

Natural Lifestyle

LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL — NATURALLY

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February 2023



Holistic hormone balance

Expert advice on easing your PMS symptoms

Best for mum and baby

Natural health tips for new parents

FAT FINDING

THE IMPORTANCE OF ESSENTIAL FATS FOR ALL

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*Vitamins B1, B2, B6, B12 and niacin contribute to the normal function of the nervous system.

B12

B7

B6

B3

B2

B1



LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL — NATURALLY

Welcome

February 2023



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Hormones... we all have them, and they perform the same functions, depending on if you are a man or a woman, yet they can affect us in such varying ways. If we look specifically at females, while one woman can escape relatively unscathed from the monthly hormone fluctuations caused by periods, some experience PMS symptoms to such a degree they are unable to go about their normal life.

And this is problematic, not just for the woman experiencing it, both physically and mentally, but it should be considered a wider issue when it comes to the support and education the female population need in terms of what triggers PMS, and how they can better manage symptoms through natural health approaches.

This is a topic we bring into the spotlight in this issue of *Natural Lifestyle*, where we have gathered a panel of nutrition experts to discuss all you need to know; from the obvious and less obvious symptoms, through to the impact nutrient deficiencies can have, right through to a holistic plan to help, our experts have all the advice you need. You can read all about it on page 14.

This issue also brings into focus another pivotal time in a woman's life, that of being a new mum. There are so many considerations to make when a woman has a baby both for her postnatally but also the early nutrition of her young one, and so we bring you the advice you need in terms of healthy diet and lifestyle approaches. Find out more on page 22.

And finally, we are very excited to bring you the results of the annual *Natural Lifestyle* Product Awards. Late last year, we launched our search for the best products you can find on the shelves of health stores and then put it to you, our readers, to tell us what got your vote. We were inundated with votes and thank you all for taking the time to get involved. You can read all about the products that won your votes on page 12.



Rachel Symonds,
Editor

THE BEST BITS

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



Our Sales Director, Ruth, jetted to Australia with her family for a Christmas with a difference.



Natural Lifestyle mascot, Gus, got into the Christmas spirit during some winter adventures with his owner, Editor Rachel.



It was to the trails for Sales Exec, James, who took to two wheels for a winter's day bike ride.



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www.mynaturallifestyle.com

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MIDLIFE MATTERS FOR MEN

Nutrition experts are highlighting the role midlife changes in men could have on their testosterone.

The male menopause, or andropause, onset in men is linked to falling levels of testosterone, which can be as much as one per cent every year after the age of 30 and by the age of 50, testosterone levels may have dropped by 20 per cent. This drop in levels of testosterone, a hormone made in the testes, can lead to a lack of overall energy, vitality and get up and go and psychologically, can manifest as depression and anxiety.

And so experts at supplement brand, Cytoplan, have offered their advice to manage the issue, explaining that as well as ageing, other factors such as poor sleep, stress, excessive alcohol intake, illness, being overweight and poor diet can negatively affect testosterone levels.

Cytoplan advises that there are a number of ways that men can support testosterone production by increasing intake of specific nutrients and lifestyle adaptations, such as including resistance exercise, and getting high quality sleep, all of which can help to increase levels of this hormone naturally. Supplements containing fenugreek extract can also support the adrenal glands to create testosterone in the body.

Amanda Williams, CEO of Cytoplan, advised: "We often hear commentary about a 'male midlife crisis' and with recent research, we now know that men can truly struggle both psychologically and physiologically while experiencing a drop in testosterone, which is often called the andropause or late onset hypogonadism (LOH) usually around the age of 50. This reduction in testosterone can have a significant effect on quality of life, wellbeing and health in general and we have been working for some time to create a natural, safe and effective testosterone supplement that helps to increase levels and support hormonal balance.

"Using a natural testosterone booster alongside key nutrients such as zinc, vitamin B6, vitamin D and omega 3 fatty acids either from food or in supplement form and eating a healthy nutrient-dense diet with regular exercise should significantly help to support men during this natural phase."

Inside... HEALTH

PLANT-BASED PLANS FOR 2023



It seems we are a nation increasingly ditching animal products, if new research from the Vegan Society is anything to go by.

A new poll has revealed that half of Britons are planning to make an environmental resolution in 2023, with over a third of non-vegans' new year's resolutions involving cutting back on animal products.

The world's oldest vegan charity ran a survey recently, ahead of the annual Veganuary campaign, to find out how many people intended to make new year's resolutions to do their bit for the planet. The nationally representative survey, in which 2,000 people participated, found almost exactly half (999) of them intended to make at least one resolution which included an environmental goal. Just over 20 per cent said they planned resolutions which would not relate to the environment. The remaining 30 per cent confirmed they would not make any at all.

The survey, which early on determined participants' dietary habits, asked those who were not already vegan and who were making environmental resolutions to specify their goals. Reducing meat and dairy was the third most popular option of 10 possible actions. Reducing energy use was the most popular (67 per cent), followed by minimising waste by recycling and reusing (65 per cent), with 56 per cent of non-vegan eco-conscious panellists saying they were planning to reduce their consumption of animal products. Other possible actions included taking fewer flights, greener travel alternatives to driving, investing responsibly or donating to climate causes and voting or engaging with political representatives.

