Natural Lifestyle

LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL — NATURALLY

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April 2020

The UK's best FREE HEALTH MAGAZINE

A time to change

A whole body guide to managing the menopause

Green home

Cleaning up for a healthier you, healthier planet

YOUR IRON NEEDS

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Welcome

Ever since David Attenborough's incredible *Blue Planet* documentary hit our TV screens, the nation has slowly but surely become more aware of our planet, of the effects that our everyday routines have on it, and about the urgency for us all to make change.

But when we talk about change, it doesn't need to be big or costly. In fact, if every one of us made some small and simple changes every day, it would add up to a huge amount. It could be as simple as always using a reusable instead of a single use cup when you buy your morning hot drink, not purchasing throwaway plastic water bottles, ensuring you are recycling, getting into the habit of washing clothes at 30 degrees, and refilling your everyday household items, such as washing detergent, hand soap and shampoo and conditioner, at your health food store, which is both better for the environment and reduces the use of excess plastic.

These and so many other simple switches can make such a different to the planet – and often to your pocket – and we highlight some of the steps you can take, and why they are important to take, on page 26.

It's an issue packed full of practical advice, with our Nutritionist, Esther Mills-Roberts, turning her attention to the menopause and how women can go through the process, naturally, and free from medication. Read all she has to say on page 18.

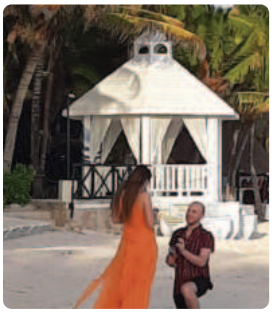
We also bring you plenty of our regulars; whether it's recipe ideas for a healthy brunch to our guide to understanding the importance of iron to a collection of fantastic giveaways, we have all you need to a healthy April. And don't forget, we run a host of fantastic competitions over on our Instagram page (@naturallifestylemag).

Rachel Symonds, Editor

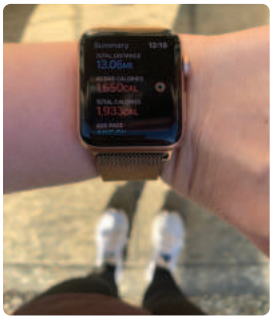
VISIT OUR WEBSITE
www.mynaturallifestyle.com

The best bits

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



It was celebrations for our Administration and Subscriptions Manager as she said yes when her partner, Alan, got down on one knee during a trip to Mexico.



It was a long training run for Editor Rachel as she took to the pavements to clock up a slow and steady 13 miles.

A stunning spring day was enjoyed in the hills of Surrey recently.

NATURAL LIFESTYLE, Target Publishing Limited, The Old Dairy, Hudsons Farm, Fieldgate Lane, Ugley Green, Bishops Stortford CM22 6HJ t: 01279 816300 e: info@targetpublishing.com www.mynaturallifestyle.com
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ISSN - 20428421
Printed in the UK by The Magazine Printing Company using only paper from FSC/PEFC suppliers www.magprint.co.uk

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PARENTS ADMIT TO BRIBING KIDS TO EAT FRUIT AND VEG

A new survey has revealed that almost half of parents admit to bribing their youngsters in a bid to get them to eat fruit and veg.

The research found that 41 per cent of parents admit to bribing their children all or most of the time to make sure they eat their five-a-day, while two in 10 (22 per cent) admit to hiding fruit and veg in their child(s) food at least once a day. And it's not just parents who are being crafty – children are being sneaky too, with 13 per cent of parents catching their child trading the fruit and veg in their lunchboxes.

Having looked at five-a-day intake of children across the UK, the survey, from fruit snacking brand, Fruit Bowl, also found that avocados (19 per cent) topped the charts as the most hated or refused fruit, closely followed by figs (18 per cent), grapefruit (16 per cent), pomegranate (12 per cent) and kiwi at 11 per cent. Unsurprisingly, sprouts are the most disliked vegetable mentioned by parents (36 per cent) with a further quarter (25 per cent) answering asparagus and cabbage, followed by 24 per cent of parents mentioning spinach, broccoli and onion.

The top excuses for children not eating their fruit and veg include not liking the taste, the texture, or the smell.

Nutritional Therapist, Filomena Komodromou, suggested some easy swaps parents can put in place at home to make up for any deficits.

"If you struggle to feed your child cruciferous vegetables, alternative fruit and vegetables such as peppers, strawberries, avocados, kiwis and spinach contain vitamins and minerals such as magnesium, vitamins K, C and E, making them a great alternative option to help make sure your child gets all the vitamins and minerals they need to stay happy and healthy," she advised.

Inside... HEALTH

Better blood pressure

Maintaining healthy blood pressure ranks among the top health concerns when it comes to the heart.

That is according to new research from Lycored, which listed healthy blood pressure as people's top cardiovascular wellness goal in the US and the UK, finding that nearly seven in 10 (68 per cent) ranked healthy blood pressure as one of the three cardiovascular goals they most wanted to achieve. Healthy blood cholesterol levels (61 per cent), healthy arteries (55 per cent) and a healthy circulatory system (45 per cent) also scored highly.

Added to that, nearly nine in 10 (88 per cent) were aware that high levels of LDL cholesterol are considered bad for cardiovascular health, and 42 per cent chose this as one of the risks they most wanted to avoid.

IMMUNITY AND YOUR HEALTH

Our immune systems should be given consideration all year round, and, in light of the ongoing concerns around Coronavirus, one expert is advising how you can keep it fighting fit.

Euan MacLennan, Herbal Director at Pukka Herbs and Medical Herbalist at a London-based NHS practice, explained that during the seasons, our body can be challenged by viruses and bacteria, both of which cause infections, albeit of a different sort, but that we have in-built defence mechanisms that protect us from invasion: our immune system and its many complex components.

He advised that every day, we each inhale more than 100m different bacteria, according to the Medical Research Council, and to stop the infectious invaders, we each have about 30m unique antibodies, each programmed to recognise a single known bacterium, plus millions more 'naïve' antibodies waiting to attack previously unknown bacteria. Whilst our immune system is designed to fight off viruses, sometimes it can be helpful to support it against new challenges and ensure we are as robust as possible at times when infections are active in the community, including the use of some top herbs. These include:

Elderberries – a great source of vitamin C

- **Echinacea:** A renowned immune tonic with some very interesting research, echinacea can be particularly helpful for fighting infections of the respiratory tract. It may have a preventative action but also help relieve symptoms and speed recovery.
- **Elderberries:** Bursting with brightly coloured pigments that act as natural antioxidants, elderberries are a natural source of vitamin C. Elderberry is a powerful fruit shown to 'de-activate' viruses, helping to stop them spreading through the body. It may also help the immune system in a similar way to echinacea.
- **Vitamin C:** Well-known for supporting our immune function, vitamin C plays an important role by improving the activity of some white blood cells such as 'natural killer cells', allowing our immune system to communicate and co-ordinate its attack against viruses.
- **Andrographis:** Traditionally used in Ayurvedic medicine to promote the production of antibodies and reduce the severity of infection, andrographis contains compounds that rally the immune system to fight effectively against invaders such as viruses.
- **Mushrooms:** There are approximately 400 species of fungi that have been identified with medicinal properties, and many have antiviral, antimicrobial or anti-inflammatory qualities. Mushrooms are high in beta glucans, natural substances found to help 'prime' our immune system, making sure it's ready for action to fight off infection. They can be easily added into your diet through daily doses of supplements.

We love

NEW NORDIC APPLE CIDER GUMMIES – an easy and convenient way to take apple cider vinegar, these gummies are free from dairy, gluten and sugar, and are also vegan.

PARADOX OMEGA LIQUID – the omegas 3, 6 and 9 in this product from Paradox are protected naturally in a unique blend, scientifically proven to be more stable than ordinary omega fish oils and has the added benefit of having no fishy aftertaste.

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Inside... BEAUTY

Protect your hands

With the nation being reminded of the importance to keep their hands clean amid the growing concern over Coronavirus, now is the time to think about what you put on them.

Regular handwashing for at least 20 seconds is imperative in the fight against spreading germs, and the people at Green People are advising how you can look after your hands, while keeping them clean.

Experts at the organic skincare brand explain that you should opt for a liquid handwash over a bar variety, as these can harbour bacterial growth far more easily. And to avoid irritation, such as contact dermatitis, which is common among those who wash their hands regularly, you could choose organic handwashes free from SLS and triclosan, which are the key culprits for drying out skin and causing contact dermatitis.

You could try Green People's Manuka & Lemon Tea Tree Antibacterial Hand Wash, a powerful natural antibacterial organic hand wash, which is hygienic, ecological and kind to skin.

UNDERSTANDING **AROMATHERAPY**

If you have an interest in essential oils, then a new one day workshop could be just the thing for you.

Tisserand Aromatherapy has launched a new workshop, taking place in Brighton on June 27, which will introduce you to the art of aromatherapy and help you understand the benefits of using essential oils safely and effectively at home.

Presented by Tisserand's essential oil expert, Jo Kellett, TIDHA MIFPA, the course will cover everything from what an essential oil is and 10 essential oil profiles to learning how to create your own massage oil blend.

Find out more at **www.tisserand.com**

NUTRITION FOR THE SKIN

Our skin can take quite a battering from the elements, making it all the more important to ensure it is getting the nutrition it needs.

And so, the British Naturopathic Association has offered some super easy and natural hacks that will make a noticeable difference to the way your skin feels and looks. This includes:

- **Primrose oil:** This works wonders thanks to its chief ingredient of linoleic acid, which is high in essential fatty acids.
- **Vitamin A:** This important vitamin contains a group of compounds which includes its active forms (retinal, retinol and retinoic acid), along with other provitamin A carotenoids, such as beta-carotene. Women should aim for 700mcg of vitamin A daily, while men should get 900mcg. Eggs and dairy products are excellent sources, while orange and green leafy veggies like sweet potatoes, carrots, cantaloupe and spinach are loaded with beta-carotene that your body will use to make all the A it needs.
- **Anti-ageing B complex vitamins:** B vitamins offer many skin health benefits, with two of the most significant being cell renewal and stress relief. Cell renewal is what keeps our skin looking and feeling healthy, so consider examining or supplementing your diet to safely increase your levels.
- **Keep hydrated:** So simple yet often forgotten, water is the key to so many natural fixes. Try drinking a pint of water in the morning and then following every toilet visit.
- **Reduce alcohol and caffeine intake:** By reducing your alcohol and caffeine intake, you will see a noticeable difference to your skin. Try decaffeinated drinks as an alternative and buy small bottles of wine instead of normal sized ones.
- **Rest well:** Making sure you get enough sleep is vital to get your body working at its best. Beauty sleep will help your skin to hydrate repair and rebalance. The body literally renews and rejuvenates during sleep, as recorded evidence shows that skin cells regenerate faster at night than during the day. Cell division does occur throughout the day, but peaks around 2am, so make sure you get a good night's sleep to take advantage of it.

