs in traditional oatcakes by substituting flaxseed (also known as linseed) for oats. These are ideal slathered in butter while still warm, topped with cheese or prettied up with cream cheese, smoked salmon and dill for an occasion. They can be flavoured with chopped rosemary, black onion (nigella) seeds or a whole host of other flavours. They are also good for lunchboxes. If you can find golden flaxseed, the colour will be more golden than the darker variety but both do the job.

Ingredients:

- 75g (2½ oz) rolled oats
- 75g (2½ oz) ground golden flaxseed (linseed)
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 30g (1oz) butter
- Scant 1tsp salt

Method:

- Cut two pieces of baking parchment the size of your largest oven tray and set aside.
- Use a food processor (not a small one or the mixture will stick to the sides) to grind the oats into a flour. Add the remaining ingredients plus

three tablespoons of water and whizz together for a few seconds until the mixture is well combined. If the mixture is very dry, add another teaspoon of water and whizz again.

- Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/425°F/gas mark 7.
- Put one piece of baking parchment on to the work surface and transfer the dough on to it. Put the other piece of baking parchment over the top and roll out the pastry into a rough rectangle. Peel off the top sheet and neaten the rectangle by cutting it with a cook's knife and patchworking pieces of the dough off and

adding them in as necessary. The rectangle should be 5mm (¼ in) thick. Slide the parchment with the dough on to the oven tray.

- Now, shape the oatcakes by cutting five lines across and five lines down with a cook's knife to divide the dough into 36 smaller rectangles/squares. Alternatively, you can leave the dough whole and break it into shards of oatcakes after cooking. Bake for 10-12 minutes, then leave to cool to room temperature.
- Serve straight away or store in an airtight container for up to five days.



Mushroom rarebit with poached eggs

Serves 2

This is an easy brunch or a light supper. Serve on its own, with sautéed spinach or a crisp, green salad on the side.

Ingredients:

- 2 large portobello mushrooms, brushed clean and stalks cut away
- 2tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 eggs
- 35g (1¼ oz) mature Cheddar or other hard cheese, grated
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- A couple of drops of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 heaped tbs Greek yogurt
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method:

- Preheat the grill to high.
- Lay the mushrooms cut-side up on a wire rack over a baking tray, brush with the oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill for seven minutes or until tender and darker around the edges. Using tongs, turn the mushrooms over so the domed sides are facing upward and grill for three minutes.
- Meanwhile, make the filling. Mix one of the eggs together with the remaining ingredients in a bowl using a fork or whisk. Fill a frying pan or saucepan with water and bring to the boil.
- Remove the mushrooms from the oven and spoon the filling into their cavities. Grill for five to seven minutes or until golden brown. Any extra filling can be cooked in a ramekin at the same time.
- Reduce the heat under the pan of water to medium, and when the water is bubbling, gently crack one egg into a teacup. Put the teacup into the water and tip it up so that the egg gently floats out. Repeat with the second egg. This method allows you to poach several eggs at once, depending on the size of your pan. Cook for three to five minutes, depending on how you like your eggs. Remove with a slotted spoon, allowing any water to fall away.
- Top each mushroom with a poached egg and serve straight away.

Baked cheesecakes with summer berries

Serves 6

Stefano Borella is the patisserie chef at our restaurant, Caldesi, in Marylebone, in London. Over the years, I have convinced him to cut back on sugar, and then he surprised me with this no-sugar version of his famous cheesecake. It's delicious and, by using vanilla, it doesn't need any sugar at all. Eat the cheesecakes still warm or enjoy them chilled from the fridge. Top with berries, such as raspberries, blackberries, blueberries or strawberries, or any seasonal low-carb fruit. If you don't have ramekins, small tea or coffee cups do the trick and they don't have to match.

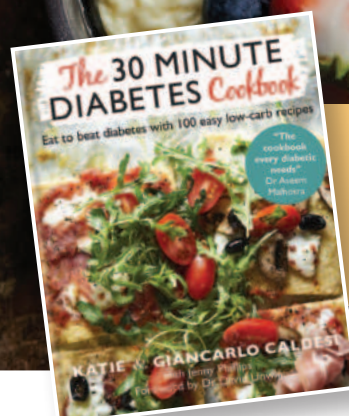
Ingredients:

- 450g (1lb) cream cheese
- 150g (5½ oz) soured cream
- 2 eggs
- 2tsp vanilla extract
- 200g (7oz) mixed berries, such as raspberries, blackberries, blueberries or strawberries, hulled and quartered if large

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/425°F/gas mark 7.

- Whisk the cream cheese, soured cream, eggs and vanilla together in a mixing bowl and spoon into six ramekins. If you want to be precise, you should have around 120ml (4fl oz) for each portion.
- Put the cheesecakes on to a baking tray and cook for 15-17 minutes or until just firm to the touch. They will set firm on cooling.
- Top with the berries just before serving. Any leftovers will keep for two days in the fridge.



The 30 Minute Diabetes Cookbook, by Katie and Giancarlo Caldesi, with Jenny Phillips, is published by Kyle Books. Photography: Maja Smend.



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Nutritional Information

Serving size 5 ml (approximately 1 teaspoon)

	Amount per Serving
vitamin C (as sodium ascorbate)	1000 mg
phospholipids (from sunflower)	250 mg



See what's in our products, and **what's not**, at pure-encapsulations.co.uk

¹in the U.S., among brands professional supplement brands surveyed,, Nutritional Business Journal® 2016, 2020.

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