Hannah Coyne, Campaign Manager at The Vegan Society, advised: "It's really encouraging to know that so many people are committing to doing their bit for the planet by reducing their intake of animal products. Our Plate up for the Planet campaign aims to help people take this further and make one of the most effective changes possible to lower their carbon footprint."

We love ♥

FLORADIX VITAMIN-B-COMPLEX

This essential vitamin contributes to the normal functioning of the nervous system, as well as the reduction of tiredness and fatigue and normal energy release. This supplement from Floradix is in a pleasant tasting liquid formula, suitable for vegetarians and vegans, and with no preservatives, colourings or artificial flavourings.

UDO'S CHOICE RANGE

Developed by Dr Udo Erasmus to tackle the most neglected areas of nutrition – gut and cellular health – the range includes Ultimate Oil, the original, cold-pressed blend of organic seeds, delivering plant-based omegas 3, 6 and 9, nourishing every cell, every day.

The true cost of a period revealed

Periods not only have an impact physically, but emotionally and environmentally, and one brand is here to educate on the scale of this.

Ruby Raut, a menstrual lifestyle expert at pioneering reusable period product brand, WUKA, has shared a guide to the physical, emotional, financial and environmental impact of periods.

Ruby explained: "We are living through unprecedented times, trying to steer our way through a cost-of-living crisis, national food shortage, global climate crisis. The female population is also faced with having to navigate a healthcare system historically designed by men, for men, giving rise to huge gaps in our understanding of and education around female specific conditions, such as endometriosis, PMDD, PCOS, menopause, and even general menstrual wellbeing.

"Having grown up in a world of period shame in rural Nepal and experienced the now illegal practice of Chhapadi – a form of menstrual taboo which prohibits women and girls from participating in day-to-day activities while menstruating as they are considered 'impure' – it's clear how far we've come in the UK in tackling the taboo of periods. But menstruation comes at a great cost both to those experiencing it and to the planet, and as something that affects more than half of the global population every month for around half of a lifetime, it's shocking that so many are still oblivious to the real challenges faced every day by menstruating people."

In terms of managing the impacts of periods, Ruby suggested:

- **Physical:** The menstrual cycle can be divided into two separate phases: the follicular phase and the luteal phase. The follicular phase includes menstruation and your periovulatory period, which helps your body prepare to ovulate (release an egg). Once you ovulate, you move into the luteal phase. The luteal phase is the transition to either supporting a pregnancy or starting a new cycle. Changes in

hormone levels before your period can cause physical (and emotional) changes known as PMS (premenstrual syndrome) or PMT (premenstrual tension). Physical symptoms include bloating, breast tenderness, acne, muscle aches, joint pain, headaches, abdominal cramps, diarrhoea or constipation, fatigue and trouble sleeping.

- **Emotional:** PMS and PMT can cause mood and behaviour-related symptoms, such as irritability, difficulty focusing, anxiety, depression and anger. With women often having their pain dismissed, this also leads to the pressure of having to keep going, despite being in physical distress. The mental strain of having to push through severe discomfort and navigate all aspects of life (work, socialising, parenting and family obligations) whilst pretending nothing is wrong is a hard burden to bear.

- **Financial:** Cost can be a huge barrier to the accessibility of menstrual products for women and girls today, with many across the UK currently facing period poverty – a serious and growing issue thanks to price hikes and the cost-of-living crisis. A cost-efficient solution could be to invest in reusables. Although the initial outlay is bigger, in the longer term, reusable period product options will work out cheaper than using disposables.

- **Environmental:** In the UK, 200,000 tonnes of single-use plastic riddled pads and tampons are sent to landfill every single year, whilst an additional two billion menstrual products are flushed down Britain's toilets annually. Not to mention the carbon footprint of period products – a year's worth of pads and tampons produces 8.9kg of CO2 emissions per person; that's the same as charging a mobile phone more than 1,000 times. Just one pair of reusable period pants can save 200 single-use plastic riddled disposables from polluting our oceans or going to landfill and will reduce an individual's carbon footprint by six times if ditching pads, and four times if switching from tampons.



The sensitive approach

If you experience skin sensitivities, there are certain considerations to make when choosing your bodycare routine.

Here to help is Avant Skincare, which has created a range of 10 products, all formulated for those with sensitive skin, and which are free from silicones, fragrances, and gluten, as well as being cruelty-free.

We love the Liquorice Sensitive Relief & Soothing Body Cream, a gentle body moisturiser with calming ingredients to soothe and hydrate the most sensitive skin. Made with liquorice to brighten and ease inflammation, aloe vera to soothe and calm any skin irritation, and avocado oil to intensively hydrate and soften the skin.

And for the face, try Sensitive PHA Pore Decongesting Cleansing Cream, formulated with anti-inflammatory properties to delicately banish impurities from the skin and remove make-up without damaging the skin's

barrier. Contains PHA that gently exfoliates and enhances skin cell turnover, magnolia extract, which aims to protect against free radicals, reduce wrinkles, helping the skin appear firmer, fresher and younger, while vitamin E works as an emollient to keep the skin young and supple.



Inside... BEAUTY

SOOTHE AND UPLIFT

The New Year can be challenging for some, with the cold weather, bugs doing the rounds and summer still feeling some time away.