AMAZING ANTIPODES

If you're looking for natural indulgence, look no further than these treats from Antipodes.

The New Zealand skincare brand has created two new natural sets, all featuring organic products, which are vegetarian, as well as vegan where possible.

The two sets, Cult Favourites and Beauty Icons, feature handbag/carry-on friendly size products, and make the ideal skincare companions for a summer holiday or mini break.

Beauty Icons includes three luxurious moisturising products to replenish and boost tired and thirsty skin in the shape of Apostle Skin-Brightening Serum, Kiwi Seed Oil Eye Cream and Vanilla Pod Hydrating Day Cream. Or there is Cult Favourites, made up of Hosanna H20 Skin-Plumping Serum, Vanilla Pod Hydrating Day Cream and Avocado Pear Nourishing Night Cream.

NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S

Top Picks

Fast, effective immune support – in a spray

Boost your immunity and maintain healthy bones, muscles and teeth with your essential daily dose of pill-free vitamin D. Just one spray a day of BetterYou DLux 3000 Vitamin D Oral Spray provides an optimal amount of vitamin D into the bloodstream via the inner cheek. DLux 3000 is the ultimate in supplementing convenience, with fast, effective vitamin D absorption – without the fuss! Available from all good health stores and betteryou.com. RRP: £8.45

Stay Calm & Clear

Help to bring Calm into your busy life. Over 85% of Adults experience regular stress. Are you constantly rushing, feeling overwhelmed and can't switch off with constant mind chatter? Do you need to find a little time for yourself? Australian Bush Flowers Calm & Clear contains 8 powerful flower essences, hand collected from wild pristine environments. Each product is handcrafted to help you wind down, enhance clarity, promote calmness and relaxation, whilst regaining focus. Applied Morning & Night, by your choice of application: Remedy drops (7 x drops) or Oral Spray (2 x Sprays). Prices from £10.95. Stocked by all good Health Stores.
www.ausflowers.co.uk

Got allergic rhinitis or hayfever?

Pollinosan Hayfever Tablets is a homeopathic medicinal product used within the homeopathic tradition to relieve the symptoms of hayfever and other forms of allergic rhinitis. Both conditions give rise to irritating symptoms such as itching and watery eyes, sneezing and tickly nose or throat. Pollinosan is non-drowsy and won't affect your ability to drive or use machinery. Suitable for children over 12 years of age. Always read the leaflet. Contains: Ammi visnaga 1x, Aralia racemosa 2x, Cardiospermum halicacabum2x, Larrea mexicana 2x, Luffa operculata 6x, Okoubaka aubrevillei 2x, Galphimia glauca 3x.
RRP from £10.50, available from independent health food stores and pharmacies nationwide.

Let's Talk Immune Health

Bio-Kult Boosted is a unique multi-action formulation with the same great 14 strains of live bacteria found in Bio-Kult Advanced but at 4 times the concentration. Bio-Kult Boosted also contains vitamin B_{12} to support the immune system.

Bio-Kult S. Boulardii is an advanced multi-action formulation designed to target both the immune system and digestive tract. It contains *Saccharomyces boulardii* as well as vitamin D_3 which contributes to the normal function of the immune system.

Bio-Kult Infantis is an advanced live bacteria formulation for babies, toddlers and young children. Containing 7 strains of live bacteria, Preplex and vitamin D_3 which contributes to the normal function of the immune system.

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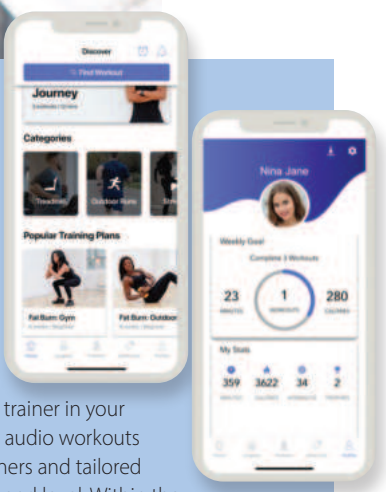
Inside... LIFESTYLE

YOUR DIGITAL PERSONAL TRAINER



Give yourself the support of your very own personal trainer with the help of Auro.

The Auro app is a personal trainer in your ear and includes motivational audio workouts that are guided by expert trainers and tailored to an individual's fitness goals and level. Within the app, there are hundreds of world-class workouts and recommendations are provided for suitable classes based on the user's own ability. Classes can even be downloaded in advance so can still be done when Wi-Fi isn't available.

The fitness classes available on the Auro app include outdoor running, walking, treadmill, cross-trainer, strength training, spin, rowing, yoga and stretching and are curated with a playlist, although users can also overlay their own music from Spotify if preferred.

It also integrates with Apple Watch, Garmin, Myzone and a range of other wearables to provide detailed heart rate-based analytics and personalisation.

WATER FOR ALL

The Quokka Ice Bottle is the perfect addition to your workout regime.

Offering everything you need in a water bottle, the Quokka is leakproof, easy clean, lightweight and BPA free. Its double twist opening at the mouth and neck provides you with the freedom to add ice and all kinds of fruit infusions.

Tritan is used for the Quokka Ice Bottle due to its strength and durability, accompanied by its crystal-clear transparency and lightweight properties – and available in a variety of colours and patterns.

PROJECT WELLNESS

If you are feeling like your wellbeing could do with an overhaul, you could benefit from the tips offered in a new book.

***The Wellness Project* has been penned by Ali Roff Farrar as a guide to aligning body, heart and mind to create a blueprint for a balanced life.**

Ali is Wellness Director at *Psychologies* magazine, and is passionate about combining western sciences of psychology, neuroscience and coaching with the Eastern philosophies of meditation, mindfulness and yoga.

In the book, Ali explains that she helps readers to take back ownership of your health and happiness by using mindfulness to identify which wellness practices suit you best and creating a unique personal wellness plan that will transform your life.

STEP-BY-STEP TIPS TO GETTING ACTIVE

Choosing to start getting active can be triggered for all kinds of reasons, but for many, it can be daunting when you don't know where to start or what you need to consider.

One of the considerations you need to be making is the impact that a new sports regime can have on your body, with thought given to how to avoid injury. And so, Nelsons arnicare has come up with some top tips to help you plan your fitness journey so you can train to the best of your ability without causing your body too much unnecessary stress.

- **Don't follow all the advice you hear:** One person's fitness journey will be completely different to your own and finding what works best for you is most important in order to ensure you stay consistent and motivated. If you are having doubts in the gym, seek help from a qualified professional such as a PT and explain your goals or issues and they will be able to offer advice tailored to you.
- **Find a level suited to you:** Start out with a beginner level and test out how you feel. If it seems too easy for you and if you feel you could push yourself more, maybe try the next level up – it's better to start from the bottom and work your way up than to start at a level that's too hard for you and risk injury or discouragement. Maybe focus the first few weeks on low-intensity exercises one or two times a week, and slowly build up until you feel comfortable with what you are doing. If you are starting a new sport, try to master the basics first before jumping into anything more complicated.
- **Rest, rest, rest:** Rest days are just as important as training days. Not only does your body need time to recover in order to perform at its best, but rest days are also essential in order to help reduce the risk of injury. If you're just starting out, try to get at least two rest days a week, eat the same as you would on a training day and don't worry about being active.
- **Make it fun:** One of the most important aspects of sports and fitness is making sure you are enjoying it and are feeling great. If you've tried out football and don't like it, maybe try tennis. If you're getting a bit bored of running on a treadmill, try some aerobic dance classes such as Zumba.

ACTIVE AND ECO-FRIENDLY

Active Therapy is the latest fitness brand to arrive in the UK with a conscience.

Designed for those who take part in yoga and surfing, all the garments are handmade, while the fabrics are sourced ethically to create sustainable products, utilising the likes of natural fabrics such as bamboo, hemp and pure cotton for the activewear and recycled plastic fabric found in the sea for the swimwear range; the Sea to Sea Swimwear range will be made from recycled plastic found in the sea. The fabric is made in Italy, created using discarded materials that were 100 per cent nylon (such as fishing nets and tulle).

The eco credentials also go into the manufacturing, with the brand working to keep an ethical and transparent supply chain.

Inside... GREEN LIVING

How to travel sustainably

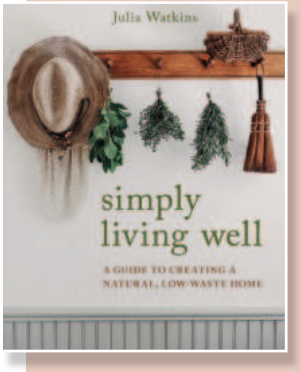
With the spotlight on our carbon footprint, travel is something often raised as a key contributor to our impact on the planet.

And now, Group Evolution has announced the launch of its 'Healthier you, healthier planet' initiative, designed to help support travellers in minimising their carbon footprint. The initiative not only offsets the carbon cost of travel but also positively encourages guests to travel sustainably. In addition, Group Evolution's own initiatives further reduce the carbon impact of its retreats.

To encourage guests to make the sustainable travel choice, all emission costs, whatever the mode of transport chosen, will be fully offset through Group Evolution's partnership with Carbon Footprint, investing in sustainability in the UK and internationally. Travel by train for individuals is encouraged, with a reduction in all retreat prices of £75 per person, while travel by car and ferry for groups is encouraged with a reduction in all retreat prices of £50 per person for groups of two or more.

Barry Williams, Group Evolution Co-founder, explained: "By incentivising greener transport modes and travel in groups, we want to reduce the direct and indirect impact of our business and also that of the environmentally conscious traveller."

Group Evolution runs fully sustainable retreats, provides vibrant, fresh and healthy food for their all-inclusive retreats.



HOW TO LIVE WELL, SIMPLY

A new guide to creating a natural and low waste home is being published this month.

Julia Watkins has written *Simply Living Well*, which provides easy-to-follow guides and recipes, allowing you to make eco-friendly changes in the home.

It covers every area of your household, from kitchen, cleaning, and wellness, to bath and garden, showing you how to eliminate wasteful packaging, harmful ingredients, and disposable items.

Julie shares rituals, recipes, and projects for living sustainably, inspired by both wisdom rooted in traditional cultures and her own grandparents. Practical checklists outline easy swaps (instead of disposable sponges, opt for biodegradable sponges or Swedish dishcloths, choose a bamboo toothbrush over a plastic one) and sustainable upgrades for common household tools and products.