But you can beat those winter blues and soothe and uplift low mood with the help of British skincare and wellness brand, Tea & Tonic, which offers a synergistic approach to inner and outer self-care, through hand blended and 100 per cent natural skincare, bath and body products with a complementary range of wellness teas.

You can't go wrong with Saving Grace Rich Face Oil, which comforts and restores for a smooth, supple, healthy complexion. High in nutrients and antioxidants with vitamin C and E and omega fatty acids, including gamma linolenic acid, otherwise known as the elixir for elasticity. This bioactive, concentrated face oil balances and calms inflammation, reducing redness and helping to strength and protect skin from daily stressors.

And get your day off to the best of starts with the High Spirits Bath & Shower Oil. Made with an aromatherapy blend of energising ingredients, it balances and hydrates skin while promoting a positive, energised spirit. Enriched with an adaptogen super herb complex, plus a therapeutic level of essential oils with black pepper, eucalyptus, rosemary, peppermint and lemon.

THE POWER OF THE SEA

Give skin a natural treat with this superhero exfoliator from the sea.

Cosy Cottage Soap has joined forces with Whitby Sea Salt to create the eco-friendly all-natural Whitby Sea Salt Hand & Body Scrub to benefit eczema, psoriasis and dry skin sufferers.

Featuring nature's healer, sea salt crystals from Whitby's coast in North Yorkshire that are hand-harvested and then created by the power of the sun, Whitby Sea Salt is described as a 'super-hero' skin exfoliator. Mineral-rich, sea salt detoxes skin, restores natural pH balance, promotes new skin growth and even speeds up the healing process.

Combined with a shea butter moisturising base, the exfoliating effects of sea salt makes an unbeatable skin conditioner suitable for all skin types. Fragranced with an exclusive blend of plant-based essential oils, the conditioning scrub is handmade in small, waste free batches by the Malton-based team just 45 miles away and is free from palm oil, artificial additives and preservatives.

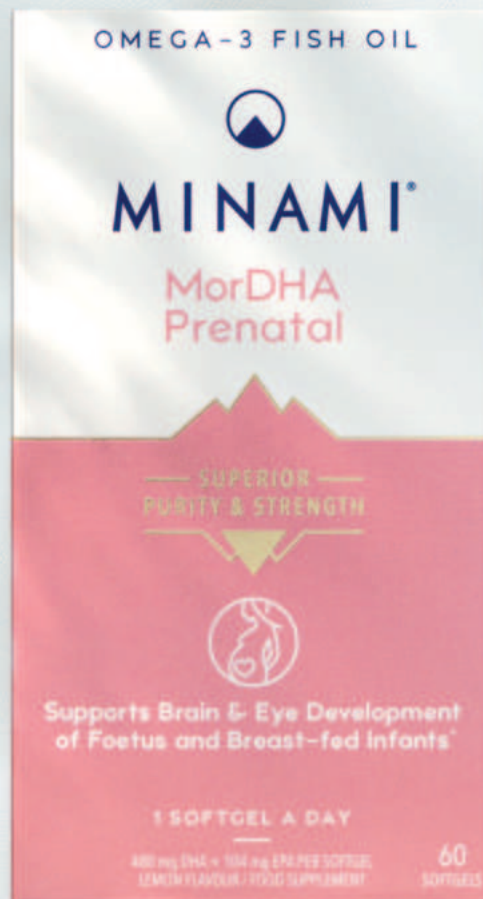




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Created with *mothers in mind.*



DHA helps maintain healthy brain function and vision throughout life, from youngsters to the elderly¹. DHA plays a role in both visual and brain development during pregnancy². It's a building block of both the brain and the retina in the eye.



DHA is proven to help with normal eye and brain development of the fetus and breastfed infants if taken by (expecting) mothers².



Benefits of omega-3 can be passed on through breast milk after birth².



Omega-3 helps expecting mothers to maintain a healthy heart³.



@minami_health



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¹DHA contributes to maintaining normal vision and brain function with a daily intake of 250 mg DHA. ²Additional intake of at least 200 mg DHA by the mother, in addition to the recommended daily amount of 250 mg EPA+DHA contributes to the normal development of the eyes and brain in the breast-fed foetus or infant. ³EPA and DHA contribute to a normal heart function with a daily intake of at least 250 mg EPA+DHA.

FATS

IN FOCUS

Not all fats are bad, but we need to make sure we're getting enough of the good kind for a range of health reasons.

Fats have been given a bad name over the years as people have shunned them for fear of putting on weight. But we must remember that there are many different types of fats and the essential ones – as their name indicates – are absolutely critical.

Yet our tendency to avoid fats means we can be lacking in adequate levels of essential fats, especially if we don't eat much in the way of oily fish, one of the best sources. And this can have an impact on our health and wellbeing.

CHOOSING A SUPPLEMENT

Many people choose to add in an essential fat supplement, and this is a good idea if you are concerned you might not be getting enough through the diet.

There are a variety of sources that an essential fat supplement will be made with, including:

- **Fish oil** – this is the most common source for an omega 3 supplement but be sure to choose one that comes from sustainable sources, ideally that is cold-pressed and purified, meaning it is free of contaminants from polluted water. You can also find organic fish oil, which will ensure it has adhered to certain standards.
- **Krill** – these crustaceans contain EPA and DHA, which are carried by easily absorbable phospholipids, meaning your body takes on more of the essential fats.
- **Evening primrose** – this has long been used as a source of omega 6 GLA, especially for women as it can be useful for balancing hormones.
- **Flax** – this is a good choice for a vegan essential fats supplement, as is hemp as the source. When choosing any essential fat supplement, be sure it is certified vegan.
- **Black seed oil** – this contains omega 6, as well as omega 9, which is an equally beneficial fat.

TRY THIS

Udo's Choice Ultimate Oil Blend

Lamberts Omega 3 Ultra

Viridian Nutrition Vegan EPA and DHA Oil

Paradox Omega 3D Chews

Vitabiotics Wellwoman Plus Omega 3-6-9

ESSENTIAL FATS EXPLAINED

Deemed essential, these fats are crucial for our health in so many ways, but cannot be made in the body. This means you have to obtain them from the diet or supplements – and ideally, a mix of both.

There are two groups of fats considered essential – omega 3 and 6 – and we need these in the right ratio to support our health. The beneficial fats within these two categories include:

- **Omega 3** – eicosapentaenoic acid, known as EPA, and docosahexaenoic acid or DHA, are the most important of the fats. These omega 3 fats play a crucial role in reducing inflammation, and are considered important for the heart, the joints, and the brain, and a healthy nervous system, among much more. They have also been linked to raised risk of postnatal depression.
- **Omega 6** – linoleic acid (LA), gamma linoleic acid (GLA) and arachadonic acid (AA) are perhaps the most widely known omega 6 fats. These play a role in inflammation and in brain cell regeneration.

EATING FATS

Fats are found in all kinds of foods, so it's relatively easy to obtain omega 3 and 6 from diet if you are conscious of including these foods in your regular dishes.

The best source of omega 3 is oily fish, such as salmon, trout and mackerel, as well as from nuts including walnuts and almonds. It can also be found in algae.

When it comes to omega 6, you can find these in sunflower oil and evening primrose oil, while ALA is also in nuts, flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds and chia seeds.

We can be lacking in essential fats if we consume an unhealthy diet filled with trans fats, usually contained in processed food, sugary foods, and the likes of margarine. Generally speaking, the western diet has a lot of omega 6 and not enough omega 3, which means you may need to balance this with a supplement.

Natural Lifestyle Top Picks



MINAMI - The Omega-3 Experts

Text (maximum of 100 words)
MINAMI® is one of the highest-concentrated Omega-3s available. This is thanks to our patented supercritical CO2 extraction process used to extract the fish oil we use: under pressure with much lower temperatures than other methods, we are able to extract the O-3 fatty acids from the fish oil,

while removing any unwanted fats often found in fish oil, exceeding European standards for purity. Our experts combine carefully selected ingredients with precise ratios of EPA and DHA, for different needs and lifestyles. Our fish oils come from small fish species that aren't endangered, sourced from southern waters of the Pacific Ocean. We're proud to have been certified by Friend of the Sea for our work.

Website: www.minamihealth.co.uk

Boost Your Everything with NaturesPlus Collagen Peptides



Collagen is a key component of hair, skin and nails so getting enough of this nutrient is vital. NaturesPlus Collagen Peptides is one of the few collagen supplements that provides all 6 major types of collagen from a variety of clean sources. It mixes easily, is virtually taste-free, and is further supported by enzymes to maximize absorption and bioavailability. You can even add it to your coffee! £29.95 for a 30-day supply.

Website: www.naturesplus.co.uk



Your health journey starts here.

The Udo's Choice range was developed by Dr. Udo Erasmus to tackle the most neglected areas of nutrition - gut and cellular health. By looking after these areas everything else falls into place.

Get your fats right...

Nutrition plays a big role in cellular health. What you put into your body affects how your body functions, repair itself, how well it produces new body tissue, and much more. Udo's Choice Ultimate Oil is the original, cold-pressed blend of organic seeds, delivering plant-based omega 3, 6 & 9 oil. Nourishing every Cell. Everyday.

Website: www.cleanmarineuk.com

Email: hello@inspiredhealth.co.uk



Aromatherapy and Essence Therapy that calms and protects!

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Vollagen®

Vollagen® is a complex of amino acids providing precisely the same proportion as those found within human collagen, with key advantages over typical collagen supplementation: Produced using fermentation and microencapsulation process, resulting in the creation of an amino acid blend rather than simply a combination of individual amino acids. 100% suitable for vegans, ethically and sustainably sourced, from non-GM corn.

Free from common allergens and contamination with heavy metals and other toxic elements that may occur in animal-derived collagen. The amino acids in Vollagen® are already isolated and are therefore readily absorbed into the body. Independent consumer testing has shown incredible results within 60 days of use.

Website: www.terranohealth.com

Panda Soft Liquorice Coated in Creamy Choc

Panda Liquorice have launched a new vegan product using their famous soft black liquorice pieces which they have been producing since 1927. The liquorice pieces are coated in a smooth and creamy vegan chocolate and are made with all natural flavours. This new chocolate coated liquorice is a delicious on-the-go snack in a handy 110g bag which is resealable.

Available in health food stores



AllicinMax™ Immune for normal immune function with vitamin C and Zinc

AllicinMax™ Immune is formulated to provide allicin from garlic, with beta glucan along with vitamin C and Zinc. Vitamin C and Zinc contribute to normal functioning of the immune system.