Projects include wool dryer balls, non-toxic dryer sheets, all-purpose citrus cleaner, herbal tinctures and balms, and more, plus recipes for package-free essentials like nut milk, hummus, ketchup, salad dressings, and vegetable stock.

Essential IRON

Considered an essential mineral given its important role in the body, find out how to avoid deficiency.

Whereas it can be hard to spot signs that you are lacking in certain vitamins and minerals, when it comes to iron, it is quite clear. For too little iron in your body can raise your risk of iron deficiency anaemia, leaving you feeling incredibly fatigued, and struggling to find the energy to get through the day.

That is because iron is a mineral that is required for making red blood cells, which then carry oxygen around the body. Without these red blood cells, your body won't have enough oxygen, which can result in the feeling of tiredness. Not only that, but we need iron to convert our food into energy, it is necessary for a healthy immune system and for our cognition.

WHY AM I DEFICIENT?

A lot of people can be surprised when they find their nutrient levels are low as they think they are eating a generally healthy diet.

But with iron, and, in fact, with many minerals, it can be hard in our modern world to obtain the amounts that the body requires. The reason for this is two-fold; many of us, despite thinking they eat healthily, simply do not meet their required five a day of fruit and veg, while our soils from which such foods come from are very depleted in natural levels of these minerals.

This can all leave us with less than desirable levels and produce some of the most common symptoms associated with iron deficiency. We have already highlighted fatigue, but other signs linked with iron deficiency anaemia includes pale skin, shortness of breath and heart palpitations.

As well as this, some groups of the population are at greater risk of iron deficiency, including women of menstruating age, pregnant and breastfeeding women, vegetarians and vegans, and those taking part in a lot of sport.

Topping up

The current NHS guidelines suggest that men need 8.7mg a day, while women aged 19-50 require 14.8mg a day. Women aged 50 and over are also considered to have a requirement for 8.7mg daily.

But you may have higher requirements, depending on your lifestyle and if, for example, you are a woman who has heavy periods. If you are concerned, an iron test is very straightforward, and you can be referred by your GP or even buy a test yourself – ask your health food store about the best route for you.

To achieve a healthy amount of iron on a daily basis, you need to place the focus on your diet, increasing intake of certain foods is crucial and can really help you to boost your levels.

Top suggestions which work for all, but especially vegans, are beans and lentils, nuts, dried fruit such as apricots, wholegrains, including brown rice, and plenty of dark green leafy vegetables, such as spinach and kale. If you are not vegetarian or vegan, meat also contains iron, but be careful not to eat too much red meat.

A supplement is a very worthwhile consideration to make to ensure you're getting enough. When choosing a supplement, seek advice from your health food store about the form that is right for you as some types can lead to issues such as constipation.

Be aware too that vitamin C taken with an iron supplement is a good idea as it can help with absorption, while caffeine can inhibit it, so be aware when supplementing.

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NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks

Free From Fellows

Free From Fellows™ consists of a line-up of the UK's favourite confectionery products; Our fabulous range of gummies (Gummy bears, Cola Bottles and Midget Gems and Wine Gums) and our delicious hard boiled sweets (Pear Drops, Rhubarb & Custard and Lollipops) are made a delicious twist – they are all made without sugar, gluten, gelatine and dairy! These fabulous products are suitable for everyone, including vegans and vegetarians. Extensive testing with sweetie fans ensured the right variants, flavours, tastes and textures were selected. The products are also egg free, soy free, GMO free, nut free and are free from artificial flavours and colours.

www.freefromfellows.com

The Leaf Life

Welcome to The Leaf Life, A CBD infused lightly sparkling range of drinks. Available in slim line 250ml recyclable cans in Laidback Lemonade, Relaxing Raspberry and Mindful Mango with Passionfruit flavours. These natural drinks contain 15mg of full spectrum CBD and are free from artificial flavours, colours and refined sugars. We have sourced the most wholesome natural ingredients including the CBD to deliver a fantastic tasting lightly carbonated drink with a functional beneficial twist and all varieties are under 25 calories per can.

www.theleaflife.co.uk

Maintaining a healthy gut Microbiome

VSL#3 is a highly concentrated poly-biotic with 450 billion bacteria in every sachet. Even better, these bacteria come from not one but eight different bacterial strains, making it a combination poly-biotic. VSL#3 is scientifically proven to survive the harsh conditions of the stomach, allowing them to reach and colonise the gut. VSL#3 is available for only £1.49 per sachet. Visit our website for more information: vsl3.co.uk and join our community on socials @VSL3_uk.

www.vsl3.co.uk

Canned from fresh organic sweetcorn from Suma

"What does 'canned from fresh' mean?" I hear you ask. Well, it means that our organic sweetcorn is sown exclusively in our growers' fields in Northern Italy, cultivated with care and canned within five hours of harvesting. This ensures our sweetcorn stays juicy and crunchy. This particular variety is super sweet—containing only naturally occurring sugars—and is part of a range of other canned from fresh products, including an organic naturally low in sugar sweetcorn, borlotti beans and chickpeas. Keep it fresh!

www.suma.coop

Rio Amazon Pau d'Arco Tea

Keep your immune system in good shape with award-winning Rio Amazon Pau d'Arco Tea! This infusion has been used by rainforest tribes to help support the body's defences and provide a source of antioxidants.

Pau d'Arco extract (*Tabebuia impetiginosa*) is derived from the bark of a giant hardwood tree that is native to the Amazon rainforest in South America. It has been used to contribute to the immune system for over two thousand years and is still popular with the modern populations of Peru and Brazil.

www.riohealth.co.uk

Panda Liquorice Redesign

The best-selling confectionery brand Panda liquorice has had a design overhaul. The ever tasty favourited recipes however have stayed the same so worry not! This amazing redesign is available in all good independent health stores in a variety of bags, bars and multipacks. Panda Liquorice has been on sale in the UK for 39 years and the liquorice itself has been in production in Finland since 1927 at a factory steeped in liquorice tradition and heritage. The range is made with all-natural ingredients and is a big favourite with vegetarians and vegans around the world.

www.Pandalicorice.com

A FREE FROM *lifestyle*

Many people are choosing to cut gluten from their lifestyle, and with some simple switches, you can still maintain a healthy and balanced diet.

You may avoid gluten yourself or you are likely to know someone who finds they are intolerant to it. That's because gluten has developed a bit of a bad name in recent years, as people have become increasingly aware of it and the potential effects it can have.

Of course, there are people who must avoid it for life, such as those with coeliac disease, the auto-immune condition in which your immune system reacts to gluten, with very uncomfortable symptoms, as well as damaging the gut. For those, they need to avoid gluten for life and there is no cure. Others may have been tested for gluten intolerance or may believe that gluten makes their symptoms of IBS worse, and so will also avoid it. Others simply choose to either cut it out or reduce intake as it makes them feel better (more on that later).

The good news is, there are so many gluten free alternatives available. The bad news is they can be stuffed full of additives and other undesirable ingredients so if you choose to be free from, it's important to choose the right foods and ensure balance.

THE USE OF GLUTEN

Gluten is a protein that is found in a variety of ingredients, such as wheat and barley, and so wherever these are included in foods you buy, they will contain gluten. Gluten is also added as an ingredient in its own right to a variety of commercial foods.

If you look at the likes of bread, it is used to provide dough with increased strength and elasticity, as well as better water absorption, while it can be found in pasta as manufacturers prefer to use semolina as it is considered better.

However, we do find gluten is contained in a lot of foods these days, and, with many people turning to carb-laden processed foods, there is an argument that we are consuming far too much gluten for our digestive systems to be able to cope.

Signs that you do not tolerate gluten well mainly focus around digestive discomfort, such as bloating, constipation, diarrhoea and flatulence, while others can also find it affects their skin and energy levels.

Free from choice

In the same way as there is plenty of processed, poor quality 'regular' food products available, so too is there poor free from food – just because it is gluten free, doesn't mean it's good for you.

The best way to ensure you are following a healthy gluten free lifestyle is to cook as much as you can from scratch, eating variety and ensuring balance, much as you would if you consumed gluten.

The difference here will be cutting out foods that are not gluten free, and so you will need to be careful when eating the likes of bread, crisps, pasta, cereals, cakes and biscuits, some processed food and sauces. That is because of the ingredients they contain which should be avoided, including:

- Wheat.
- Barley.
- Rye.
- Cous cous.
- Semolina.
- Spelt.
- Bulgar wheat
- Khorosan wheat (known as Kamut).

You should also be aware of certain drinks, such as juice, squash, beer and wine as these are not always gluten free.

The good news is there is much you can eat that is gluten free, including rice, potatoes, lentils, corn, polenta and soya. You can also safely eat amaranth, quinoa, flaxseed, hemp, millet and buckwheat.

Experts advise that you check on certain ingredients, including barley malt extract and oats; the best way to be safe is to get familiar with checking ingredient labels as if they are free from gluten, they should say so on the packet.

Ways to support your immune system – when you need it most

Top tips on the essential nutrients needed to keep your immune system in the best of health.

The world is currently on high alert as the coronavirus COVID-19 spreads across the globe. While there is as yet no vaccine for the virus, there are many things we can do to adapt and help protect our health.

Along with healthy habits, including exercise and a balanced diet, nutritional supplements play an important and supportive role in ensuring our immunity is in fighting shape. The following are key supplements to consider for immune function.

SELENIUM

Supplementing with the mineral, selenium, could support the immune system. During a viral infection, the body loses selenium but needs it then more than ever*. Viruses produce substances known as reactive oxygen species (ROS) when they infect the body, which can potentially cause damage to cells. Recent research also shows that these ROS can speed up viral reproduction and reduce the body's immune response. Fortunately, these ROS can be neutralised by a substance called glutathione, decreasing cellular damage and improving the immune response. To make glutathione, the body requires good levels of the nutrient selenium.

In a study published in *Advances in Nutrition*, selenium supplements were shown to improve the immune responses in the case of various virus types including Influenza type A*. Study authors suggest that selenium supplements have a place in the therapy of viral infections, alongside traditional treatments.

We struggle to obtain selenium from dietary sources, even with the most healthy, balanced diet. The soil in farming land within the UK and most of Europe is low in selenium, meaning that locally grown food and livestock will give low selenium when eaten.

A recent analysis shows that selenium intakes in the UK are significantly low, with 50 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men consuming less selenium than needed for good health*. Other studies show that vegetarians and vegans are more likely to be deficient in this essential nutrient*.