It makes a perfect addition to your wellness supplement regime. The easy to swallow, vegan capsules are odour free and suitable from age 12. Two capsules provide 180mg Allisure (Allicin) Powder, 150mg Vitamin C and 10mg Zinc. Part of the AllicinMax™ range, the brand leader in stabilised allicin supplements, you will find the range in your local independent health food store.

www.allicin.co.uk



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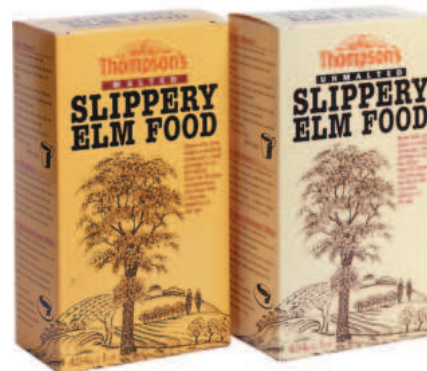
- Rheumatism, Arthritis, Inflammation
- OsteoArthritis
- Broken Capillaries, Weak Nails & Teeth
- Ageing, Dehydrations
- Loose, Sagging Skin



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Rest Assured with Slippery Elm Food

There are few products that have been around as long as Thompson's Slippery Elm Food. That, undoubtedly, indicates its success. It soothes and sustains

at times of distress, whether convalescing or simply needing to line the digestive tract and nourish. Slippery Elm Food malted or unmalted makes a smooth porridge or a drink and is easily digested by the most delicate stomachs. A Slippery Elm Food drink before bedtime may encourage sound restful sleep.

For more information visit www.sunshinehealthshop.co.uk



A Daily Wellness Essential!

Multi award-winning Bee prepared daily immune supplement is formulated by nutritionists combining highest quality ingredients with studies behind their use for helping support immunity and which have natural antibiotic and antiviral properties including propolis, black elderberry, and more. They're concentrated and contain no fillers or excipients so fewer are required. Suitable

for children and to take on an ongoing basis. Helpful for hay fever too.

Capsule contents may be added to smoothies. UK Made.

www.unbeelievablehealth.co.uk

Highly Commended for Helios Sleep

We are delighted that Helios Sleep has won Natural Lifestyle's Highly Commended Award for Best Herbal Category 2022, a very big thank you to everyone who voted for us. In the fast paced, pressurised world that we live in our Sleep combination of Avena sativa, Coffea, Passiflora and Valerian brings natural, gentle relief to all manner of sleep disturbances, from getting off to sleep to frequent waking during the night. Being homeopathic Helios Sleep has no known side effects and comes in organic sucrose pill form in our single dose dispenser. Please contact us for more details.

Website: www.helios.co.uk



FAIRTRADE POWER

How you can make a difference to farmers and producers – and in turn, ensure the supply of our most common food items – during the forthcoming Fairtrade Fortnight.

We can often take for granted that common food items are easily accessible. Indeed, it wasn't until the Covid-19 pandemic that many of us experienced difficulties with food shortages such as flour, likely for the first time in our lives.

But it isn't just the pandemic making things difficult for food supplies, especially for producers in disadvantaged parts of the world. And that is what the Fairtrade movement is here to help with.

Experts at the Fairtrade Foundation explain that cocoa, bananas and coffee could soon be much more difficult to find on our shelves, and it's all to do with climate change making it harder for crops to grow. The foundation adds that combined with deeply unfair trade, communities growing these crops are being pushed to the brink.

Highlighting these issues, this year's Fairtrade Fortnight, which takes place between February 27-March 12, is asking for shoppers to choose Fairtrade now and help save our favourite foods.

HOW FAIRTRADE HELPS

Fairtrade is a system of certification that aims to ensure a set of standards are met in the production and supply of a product or ingredient. For farmers and workers, Fairtrade means workers' rights, safer working conditions and fairer pay. For shoppers, it means high quality, ethically produced products.

The question is, how can buying Fairtrade goods help producers facing difficulties with growing crops?

The Fairtrade Foundation, which certifies products in the UK, points out that more of us choosing Fairtrade means extra income, power and support for those communities, as they work to build sustainable and prosperous futures. Choosing Fairtrade means standing with farmers for fairness and equality, against some of the biggest challenges the world faces. It means farmers creating change, from investing in climate friendly farming techniques to developing women in leadership.

TRY THIS

Suma Columbia
Ground Coffee

Alter Eco Almond
Dark Chocolate

Odylique
Mineral Lipstick

Clipper Organic
Fairtrade
Earl Grey Tea

Fish4Ever Fairtrade
Yellowfin Tuna in Water

HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

There are a range of ways you can do your bit to support farmers and producers, with the easiest and most common being to try to buy more Fairtrade goods. Your local health food store will very likely stock a wide range of certified products, including chocolate, tea, coffee, and nuts and seeds, and very often, there is a very small price difference, meaning it can be affordable too.

There are more than 6,000 Fairtrade products available in the UK that bear the Fairtrade Mark, which means it is certified and money is being channelled back to the people who need it the most.

GET TOGETHER

One way to celebrate Fairtrade and mark the fortnight-long campaign is to join in the free online Big Fairtrade Get Togethers.

You can sign up to these live events to hear from Fairtrade farmers and other experts on what needs to change so we can have a sustainable future for our favourite foods.

You can also take matters into your own hands and host your own event to raise awareness; whether it's a coffee morning, a quiz night, social media post or something completely different, there is much you can do to spread the word about Fairtrade in your local community. Your local health food store may also be hosting events and promotions, so do pay it a visit.

Find out more about Fairtrade Fortnight by visiting www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/

HOLISTIC GOLD STARS



We asked you to tell us your favourite natural health products, and tell us you did. Here, we can reveal the deserving winners of the *Natural Lifestyle Product Awards*.



BEST FOOD AND DRINK Udo's Choice Ultimate Oil Blend

The Udo's Choice range was developed by Dr Udo Erasmus to tackle the most neglected areas of everyday nutrition with delicious tasting, healthy foods.

Udo's Choice Ultimate Oil, the original nutritional seed oil, is an internationally award-winning

cold-pressed blend of organic seed blend that delivers plant-based omega 3, 6 and 9 essential fatty acids in the right ratio for optimum foundation health, nourishing every cell, every day.

Easy to add into every meal, simply pour, drizzle or mix it into soups, salads, smoothies or meals.

Commenting on the award win, Abby Smith, Udo's Choice UK Brand Manager, said: "We are delighted that after nearly 30 years, Udo's Choice Ultimate Oil Blend is still loved and trusted and is the winner of the Best Food and Drink category 2023."

Highly commended: Fish4Ever Yellow Fin Tuna



BEST NEW



Viridian Menopause Complex

Menopause Complex by Viridian is an innovative combination of potent plant extracts to support a wide range of menopausal symptoms, including sage, which helps with physical and mental comfort during the menopause.

A standardised extract from hops, it provides a well-studied phytoestrogen (8-prenylnaringenin (8-PN)), which can help with the tell-tale signs associated

with the menopause, such as hot flushes, sweating, restlessness, and irritability.

Lemon balm contributes to relaxation and supports sleep and the addition of saffron supports emotional balance and improved libido. Suitable for all stages of the menopause.

Aimee Benbow, Head Nutritionist at Viridian Nutrition, commented: "We're thrilled to win Best New in the *Natural Lifestyle Product Awards*. This supplement contains fully researched ingredients to ensure they deliver effective and therapeutic doses, making a lasting difference to people's health. Our ingredients are ethically sourced with 100 per cent care so there is minimal impact to the planet, no animal testing or use of harsh chemicals. Thank you everyone who has voted for us."

Highly commended: Good Health Naturally Ionic Iron

BEST PERSONAL CARE

JASON Hydrating 2-in-1 Face + Bodywash

JASON Hydrating 2-in-1 Face + Body Wash is formulated to help lock moisture into skin. Dry skin will love the unique blend of ocean minerals – including giant kelp, blue algae, Irish moss and sea salt – and the power of eucalyptus to moisturise, soothe and repair.

Gentle enough for daily use but powerful enough to tackle odour, impurities and sweat, this vegan and cruelty-free face and body wash will leave dry skin feeling replenished and smooth to touch. Dermatologist tested, hypoallergenic, and a SLS/SLES-free foaming lather that leaves skin cleansed, soft and smooth, consumer tests found skin was cleansed without dryness.

"The UK team behind JASON are delighted to start the year with this award scoop, and it pleases us that *Natural Lifestyle* readers are loving the Men's JASON range, which we feel fills a real hole in the natural products landscape – products especially for men that offer results driven skin, body and hair care for specific needs," commented Alexander Barani, Managing Director at Kinetic, which distributes the JASON range in the UK.

Highly commended: Cysticlean





BEST SUPPLEMENT

Bio-Kult Boosted

Bio-Kult Boosted is a unique multi-strain live bacteria formulation targeting the digestive and immune systems, with the same great 14 strains of live bacteria found in the original Bio-Kult, proven to survive the high acidity of the stomach, but at four times the concentration.

In addition, Bio-Kult Boosted also contains vitamin B12, which contributes to the normal function of the immune system. Bio-Kult Boosted can be taken every day as part of a healthy lifestyle, it does not need to be refrigerated and can

be taken alongside antibiotics, whilst travelling and by vegetarians.

Diogo Amorim, Human Health & Nutrition Marketing Manager at ADM, which has the Bio-Kult brand in its portfolio, commented: "We're delighted that Bio-Kult Boosted has been named the best supplement in the *Natural Lifestyle* Product Awards. Our unique advanced multi-action extra strength formula offers the ultimate support for those looking to enhance their gut health for optimum wellbeing. With a higher strength probiotic formulation, four times the concentration of our original formula, Bio-Kult Boosted offers additional support when it is needed most."

"As a business, we are committed to bringing innovative products to market which enhance the lives of our customers and knowing that we've been voted best supplement by consumers illustrates the need for research-based, effective, and easy-to-use solutions which support the immune and digestive systems."

Highly commended: Lifeplan Daily Green Complex



BEST ECO/HOUSEHOLD

Absolute Aromas Relaxation Reed Diffuser

A beautifully relaxing and restorative natural room fragrance, blended with only 100 per cent pure and natural essential oils, including beautifully grounding notes of bergamot, lavender, ylang ylang and petitgrain.