Selenium density in the soils and foods has become worse in recent years and various reasons are cited for this, including the rise of organic farming, climate change and changes in agricultural techniques. Selenium supplements, therefore, become a reliable way to ensure good selenium intakes and therefore support the immune system. Selenium supplements are available in two forms: 'inorganic' (such as sodium selenite and selenate), or 'organic' types, such as selenium-yeast. The major difference between the two types is that the organic variant contains a wider range of beneficial compounds, important for the eventual production of immune-supporting glutathione.

Most selenium supplements are in the 'inorganic' form, but scientific evidence suggests that only about 50 per cent of an inorganic supplement actually gets absorbed by the body. Selenium-yeast, however, is shown to be much more effective, with a particular type (the pharmaceutically produced 'SelenoPrecise') shown to have absorption as high as 88.7 per cent*, the highest recorded for selenium supplements. SelenoPrecise selenium supplements have also been certified by the

European Food Standards Agency as being better absorbed than the inorganic selenium forms, selenite and selenate* and they have been used in more than 40 scientific studies.

OMEGA-7

Omega-7 SBA24 is an extract of the sea buckthorn berry, which is naturally rich in important protective nutrients. Omega-7 includes the major essential fatty acids (omegas 3, 6, 7, and 9), phytonutrients and beta-carotene, which contributes to a healthy immune system and healthy mucous membranes.

Mucous membranes are protective tissues that line our respiratory tract (from our nasal passages to our lungs) and act as a barrier between viral infections and the body, so it's important to help ensure they're in fighting shape during periods of contagious illness.

Furthermore, various lab studies have shown that sea buckthorn may demonstrate anti-viral properties by stimulating the production of the body's immunity molecules and decreasing the growth of various 'flu-related viruses*.

VITAMIN D3

Vitamin D3 plays an important role in the immune system. Known as the sunshine vitamin, vitamin D3 is normally produced when our skin is exposed to sunlight, but this production is reduced as we get older or if we live in dark, rainy places in the world, such as the UK. Now, more than ever, it's important to achieve adequate vitamin D levels.

Not only does vitamin D support the immune system, but a major study published in the *British Medical Journal* also demonstrated that vitamin D supplements help protect against respiratory tract infections, which covers everything including colds, 'flu and pneumonia*.

GARLIC

Garlic is a key ingredient in the Mediterranean diet, considered to be the healthiest diet in the world. Garlic contributes to a healthy immune system, making it a key consideration right now.

Garlic has demonstrated anti-microbial properties in various clinical trials, meaning it's been shown to fight bacteria and viruses. Studies propose that garlic does this by stimulating the production of immune cells, reducing the duration of infectious illness and risk of catching them all together.

Compared to dietary garlic, garlic supplements can provide the body with higher levels of active compounds responsible for this immune support.

MULTIVITAMINS

Multivitamin supplements are an important consideration for overall health and contain a wide range of vitamins and minerals important for supporting the immune system.

In the case of a supplement such as Bio-Multi, its ingredients, including zinc, vitamin A and vitamin C, contribute to a healthy immune system by providing the body with the building blocks to produce disease-fighting immune cells.

These are just some of the ways in which we can support our body's natural defences and do what we can in the current challenging climate.

*** References available on request**

Immune system support

when you need it most

Pharma Nord's range of pharmaceutical quality supplements provide a variety of ways to support your body's normal immune function.

Good to know in times like these.

Pharma Nord
Pioneers in Nutritional Healthcare

Available from health food stores, independent pharmacies or online at www.pharmanord.co.uk

Menopause, naturally

If the menopause is leaving you feeling less than your best, take positive steps, naturally. Esther Mills-Roberts has all the advice.

We know all too well the hormonal influence on our body. From a woman's first period, to her last and everything in between, ladies manage the effects of their menstrual cycle hormones until one day, the body finally winds it down – and the menopause arrives.

For many, this brings all kinds of symptoms, such as hot flushes, changes in mood, dryness affecting the vagina, hair, nails and lethargy. So, what can be done to help?

Manage your hormones

Hormones are not always helpful when it comes to keeping level emotions.

During this time of change, it's important to be kind to yourself and, as much as you are able, take time out to rest. This can be hard if you're the one holding a family together, caring for older relatives or working especially hard. But it's so important. If time to think and plan goes by the wayside, you can soon find yourself feeling overwhelmed when your hormones are already erratic and might be affecting your mood.

Your body relies on you to nourish it. Over time, deficiencies of B vitamins or iron can lead to lethargy and poor concentration, and lack of minerals can compromise the function of both sex hormones and those that manage blood sugar balance and brain function. So, be honest with yourself about how motivated you are with food. No time to prepare? Find healthy pre-made alternatives like vegetable juices and smoothies, snack on nuts and seeds, make slow-cooked meals full of beans and pulses and add in seeds. Look out for organic and wholefood snacks. Choose caffeine alternatives based on chicory or barley, and enjoy herbal and fruit teas. Most of all, increase your food variety. If you're finding food dull, your diet becomes narrow. Give yourself the goal of adding 10 new foods and five new drinks to your diet and enjoy!

As well as this, an obvious starting place to any change in feelings is to manage the drop in oestrogen that characterises the menopause.

There are many herbal remedies that can be used specifically for menopausal symptoms to manage hormonal fluctuations, such as agnus castus, black cohosh, dong quai and sage. It's wise to do so under the supervision of a practitioner who can check suitability with any medications that you are taking and help you to monitor your symptoms whilst you're using them.

Botanicals also form the basis of aromatherapy which, like herbal medicine, is well known to help with hormonal conditions, and also for the management of stress.

IT'S ONLY NATURAL

With the widespread use of hormone therapy, it has become the norm to be offered medications for the menopause and, whilst some are happy with this, others look to more natural therapies to help them through.

With the support of a naturopathic practitioner, natural therapies and remedies can be used alongside HRT to create more holistic health management at this time of life. Symptoms such as weight gain, feeling low and tiredness might be helped, and extra considerations including heart and bone health can be well supported.

Positive ageing is to be celebrated and is achievable.

In search of sleep

Women experiencing the menopause are known to suffer with poor sleep, often because of the onset of night flushes that make decent shuteye almost impossible. This then has a huge impact on other areas of life.

Much has been researched about the effects of poor sleep and the phrase 'sleep hygiene' describes positive steps to make sure that sleep-stealing practices are ditched, including late night blue light screen time, and eating and drinking in ways that could keep you awake, such as no heavy meals or stimulants late in the evening. You could also try and adopt some healthy strategies, such as bathing and going to bed in good time for your body to wind down and using some soothing essential oils to calm.

Thankfully, many of the therapies and remedies for stress also apply to healthy sleep, so you can take positive steps towards both at the same time.

Try this

- A.Vogel Menoforce
- Healtharena Dermacoll
- Natural Health Practice Meno Support
- Nature's Answer Vitamin D-3
- Omega 7

Hearty way to care for bones

The menopause is a time to start thinking more seriously about the health of your heart and bones, as studies have identified how these body systems are impacted by lower oestrogen, which occurs with the menopause.

This is often accompanied by a slowing down of the pace of life, which makes us more sedentary and can, in turn, make the heart and bones weaker. It's definitely time to make these a health focus.

Diet goes a long way; plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, wholegrains and pulses, nuts and seeds, high quality protein, omega 3-rich foods (as well as healthy fats in general), low salt, salts and stimulants, as well as moderate alcohol.

In addition to this, it's wonderful that many of the supplements that are chosen for the heart, such as essential fats from cod liver oil or fish oils, hemp and more recently algal sources of omega oils, help to maintain a healthy heart and joints. The same is true of soya supplements and collagen formulations.

For the heart, antioxidant formulations have always been popular and for cholesterol management, formulations such as beta-sitosterol might be recommended by a practitioner. You also need vitamin K2 for both healthy bones and a healthy heart.

For bone health, you must ensure an adequate intake of vitamin D and magnesium, both absolutely crucial for the long-term health of your bones.

BEAT THE STRESS

If you've lived life under prolonged stress, you might even have forgotten what 'normal' feels like. The crazy pace of modern life can leave you feeling worn out at a time when your body is in a state of menopausal adjustment.

In the same way as stress is stereotyped, 'stress relief' often is too, and it's vital to find what works for you. It's not always about being alone and quiet, but one thing is certain – this is where natural therapies and remedies really come into their own; essential oils to encourage calm such as patchouli or sandalwood, homeopathic remedies based on your 'constitution' (your overall person – both physical, mental and emotional), botanicals that have been used for centuries to encourage calm and rest. Excellent choices here include chamomile, passiflora and lavender.

Nutritional supplements based on nutrients that are either lacking in the diets of people who are stressed, or those that are used up in stress systems in the body, can help to safeguard against nutritional deficiencies.

However, it's not all about adding in. It's also about switches; maybe displacing high levels of caffeine by using low caffeine/no caffeine alternatives, using low alcohol/no alcohol drinks and switching cheap sweet treats with those that also include more substance and swapping high fat and sugar snacks for those with nuts and seeds, more fibre and perhaps fruit and vegetables.

People sometimes also use calming and meditative music to help relaxation so look out for these too.

Be beautiful

Nature is wonderful in giving us remedies that are multi-purpose. For example, vitamin E, which is great for skin, hair and nails, has also been found to help vaginal dryness. Essential fatty acids that help the heart and bones are wonderful in helping to condition the skin, hair and nails. The same is true of collagen, MSM and key nutrients such as iron, zinc and B vitamins.

So, the good news is, if you're caring for your diet, and supplementing for overall wellbeing, healthy bones and heart, then your skin, hair and nails are cared for too. In addition to this, look out for some wonderful organic and natural beauty products for skin that is getting older. Often based on enriching oils, botanicals and essential oils, many are formulated for specific purpose, such as dry, oily and, of course, for the time of the menopause, more mature skin, hair and nails. Don't forget natural hair dyes too. By this time of life, many will have been dying their hair for decades, so dyes using fewer chemical irritants can be a positive change.

Of course, if you're feeling well cared for a confident, your love life is likely to be better. If intimacy is tricky because you're finding things too dry, then natural lubricants might help to keep you comfortable and close. Vitamin E can help too, while omega 7 from sea buckthorn oil is excellent at helping maintain mucous membranes, which can lead to vaginal dryness.

NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S

Top Picks

Menopuase Support

Meno Support (Multi) from the Natural Health Practice has been formulated in association with Dr Marilyn Glenville PhD and is an all-round excellent multivitamin and mineral supplement in easy to swallow capsule specially formulated to help women through the menopause and beyond as well as supporting good bone health. It contains a full spectrum of nutrients including vitamin A, E and the B Vitamins, beta-carotene and selenium. As well as those all-important bone nutrients such as calcium, magnesium and vitamin D3. Also contains digestive enzymes to help digest fats, protein and carbohydrates. Now Vegan and Vegetarian registered, Kosher and Halal approved.

naturalhealthpractice.com

Tackling menopause-related dryness

More than 50% of women aged over 50 in the UK suffer from intimate dryness. Omega 7 SBA24 is a natural way to deal with dryness by supporting the health of mucous membranes – tissues which help maintain bodily moisture. Made from the berries of the sea buckthorn plant using an environmentally friendly extraction process, Omega 7 SBA24 is made under pharmaceutical control and is featured in many clinical trials. In a survey of over 7,000 Omega 7 SBA24 users, 98% said they would recommend it.

www.pharmanord.co.uk

Reseed R8 Botanical Hair and Scalp Solution for Women

3 in 1 botanical solution which treats both adverse scalp conditions and aids the fight against hair loss.

This unique 100% natural solution stimulates, refreshes and protects the scalp. High concentration of ingredients, ensure the hair follicles are stimulated to deliver hair that feels stronger and fuller. Also addresses adverse scalp conditions such as dandruff, greasy hair, inflammation and itchy scalp. Key actives; Arnica, Rosemary, Green tea, German Chamomile, Fennel, White Nettle, Horsetail and Thyme extract. Available at all good local health stores and pharmacies and from **reseedhair.com**

Paradox Omega Capsules

Boost your immune system naturally with Paradox Omega 3 fish oil. A unique blend of stabilised Omega 3 6 & 9 and powerful polyphenol antioxidants taking the best from the Arctic and Mediterranean diets.

Many studies show significant improvement and boosting of the immune system when Omega 3 is increased. Choose Paradox Omega, a natural anti-inflammatory to support your immune system

www.paradoxoil.com

Available from health stores & pharmacies £9.99

Menopause support

Menopause is a natural stage of life that every woman goes through. Meno Joy provides nutritional support during this period of change. The Meno Joy tablet is based on a combination extract of hops and red clover, which provides a variety of natural isoflavone types. Red clover helps to cope with typical signs associated with menopause, such as hot flushes, sweating, restlessness and irritability. Meno Joy is available in a 60 tablet pack for £24.95

www.newnordic.co.uk

Your herbal helper

In a new column for *Natural Lifestyle*, Jo Webber, Head of Herbal Education and Ayurvedic Practitioner at Pukka Herbs, picks her top herbs for health. This issue, she addresses female hormone balance.

While you might be aware of your hormones, the chances are you're not familiar with how much they influence everything – from how you digest food to the quality of your sleep and overall mood. Hormones are responsible for much more than pregnancy, cravings and menopausal hot flushes and they adjust and shift throughout our lives.

A woman can access whole body health, vitality and wellbeing by balancing her hormones. We are all familiar with the term pre-menstrual tension (PMT). This is just one indicator of how a woman can feel when hormones are tipped out of balance.

The balance and regulation of hormonal cycles underpins women's health. Understanding it will help you to not only capture the essence of your superpower but to harness your inner strength, rather than hiding from it.

When a woman's hormones are balanced, she can experience a regular, pain free journey from menarche (age at first period) to menopause.

Hormones are intricately woven into every aspect of a woman's wellbeing. Maintaining their balance is key to overall positive health and can be achieved through natural means and understanding of our individual rhythms. The key factors which can disrupt this balance include stress, diet and digestion, liver stress, genetic health and hormone treatments, such as birth control and hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

This is not to say that such medicines are invariably harmful or should be avoided. However, there are times when a more gentle, insightful and natural approach may provide a more complete solution to women's health issues. This is where herbs, diet and lifestyle suggestions come into their own.

To help capture the essence of your superpower and maintain hormonal balance, I'd like to share some helpful tips to help support women's health.

JO WEBBER oversees the delivery of Pukka's industry leading education to a range of audiences. As an Ayurvedic practitioner and yoga teacher, she is passionate about bringing these two ancient sciences together to help people feel empowered about their health today.

Hormone balancing herbs

Hormonal irregularities or changes in the female reproductive system can lead to menstrual imbalances, having a knock-on effect on fertility and the ability to conceive. They can also cause problems during menopausal transition, where a cycle established over decades begins to evolve.

There are several herbs that can naturally support hormonal balance, but my favourite is a traditional ayurvedic, adaptogenic herb called shatavari. This renowned tonic is beneficial for the female system, helping women adapt to the daily stresses of modern living and maintain balanced energy levels, whilst also reducing excess stress. In fact, it's been used for thousands of years in India to support women, where its name can be translated to 'she who has 100 husbands'.

Eat healthy fats and proteins

Fat is one of the most crucial elements for hormonal support. It is the raw material women need to produce and maintain proper hormone function. Your body needs certain fats for supporting cells and managing hormones. So that's foods such as coconut oil, walnuts, avocados, olive oil, ghee and clarified butter. These are the building blocks of hormones.

It's also important to ensure you're eating adequate amounts of protein at every mealtime as this helps to balance blood sugar levels and keep hormones in check.

Regular exercise

It's well known that exercise increases the feel-good hormone, dopamine, which reduces stress and feelings of depression. Regular activity can also help your sleep, digestion, memory and even sexual function, thanks to a boost in serotonin.

Any movement is better than none, so why not grab your yoga mat or take a walk in nature to help support your body when it needs it most?

Ask the experts

SPRING INTO HEALTHY SKIN...

by Ian Taylor

Does our skin require a different routine as the seasons change and why?

Spring sunshine can be both a hindrance and a help to our skin. As the weather warms up, the skin is less likely to be affected by weather-induced dryness so, unless your skin is very dry, you may wish to reduce your use of heavier balms and switch to a light serum. Look for one providing intense hydration in a very light formula. Longer, lighter days mean that it is especially important to incorporate SPF skin care into your routine. Sun care should always be the last step of your organic skin care routine and you can either apply a facial sun cream or an SPF day cream.

If you work in an airconditioned environment, maintain skin hydration throughout the day by spritzing the skin with a light hydrating mist with nutrient-rich actives, such as aloe vera.

What is the best skincare routine when moving from the cold weather to summer?

It is a good idea to ensure that both your skin care and mineral make-up contains SPF15. You can also help your spring skin care to work harder by starting to take supplements containing astaxanthin. Research shows that astaxanthin works as an internal sunscreen, protecting you from the sun's harmful rays from within. If your hair is vulnerable to springtime humidity, make sure you use a hydrating shampoo and plenty of conditioner. Choose shampoo made with marshmallow and chamomile extracts to give dry, frizz-prone hair a moisture boost. Those living in urban areas may notice that their skin is at increased threat from pollutant damage in warmer weather. To keep pores clear of congesting pollutants, cleanse the skin twice daily and consider incorporating a detoxing face mask into your routine, such as those made with coconut and charcoal.

Q How can we resist viral infections?

Rose Holmes advised: Viruses are making world news with media coverage of the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) across China and affecting other locations globally. Coronaviruses usually cause mild to moderate upper respiratory tract infections, like the common cold. Occasionally, a novel virus occurs for which humans have not developed immunity. This can happen with influenza viruses (different viral family), which notably occurred in 1918-1920 with the Spanish Flu pandemic. COVID-19, like MERS and SARS previously, is a novel coronavirus which means humans haven't developed immunity to it. This means the numbers affected will likely be high – and fatalities occur. Arresting COVID-19 spread is the best option. This also means practicing hand hygiene, not sharing drinks and supporting immune health, including avoiding fatigue. Fortunately, most of us get the less deadly and far more common cold, an infection caused primarily by a rhinovirus. For all viruses, aim for immunological fitness by ensuring optimum levels of essential nutrients and optimum sleep. Immune system health can be negatively impacted by both overindulgence and inappropriate nutrition and lifestyle. In addition to following a truly healthy diet, rich in antioxidant-laden vegetables/fruit, adequate protein is needed for ensuring immune system cells deal with invading viruses. Avoid sugar/simple carbohydrates, which negatively impact immunity for five-plus hours. Vitamins A, C, D, E and some B vitamins, and minerals zinc and selenium, are particularly beneficial as antioxidant and/or immune system support against external agents. Vitamin C-rich fruits (for example, camu-camu) may provide synergistic components. Adequate hydration is especially important; choose non-caffeinated herbal teas like pau d'arco and cat's claw that contribute to immune defence.

About the experts

KAY TOMLINSON set up Absolute Aromas in 1994 with her husband, David, with great enthusiasm for aromatherapy as the perfect complementary therapy. With three young children, Kay was encouraged to try new aromatherapy solutions to sort out everyday problems.

IAN TAYLOR is Information Manager and Cosmetic Scientist at pioneering organic skincare company, Green People.

ROSE HOLMES, Registered Nutritionist, is Education and Training Manager at Rio Health.

JOHN CAREY is founder and Director of Active Edge Nutrition (formerly CherryActive), which produces a range of premium, concentrated juices of cherry, beetroot, blueberry and pomegranate. The juices are pressed and concentrated, avoiding excessive heat to protect the goodness, before cold-filling into bottles without preservatives or other additives.

NATURE'S DEFENDER

MADE IN THE UK

PROPOLIS IS COLLECTED BY BEES FROM BUDS AND TREES

HIGH IN BIOFLAVONOIDS TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY IMMUNE SYSTEM

NATURAL ANTIOXIDANT

BEE HEALTH™

Ask the experts

ESSENTIAL STRESS SOLUTIONS...

by Kay Tomlinson

What effect does stress have on the body, both in the short and the long-term?

Stress has many unpleasant knock-on effects on people's everyday lives, it is known to affect all aspects of life, resulting in emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioural symptoms. When we are stressed, our immune system also tends to be weakened, making us more prone to catching illnesses and finding it harder to get over them. There are many other effects, but this is very much dependent on the person. With mental/emotional stress, if we don't identify it and try to address it early on, it certainly can cause long-term damage to our health.

What signs are there that our body is experiencing excess stress?

Mental and emotional stress tends to manifest itself very differently in different people. Some people can feel anxious, others struggle to sleep, many people suffer with backache due to tense muscles, and others have headaches, irritability, skin outbreaks or sensitivity. The signs are incredibly varied depending on the person, sometimes it takes time to identify these signs ourselves and link them back to our stress levels. However, it is important that once we identify that our body is experiencing excess stress, we try to take steps in reducing our stress levels in order to help keep both our mind and body feeling healthier and happier.

How can aromatherapy help and what essential oils are particularly beneficial?

Stress is being in a state of tension. For that reason, aromatherapy is hugely beneficial in helping the mind and body relax. Using aromatherapy can be as simple as inhaling essential oil from a tissue, which is one of the fastest and simplest way to benefit from essential oils. Another great option is to incorporate relaxing essential oils into a massage blend to help relieve tension from both the mind and body. Some of the best essential oils for stress include ylang ylang, bergamot, roman chamomile, jasmine, neroli and lavender. Ylang ylang is known to help soothe the mind and deepen breathing, whilst bergamot is incredibly uplifting, and chamomile is known for its calming and grounding effect. Pre-blended relaxation essential oil blends are also perfect for adding to a diffuser to help create a relaxing and balancing atmosphere at home to help you unwind at the end of the day.

Q What are the most obvious signs I could be experiencing gout and why, and are there any natural remedies to help?

John Carey explained: Gout is a type of arthritis that causes sudden and extremely painful attacks in the joints of the foot, knee, ankle, hand and wrist, especially the big toe. It is a common joint condition, now affecting one in 14 men and one in 35 women. Gout is caused by excess uric acid in the bloodstream; an overload of uric acid can cause it to form into microscopic, needle-like, urate crystals in the joints, causing inflammation and intense pain. Most people with gout have high levels of uric acid. Gout is no fun for sufferers as this painful arthritic condition can leave those who suffer with it debilitated when an attack strikes. But it is also a condition that can be reduced in incidence and severity with some changes to diet and lifestyle, not to mention adding in certain natural health products like Montmorency cherries. Research studies have shown that consumption of Montmorency cherry juice can lower uric acid in the bloodstream, which, in turn, can prevent it forming crystals of urate that cause gout attacks. Analysis of Montmorency cherries shows they contain significant levels of anthocyanins (far higher than other varieties of cherries and other fruit), which give the fruit its bright red colour. Scientists believe these compounds are behind the fruit's uric acid lowering effects. Studies have also shown that anthocyanins possess anti-inflammatory properties, which may help reduce the inflammation and pain associated with acute gout attacks.

The naturopathic advisor

***Natural Lifestyle* has teamed up with experts at CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) to answer some of your burning health questions. This issue, you asked:**

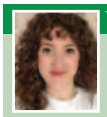
Q My acne gets worse the week before my period. Can diet help?

Acne flaring up before your period is all to do with hormones. Your cycle relies on a delicate balance between all sex hormones; if one is out of whack, the rest tend to follow.

High levels of androgens (male hormones), often seen in conditions like PCOS, can stimulate the skin to over-produce sebum (oily substance that keeps skin supple), which can result in acne. Insulin, a hormone which controls blood sugar, is also involved, with chronically high levels (due to diets high in refined sugars and starches) encouraging over-production of sebum, resulting in breakouts.

My top tips for supporting premenstrual acne includes:

- Eat adequate protein from both vegetarian and animal sources, making sure all animal protein is organic and grass fed so reducing exposure to excess hormones and inflammatory fats.
- Dairy can exacerbate acne; reducing it temporarily may give some relief – but do not eliminate food groups without the help of a nutritional therapist.
- Reduce or totally give up foods like crisps, chips and takeaways, fizzy drinks and alcohol; they contain trans fats, additives and other substances which cause inflammation and stimulate sebum production.
- Support your digestive system and liver in clearing excess hormones from the body by eating a portion or two of cruciferous vegetables every day (for example broccoli, kale and cabbage). This veg family contains phytonutrients which help do just that!
- Eat low glycaemic carbohydrates, such as fermented, minimally processed whole grains, sweet potatoes and legumes to balance your blood sugar levels.



YOUR EXPERT

Nutritional Therapist, Rosie Weston, is a CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) graduate. CNM trains successful natural therapy practitioners, in class and online. Surveys show that over 80 per cent of CNM graduates are practising. Visit naturopathy-uk.com or call 01342 410505.

Your guide to a green home

We're all talking about the environment but knowing how to make effective, yet simple changes, can be difficult. But don't worry as *Natural Lifestyle's* panel of experts answer all your questions.

Whether it's cutting the amount of single use plastic you use or choosing products that are kinder to the environment, it has never been easier to do your bit for the planet.

And it's worth considering as not only does it reduce your impact on the earth, it is also better for you and your family's health.

"Going green with your household products is beneficial. By cutting harmful toxins from your cleaning routine, it reduces your family's exposure to potential health risks. For instance, your food won't pick up trace amounts of chemicals from the kitchen counter, your hands won't absorb chemicals through surface contact, and you won't be breathing in the harsh fumes. This reduces the chances of allergies, asthma and skin conditions such as eczema, especially in children," explained Rebecca Kinnard, from worker's co-operative, Suma, which has the Ecoleaf range.

So, what steps can you take?

Q. How much of a problem is our plastic use?

The answer to this is straightforward – huge.

Cheeki is an eco-friendly brand making bottles and other products to cut our plastic use. Its Marketing Manager, Steve Collopy, explained: "Plastic use is becoming a major problem for not only the planet but our health as well. We live in the age of convenience and it's reflected by the amount of plastic that's used in everyday life. It's filling up our landfill areas faster than ever. The biggest problem comes from developing countries for two reasons. Firstly, the introduction of plastics has been so rapid that the education around being waste-wise has not caught up so damaging practices are in place to deal with plastic waste, like dumping it in water ways or burning it. Secondly, many of these developing nations struggle to handle the amount of domestic plastic waste but still have the means to take on imported waste from developed nations.

"Then the waste issue overflows into the environment. Unfortunately, much of the developed world look to these developing nations and point the finger but, in reality, much of this waste has come from those pointing the finger. It's like a never-ending game of pointing the finger but never actually lifting that finger and picking up the rubbish."

When cutting plastic use, Steve advised to check that materials are of a high food-grade quality so it can be reused.

"Always look for products that have been FDA approved or at least have certification of the quality of materials used. Try and look for alternatives that are wrapped in eco-friendly material; you don't want to buy stainless steel straws in a plastic package."

Q. Why do my household cleaning products impact the planet?

We hear a lot about cutting single use coffee cups and water bottles, but not so much is said about the role your everyday household products can have on the environment, not to mention your own health. All of these need to be considered and are actually some of the easiest changes you can make.

"Not only do many conventional mainstream products contain chemicals which are then leaking into the ecosystem, many of them are packaged in virgin plastic, which is obviously a major concern for the planet," explained Rebecca.

Graeme Hume, Managing Director of Pravera, which distributes the Sodasan cleaning range, added that health of the environment and on humans is intertwined.

"The use of synthetic aromas affects the olfactory system and to give an example, use of synthetic aromas that end up in watercourses affects the ability of fish to go upstream to their spawning grounds because they are disorientated. If you have to use aromas in the home use only organic essential oils and buy products that state 'parfum' is from essential oils," he explained.

Try this

- Ecoleaf by Suma Laundry Liquid
- Waft Lavendar Air Freshener
- Cheeki Classic Insulated Bottle
- Natracare Safe to Flush Moist Toilet Tissue
- Woobamboo Brush Picks

Your top tips

- **CUT THE AMOUNT YOU USE:** Graeme advised: "Stop using unnecessary products that have been 'bigged' up through marketing. Most all-purpose cleaners cover 99 per cent of the jobs needed. This reduces the packaging and stored products."
- **OPT FOR REFILLS:** Head to your health food store with your own reusable bottles and containers to fill up on many household cleaning products. Rebecca added: "It's not just the liquid type products to look out for, many cleaning accessories are plastic based, such as sponges, cloths, brushes etc. There are now plenty of plastic alternatives to these made from things such as coconut husk, bamboo and recycled plastics."
- **START SMALL:** Steve advised: "It's all about little changes around the house to ensure that your home is giving back to the planet. Buy naked fruit and vegetables – no wrapping, use loose-leaf tea instead of tea bags, swap plastic items for eco-friendly options – toothbrushes, cotton buds, sanitary items, nappies, cook more at home, instead of going for the quick and easy options, and buy less stuff."
- **CHECK INGREDIENTS:** Lois Clark, Managing Director of NatBrands, owner of LoofCo and Waft and distributor of Eco-Max, advised to question: "Are ingredient ssustainable, for instance, are they plant-based. If palm oil is used, is it RSPO? Are they GMO free? Are fragrances from essential oils? Look for certifications such as Vegan Society and environmental bodies. Is packaging biodegradable or recyclable where possible? Are there large sizes or refill options which cut down packaging and plastic? And have the makers offset some or all of the transport CO2?"

Q. What are the biggest products of concern in the home?

Take a look under your kitchen sink and you may be surprised at the vast amount of household cleaning products you use, not to mention those kept in the bathroom. So, which should you be particularly concerned about?

Rebecca advised to be aware of plastics.

"Anything that comes in non-PCR (post-consumer-recycled) plastic. And harsh cleaning products such as toilet cleaners, bleach and stain removers. Products that don't carry the Leaping Bunny logo should also be avoided as many will have been tested on animals unnecessarily if they don't carry this certification," she explained.

Steve added: "Food packaging by far is the biggest concern. Pre-cut vegetables, microwaved packages, bottled drinks, microwavable rice packets, bagged up bananas and the list goes on. Bananas are the worst; nature has given them a neat little suit to protect the fruit, yet we still need to wrap it in plastic."

Graeme highlighted fabric conditioner, explaining "These are basically minute particles of plastic that coat clothes to make them feel softer. They then get partially washed out on the next wash and end up in the water courses and ocean. Only use organic and natural fabric conditioners certified by COSMOS, or NCP. I also think bleach should be banned as it has more danger than benefits."

Q. Should I be concerned about using wipes?

In short, yes, because the majority of them will end up on landfill. Even if they say they biodegrade, it's important to do your research as some can take years to do so.

Rhiannon Davis, from natural personal care brand, Natracare, explained: "The issue with wipes is huge. Globally, 14,000 wipes are disposed of a second. These wipes often contain plastic, which, as we are now well aware, don't ever biodegrade. It just breaks down into smaller pieces, which end up in the environment and up the food chain.

"Wipes cause 333,000 blockages a year across England, Scotland and Wales. Water companies in the UK spend £100m a year clearing these blockages, the largest of which are dubbed 'fatbergs', and can be found underneath towns and cities across the world. Fatbergs, when they appear, take teams of people to go down into the sewers and hack them apart with pickaxes (yes, really). Water UK looked into the causes of fatbergs and found that 93 per cent of their content is wet wipes which have been flushed down the toilet."

Seek out brands that have been tested by Water UK to be flushable, are made from 100 per cent paper and decompose before they reach the sewer.

And when looking at wipes, what are the key questions you should ask?

"Do these contain plastic? Do these contain cellulose (which is plant-based but doesn't break down quickly)? Do these come in a recyclable packet? Do these claim to be flushable? If so, where's the evidence?" Rhiannon added.