Specially formulated by expert aromatherapists to help you naturally relax and unwind your mind and body, this aromatherapy diffuser comes with eight high quality reeds, which gently release this wonderful natural fragrance into your home. To source the best essential oil suppliers. Absolute Aromas only opts for oils from controlled, sustainable sources that have little or no negative impact on the environment. And refills are now available.

Commenting on the win, a delighted Kay Tomlinson, Co-founder of Absolute Aromas, enthused: "We are absolutely delighted that we've won the award for one of my favourite products – thank you *Natural Lifestyle*!"

Highly commended: If You Care Unbleached Waxed Paper



BEST HERBAL

A.Vogel Echinaforce Echinacea Drops

Help fight the misery of colds and flu by supporting your immune system with A.Vogel Echinaforce Echinacea Drops.

Echinaforce is made from extracts of freshly harvested, organically grown *Echinacea purpurea* herb and root, processed within 24 hours of harvest from A.Vogel's Swiss farms. Echinaforce is a traditional herbal remedy used for the symptomatic relief of colds, influenza-type infections and similar upper respiratory tract conditions. Always read the leaflet.

A.Vogel CEO, Steve Brockie, enthused: "It's very exciting to hear this news. All of us at A.Vogel are very proud to receive this acknowledgement and we recognise that Echinaforce really is a special product. We never use dried herbs in our Echinaforce products, and we remain committed to the organic farming of our own plants and ensuring the fresh plant material is processed immediately following harvest."

Highly commended: Helios Sleep



BEST BEAUTY/BODYCARE

Silicea Collagen Plus

Described as the ultimate beauty formula, Silicea Collagen Plus combines the highest quality Verisol collagen with a whopping 150mg of Haplex hyaluronic acid and Silicea's famous Silica Gel, all of which have been subject to clinical studies covering, skin elasticity, wrinkles, hair and nail growth, and skin moisture levels. Flavoured only with fruit puree and packed in individual sachets for convenience.

Mark McCarty, Director at WFBM Healthcare, which distributes the Silicea range in the UK, thanked readers for their support, commenting: "We're delighted that consumers have voted this amazing product the Best Beauty/Bodycare product."

Highly commended: Kinvara Precious Facial Oil



BEST VEGAN

Viridian Liquid B12

Liquid B12 is a great tasting vegan liquid formulation developed using a natural fermentation process and includes both methyl and adenosylcobalamin. These two different forms are used at varying stages of metabolism

and required and used for different processes in the body. Vitamin B12 contributes to normal functioning of the nervous system and the reduction of tiredness and fatigue.

Formulated in a base of glycerine for easy absorption and with natural orange oil, it contains 100 per cent natural ingredients with no artificial fillers or nasties. Sourced according to Viridian's strict ethical criteria, including no animal testing, GMO or palm oil.

Aimee Benbow, Head Nutritionist at Viridian Nutrition, commented: "We're thrilled to win Best Vegan in the *Natural Lifestyle* Product Awards. This supplement contains fully researched ingredients to ensure they deliver effective and therapeutic doses, making a lasting difference to people's health. Our ingredients are ethically sourced with 100 per cent care so there is minimal impact to the planet, no animal testing or use of harsh chemicals. Thank you everyone who has voted for us."

Highly commended: The Good Guru Vegan Magnesium



Help your hormones

PMS affects women in different ways, but for many, it can hugely affect their quality of life. However, with a more holistic approach to diet and lifestyle, you can bring your hormones into better balance.

Hormones have a lot to answer for, being involved in many aspects of our health, whether in relation to falling oestrogen as women approach the menopause, the role they play in regulating body temperature and with our blood sugar levels, and in maintaining the health of our thyroid. And, of course, they are critical when trying for a baby.

But one area hormones can get a bad name is in relation to periods, being the reason women suffer with pre-menstrual syndrome, better known as PMS. While periods are inevitable for women of menstruating age, suffering with PMS isn't a done deal, and with some simple changes to diet, nutrient intake and lifestyle, you can ease the effects.

The facts

When it comes to the numbers suffering, there are various factors.

Aimee Benbow, Technical Director at Viridian, explained: "As many as three in four women will experience PMS at some point in their life. Most women at childbearing age will experience symptoms, especially in their late 20s to early 40s and is generally mild, however, around one in 20 women have symptoms severe enough to stop them living normal lives. This is known as premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD)."

Vanessa Tucker, Naturopath, Herbalist and Nutritional Therapist at Wild Nutrition, added: "It is estimated that up to 30 per cent of the population suffer from PMS, with symptoms ranging from very mild to severe, with up to eight per cent suffering from the more severe form, PMDD. Modern lifestyles may increase how many people suffer due to these factors.

"Research shows stress influences symptoms, modern life can be more sedentary, and research shows exercise is beneficial at reducing symptoms such as fatigue and low mood. In today's modern world, we are surrounded by toxins, chemicals and pollution so our liver is under increased burden just when we need it to focus on hormone balance. The liver will prioritise processing toxins, over and above detoxing old

hormones, so can easily build up."

Catherine Gorman, Nutritionist at Good Health Naturally, went on: "PMS is a collection of symptoms women usually experience a week or so before their period starts. More than 90 per cent of women say they have suffered some premenstrual symptoms, such as bloating, headaches, and moodiness.