Q. Should I be concerned at the use of any chemicals?

We come across chemicals on a daily basis, some we are exposed to without our control but some we can eliminate from our lifestyle and our homes – household products being one of them.

"Conventional cleaning products are often derived from petroleum-based sources, which deplete natural resources. They may contain harsh chemicals, such as phosphates, caustics and other ingredients that can be hazardous to both the user and the environment. Phosphates are used to soften hard water as cleaning agents and to counteract other constituents of tap water. Phosphates, when discharged into streams and rivers, encourage the growth of substances such as algae – this starves marine life of oxygen," Rebecca explained.

"Triclosan is an antibacterial agent and preservative used in personal care and home-cleaning products. Phthalates are chemical plasticisers often added to soap or synthetic fragrances. Parabens are a group of compounds widely used as an antifungal agent or preservative. These ingredients are all thought to act as potential endocrine system disruptors."

Lois also added: "As there are thousands of different chemical ingredients that can be used in cleaning products and many raw materials have many different names for the same chemical, it can be difficult for consumers to keep track the ingredients in their cleaning and laundry.

"Surfactants are used in cleaning products to reduce the surface tension of water, helping to penetrate stains and dirt so that they can be easily washed, wiped or rinsed away. Preference should be given to surfactants that are derived from botanical origin as these are generally non-toxic, readily biodegradable and do not persist in our environment to cause harm to our ecosystems.

"Sodium etasilicate is a toxic chemical derived from a non-sustainable resource. It is highly corrosive to the skin and eyes. Petroleum solvents are used to boost the cleaning power of cleaning products and/or solubilise other ingredients in water. Petroleum solvents are toxic and derived from a non-renewable and non-sustainable resource. The following are petroleum solvents used in cleaning products: Butyl cellosolve; 2-methoxyethanol; and monoethanolamine."

Lois also cautioned against buying products that contain the likes of alcohols, bleaching agents, such as hydrogen peroxide, and dyes as none of these are good for us, for the envrinment or for our waterways.

"Artificial colouring commonly used in cleaning products are derived mainly from petroleum or coal tar. These chemicals are toxic and some can even cause cancer," she explained.

NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S

Top Picks

LoofCo Washing-Up Soap Bars

Introducing LoofCo Washing-Up Soap Bars in Lemongrass and Fragrance Free. The ideal companion to the award-winning Washing-Up Pads and Brushes from LoofCo, they complete the plastic-free washing-up routine, offering an alternative to plastic bottles of Washing-Up Liquid. Using a traditional recipe, LoofCo has created effective yet gentle soap bars that clean crockery, cutlery, glassware & pans. Also perfect for handwashing laundry while remaining gentle to skin. Containing pure organic coconut oil, they fit the LoofCo ethos to provide plastic free, vegan washing-up. These long-lasting 100g bars at a competitive RRP £2.75 will be a popular extension to the LoofCo range.

www.natbrands.co.uk

Ecoleaf toilet tissue – now wrapped in paper

Cut oil, chemicals and plastics from your home with Ecoleaf by Suma. Ecoleaf has been on a mission to make homes greener for years, launching the UK's first 100% recycled toilet tissue over three decades ago. Still made from 100% recycled paper, Ecoleaf toilet tissue now comes wrapped in fully recyclable paper, meaning that no plastic is used in its packaging. What's more, it is made right here in the UK by a process that involves no chlorine, so you can be sure your toilet tissue is good for you and your planet.

RRP for 4 roll pack: £2.25

www.suma.coop

Woobamboo interdental brush picks

WooBamboo Brush Picks are a convenient and eco alternative to plastic interdental brushes. The leaflet & box are made from recyclable paper & cardboard, the handle is biodegradable and sustainable bamboo. Extra durable nylon bristles deliver superior cleaning ability. The cap also allows brush to dry between uses and keeps bristles clean. Slim Ergonomic Compact Handle, allows the user to rotate the brush on insertion, resulting in less pressure being placed on the tip of the brush. The smart design of the slim bamboo handle, results in less plastic per item = less overall waste. Available in small and assorted packs

www.woobamboo.co.uk

Natural Room Spray

Lemon Myrtle has a reviving, sweet, lemony aroma – often compared to sherbet lemons! Not only does this powerful essential oil smell wonderful and help to uplift the mood, but It also has natural antibacterial & antimicrobial properties, making it an ideal natural product for cleansing and refreshing. This handy natural room spray combines the properties of Lemon Myrtle essential oil with the convenience of a spray, perfect for keeping in bathrooms, spritzing in shoe cupboards, waste-bins, or even to wipe down your Yoga Mat, to naturally cleanse, refresh and eliminate unpleasant odours.

www.absolute-aromas.com

Discover Waft Air Fresheners!

Aromatically fragrance & freshen your home with Waft Air Fresheners, expertly blended in the UK using essential oils and flower waters. Waft Air Fresheners are 98.5% organic, biodegradable, plant-based, Vegan Society registered, not tested on animals, palm oil and GMO Free. Choose from six signature scents: zesty Lemongrass, soothing Lavender, refreshing Peppermint, floral Geranium, citrus Orange and comforting Rose in a generous 100ml brown recyclable bottle with pump action sprayer. The vibrantly coloured labels represent a burst of fragrance and create a stylish look around the home. Give Waft Air Fresheners a try - the only dilemma is… which fragrance to choose!

www.natbrands.co.uk

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welcome to natracare's campaign to save our sewers and fight plastic contamination in the environment.

After 3 years of development with Water UK, natracare moist tissues became the first wipes to pass their stringent testing to be approved Fine to Flush Natracare has produced a quality, plastic-free, natural moist tissue for all the family- just what you'd expect from natracare.*

FINE TO FLUSH

Passed the UK water industry specification 4-02-06

natural and organic formula, soft and gentle on the most sensitive of skins. Vegan

**Flushability Standard - WIS 4-02-06*

Managing your mental wellbeing

Discover how you can support your mental health and wellbeing with a focus on your nutrition.

It is wonderful that mental health is being talked about so openly in the media today, with the emphasis on taking the time to talk and breaking down barriers.

This is important because the World Health Organization states that mental disease, including stress, is set to be the second leading cause of disability by the end of 2020. Furthermore, the Health and Safety Executive has highlighted that an incredible 15.4m working days were lost to depression, anxiety and stress in 2017/18.

Meeting our nutrition needs

A very exciting area of research suggests that our diet is an important modifiable risk factor for mental health and there is a very clear link between our mind and body; by eating well and taking certain nutrients, we can alter the way we think and feel.

Certain nutrients are important when talking about mental health, including the B vitamins, which are needed for the crucial role in the synthesis of neurotransmitters, including serotonin – our 'feel good' brain hormone.

Magnesium has also been found to be effective for depression and it's been found that deficiencies of magnesium may cause agitation, anxiety, irritability, confusion and sleeplessness.

The amino acids, tyrosine and L-theanine, can be helpful in improving mood and mental relaxation. We now know that those with the lowest levels of vitamin D, our sunshine vitamin, are 31 per cent more likely to have depression than those with the highest levels.

Research on omega 3 fats, which are classed as essential because we can't make them in our body, are important for decreasing psychological distress and omega 6s could increase the risk of major depression.

Gut focus

We also have to think of our gut health when we are considering our mental health and wellbeing.

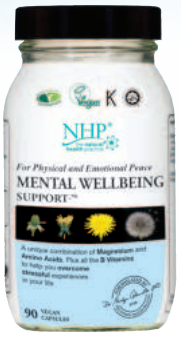
That is because our gut is classed as a 'second brain' and we have the same neurotransmitters in there as we do in our brain. In fact, 95 per cent of our serotonin is in our gut, compared to five per cent in our central nervous system.

Research has suggested that the microbiome may yield a new class of psychobiotics for the treatment of anxiety, depression and other mood disorders.

You want to make sure that you have good levels of beneficial bacteria as that can help you feel both mentally and physically well.

Reader offer

Natural Health Practice Mental Wellbeing Support is a combination of specially selected nutrients to help you cope mentally and emotionally. It includes the B vitamins, particularly vitamin B5 for supporting adrenal function, L-theanine to help promote feelings of calmness and research shows that it can help reduce psychological stress responses, the amino acid, tyrosine, to help in periods of severe stress, turmeric to help with stress-induced anxiety, vitamin D to help lift mood and magnesium, nature's tranquiliser. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of 10 packs. See page opposite to enter.



Giveaways

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

WAFT CONCENTRATED LAUNDRY PERFUME

Fragrance your laundry with the fresh aroma of spring. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of six 50ml (100 wash) bottles of Waft Concentrated Laundry Perfume in Spring Freshness. An expert blend of essential and fragrance oils in compact bottles that reduce plastic use. Use 10-20 drops as a laundry fragrance boost or mix with vinegar for a perfumed laundry softener. Also available in Tropical Flowers, Vanilla, Lavender & Orange, it is biodegradable, vegan, and palm oil free.

BETTERYOU CBD ORAL SPRAY

Representing the next generation of CBD supplementation, BetterYou's innovative CBD Oral Spray is specially formulated for enhanced absorption – with none of the CBD taste. A first of its kind, the great-tasting, natural lime flavoured spray delivers highly bioavailable, full-spectrum CBD directly to the bloodstream via the inner cheek. With 100 per cent vegan-friendly ingredients, the pill free supplement is housed in packaging made from carbon negative, plant-based plastic, which is 100 per cent recyclable. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of 10.

BIO-KULT MIND

Improve your cognitive function with this great bundle from Bio-Kult. Why not try a sudoku a day to boost your brain power, whilst alongside a daily dose of Bio-Kult Mind, with *Bacillus subtilis*, grape and wild blueberry extracts and zinc, which supports normal cognitive function and the immune system. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of three.

NATURES AID MINI DROPS IMMUNE PLUS

Natures Aid Mini Drops Immune Plus provides zinc and vitamin C to support the healthy functioning of your child's immune system, plus vitamin B12, folic acid and elderberry extract. The drops are a pleasant natural blackcurrant flavour, with no added sugar, artificial colours or flavourings. Easily added to juice or water, it is suitable for vegans. Natures Aid award-winning Mini Drops are a natural, healthy alternative to gummies and tablets, with no choking risk, no gelatine and no unhealthy ingredients – and *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of five.

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: May 1, 2020.** **Or you can enter online – visit www.mynaturallifestyle.com**

Please tick: ☐ Waft ☐ BetterYou ☐ Bio-Kult ☐ Natures Aid ☐ Natural Health Practice

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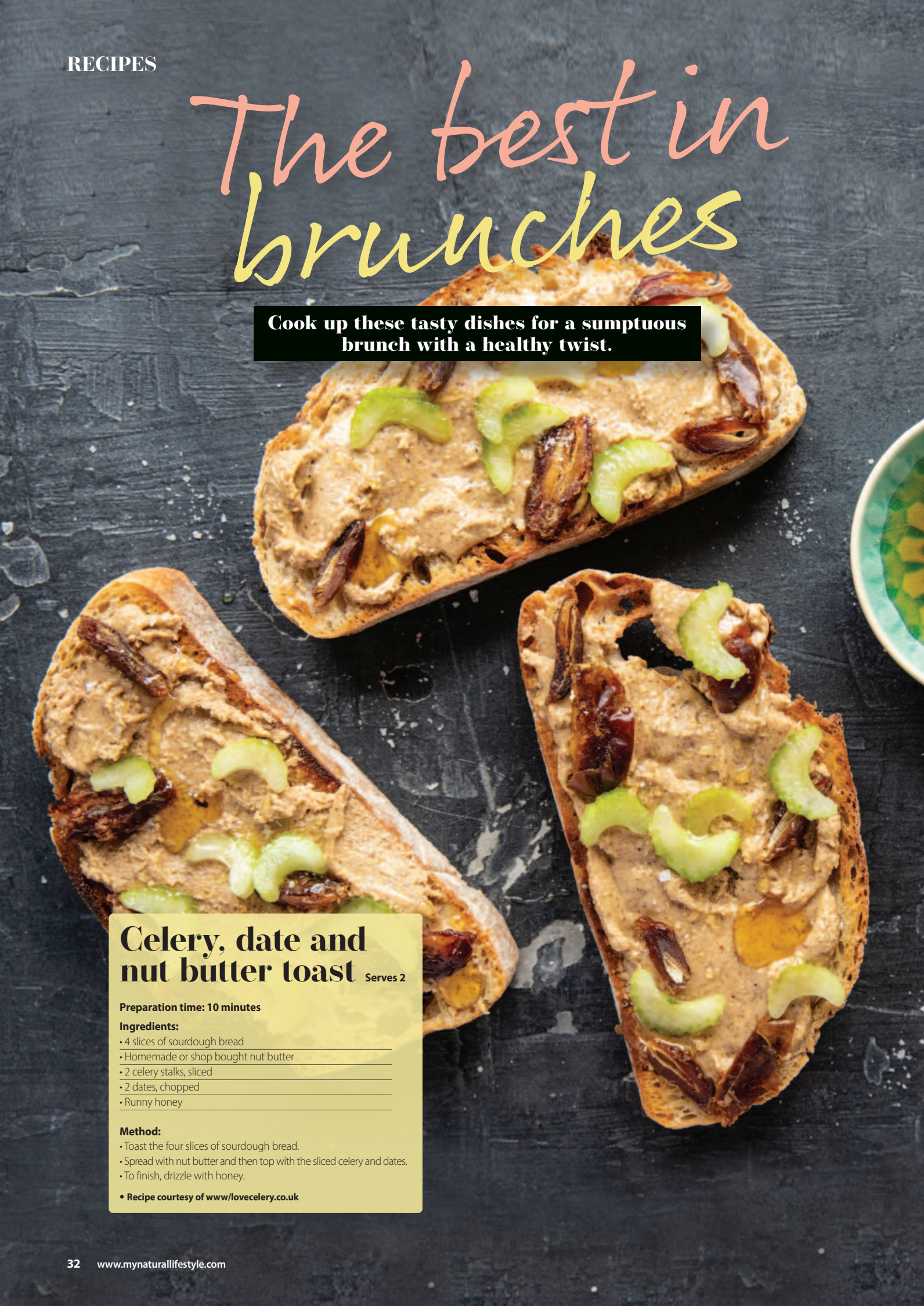
APR20_NL

The best in brunches

Cook up these tasty dishes for a sumptuous brunch with a healthy twist.



Celery, date and nut butter toast Serves 2

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 slices of sourdough bread
- Homemade or shop bought nut butter
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 2 dates, chopped
- Runny honey

Method:

- Toast the four slices of sourdough bread.
- Spread with nut butter and then top with the sliced celery and dates.
- To finish, drizzle with honey.

- **Recipe courtesy of www/lovecelery.co.uk**

Wholemeal muffins with oats, cream cheese and green kiwifruit

Serves 8 people

Start the day off with a delicious muffin that will provide your kids with all the vitality they need for the day. This is a complete and nourishing breakfast, which will favour intestinal transit and digestive comfort. This recipe is rich in fibre with a high content of vitamin C and a good source of potassium and folic acid.

Preparation time: 50 minutes
Difficulty: Average
Recipe suitable for: Vegetarians

Ingredients:

- 180g wholemeal flour
- 80g rolled oats
- 1tsp baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 4tbsp honey
- 200g low-fat cream cheese
- 4tbsp soy or oat milk
- 1 Zespri green kiwifruit, peeled and blended

For the frosting:

- 200g low-fat cream cheese
- 2 Zespri green kiwifruit
- 35g agave syrup

Method:

- Beat the eggs with the low-fat cream cheese, plant-based milk and honey. Stir the blended kiwifruit into the mixture.
- Sift the flour with the baking powder, then add the flour and rolled oats to the rest of ingredients. Put the mixture in the fridge for 30 minutes to allow the oat flakes to soak up the liquid.
- Spoon the mixture into silicone moulds or ramekins lined with muffin cases and bake in the oven at 200ºC (180ºC Fan) for 30 minutes. Leave to cool on a wire rack.
- To make the frosting, beat the low-fat cream cheese together with the agave syrup and a blended kiwifruit. Leave to thicken in the fridge for at least an hour. Spread the frosting over the muffins with a palette knife or use a piping bag, then decorate them with slices of kiwifruit and serve at once.

• Recipe courtesy of Zespri Kiwi (www.zespri.eu)

British asparagus, sweet potato and tomato shakshouka

Serves 2

This wholesome brunch dish is packed with nutrients that, among a range of benefits, can help support a woman during pregnancy. Asparagus is a rich source of dietary folate, providing approximately 40 per cent of your daily folic acid per portion, essential in pregnancy. Meanwhile, sweet potatoes are rich in vitamin A, which is essential for healthy foetal development, and eggs are a great source of choline, which helps protect against neural tube defects during pregnancy.

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2tsp cumin seeds
- ½-1tsp chilli flakes, to taste
- 2tbsp olive oil
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1cm chunks (about 400g total weight)
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 400g cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 bunch British asparagus, trimmed and chopped into bite size pieces
- 2-4 eggs, depending on hunger
- A small handful coriander, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

To serve:

- A drizzle of extra virgin olive oil
- A dollop of Greek yogurt

Method:

- Add the cumin and chilli to a frying pan and set over a medium-high heat to toast for a couple for minutes. Once the spices are fragrant, pour in the oil and add the sweet potato cubes, stirring well to mix. Reduce the heat to a minimum and cover the pan with a piece of tin foil (or a lid if you have one). Leave to cook for 10 minutes, stirring once or twice, until the sweet potato is just starting to soften.
- Remove the foil, add the garlic and stir through, then fry for a minute. Turn the heat up a little, add the tomatoes and a little salt and pepper and fry for another five minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir through the asparagus, recover loosely with the foil and cook for another five minutes.
- Use a wooden spoon to push the vegetables aside to make two to four wells in the asparagus mix, cracking an egg into each. Recover loosely with the foil and leave to cook until the eggs are done to your liking, about five to eight minutes for a set white and a runny yolk.
- Season with salt and black pepper, scatter over the coriander, top with a dollop of Greek yogurt and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Serve immediately with plenty of crusty bread.

- **Recipe courtesy of www.britishasparagus.com**

Advertisement

SKIN

THE BODY'S LARGEST ORGAN

ARE YOU TAKING CARE OF IT?

The flawless youthful glow of beautiful skin is something we take for granted when we are young.

The smooth radiant perfection of a baby's complexion is irresistible, don't you just want to touch it? Even at 17 years old I remember looking in the magnifying mirror trying to find a small spot, or an open pore I could be unhappy with - how unappreciative of youth we can be.

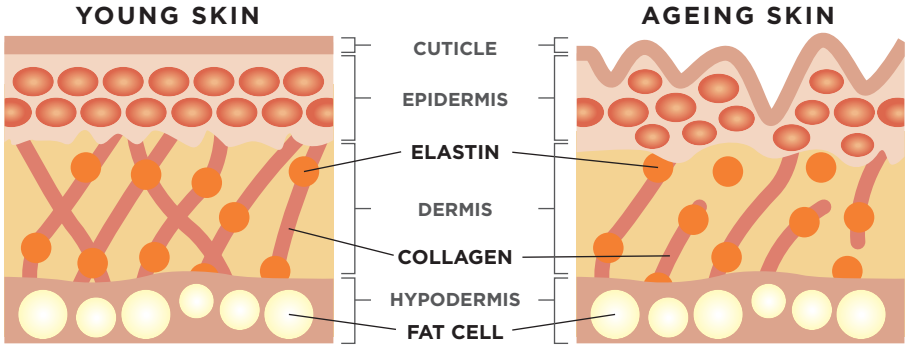
One day we may look in the non-magnifying mirror and see the skin we don't recognise anymore. What causes our skin to age? Why do some people at 50 or 60 look years younger?

There are many reasons why some people age better than others. Unprotected sun exposure, smoking, poor diet lacking vital nutrients, excessive sugar consumption, dehydration, stress and genetics are all contributing factors.

Another factor is our decreased collagen levels. At the age of 25 our collagen production starts to deplete, by the age of 40 our body's ability to produce collagen has decreased by 25%. By age 60 it has decreased by over 50%.

Collagen is the most abundant protein in the body. It's found in connective tissue, tendons, muscles, ligaments, hair, nails and skin. Collagen acts as a support structure to anchor cells to each other so they give the skin strength and elasticity, keeping the skin smooth and youthful. As we age and lose our natural collagen levels, fine lines and wrinkles start to appear.

By improving our diet and lifestyle choices, we could help keep our skin as healthy and youthful as possible. It may also be helpful to take a good quality collagen supplement.



Dermacoll™
Skin Supplement

High Strength Hydrolysed Collagen Drink Mix

5000mg per serving

With Hyaluronic Acid, Green Tea, and Vitamin C *which contributes to normal collagen formation in the skin*

30-day supply
£28.95

PLUS FREE
Biotin worth £10.95
3 month supply

Biotin is proven to support hair, skin and nails and works effectively in conjunction with Dermacoll

Use code **DBIO** at checkout. Expires 30/4/20.

Made in the UK by Healtharena, the leading UK collagen brand since 2003. Find out more about the reasons why collagen is so important for our health by visiting our website.

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