"Some well-known contributing factors include stress, unstable blood sugar, food allergies, malabsorption, hypoglycaemia, and low serotonin. These are all prevalent in our modern lifestyle. It's been dubbed a 'health epidemic of the 21st century' by the World Health Organization. Chronic stress can lead to all kinds of hormone imbalances."

But what known reasons are there that some women suffer particularly badly?

"Obesity is a predominant risk factor; individuals with a BMI over 30 are three times more likely to incur symptoms," Aimee advised. "In addition, high levels of tobacco and caffeine have been associated with a higher prevalence and women under emotional and physical stressors. Biological risk factors for PMS include women with heavy loss of blood during menstruation and low circulating levels of serotonin. Genetics are also thought to play a role, with new research isolating specific genes which are linked to PMS severity."

SYMPTOM CHECKLIST

Certain symptoms are commonly linked to PMS, but the range of issues is actually far wider.

Catherine explained: "There are more than 100 different signs and symptoms, and they tend to fall into two categories: emotional or physical. Emotional symptoms include mood swings, irritability, insomnia, poor concentration and depression. Physical symptoms include tender breasts, food cravings, fatigue, headaches, acne or eczema flare-ups, constipation and diarrhoea. Symptoms tend to form in a predictable pattern starting a week or so before the period, disappearing within four days after the start of the menstruation.

"Some less well-known symptoms include puffy eyes, and increased sensitivity to odours. But it's not all negative. In the run-up to their period, some women become more creative or assertive and feel a lot more confident and decisive. Others have

reported a heightened sense of smell and taste and even an increased sex drive."

Vanessa went on: "Digestive upsets such as diarrhoea, constipation, bloating, more gas and changes in appetite and taste are common, especially diarrhoea or an increase in bowel motions within the first couple of days of your period. Increased sensitivity to existing allergies and intolerances may occur due to histamine levels being influenced by oestrogen and progesterone levels.

"If allergies and intolerances worsen before your period it could be a sign of higher histamine, especially if they coincide with other symptoms, such as anxiety, poor sleep, headaches, and tender breasts. Adopting a low histamine diet and increasing anti-inflammatory foods and supplements will help reduce these symptoms, particularly omega 3, turmeric,

vitamin D and C, which reduces the release of histamine from mast cells."

PMS can also be linked to other health issues.

"It is estimated more than half of women who get migraines notice a link with their periods. These menstrual migraines are most likely to develop in the two days leading up to a period or the first three days after it has started. Some women find their migraines become less severe or even stop after menopause," Catherine commented.

"Research shows a significant number of women suffering from PMS may experience thyroid dysfunction. While the relationship between thyroid function and PMS is not yet fully understood, it is clear they have a notable influence on one another. Conditions like hypothyroidism may contribute to oestrogen imbalances, which can trigger some PMS symptoms. Studies also show PMS and elevated oestrogen may contribute to thyroid issues."

Try this

- ★ Lamberts Pure Evening Primrose Oil 1000mg
- ★ Cleanmarine For Women
- ★ Terranova Nutrition Vitamin B6 50mg
- ★ Good Health Naturally Ancient Magnesium Lotion Ultra

HORMONAL EATING

Cravings for sweet and carb-heavy foods can be common when hormones are fluctuating but healthy eating is important.

Aimee suggested: "A balanced, colourful, nutrient dense, whole food diet is needed to ensure the body has all the necessary nutrients, such as essential fatty acids, magnesium, and vitamin B6 for hormone production and balance. Reduce salt and refined sugar as salt leads to increased fluid retention, which can increase blood pressure and exacerbate bloating in those who suffer with it as a symptom."

Vanessa added: "Resisting the urge for sweet treats, choosing food with a higher protein/fat/fibre content will maintain balanced blood sugar, increase satiety, and decrease cravings. Increase food sources of zinc (shellfish, meat, eggs, seeds, particularly pumpkin seeds), selenium (Brazil nuts), magnesium (green leafy veggies, nuts, seeds and even chocolate, the darker the better), and vitamin B6 (chicken, eggs, legumes, fish, nuts such as walnuts, and seeds, particularly sunflower, and bananas) and vitamin D from safe sun exposure during summer and supplementation during winter with a recommended

daily intake of 1000IU daily.

"Increasing fibre, 25-30g a day from legumes, wholegrains, fruit and vegetables and even supplementing with fibre such as psyllium husks can improve PMS symptoms by supporting healthy detoxification and elimination by absorbing and binding to toxins, including hormones in the gut, and supporting their elimination through the bowel. Reducing inflammatory foods, particularly dairy, gluten for some and refined foods and following an anti-inflammatory diet, such as the Mediterranean diet, with magnesium-rich foods, omega 3 essential fatty acids and turmeric reduces pain and spasms."

And Catherine suggested: "To help balance oestrogen, include foods high in phytoestrogens, like soy, flaxseed, chia, and green tea, as these contain phytoestrogens, which can help with hormone balance. Phytoestrogens are plant compounds with a similar structure to estradiol, which gives them the ability to modulate oestrogen levels both up or down by plugging themselves in or blocking the receptor sites for oestrogen."

Better balance

In addition to a healthy diet, what other ways can you balance hormones and lessen the severity of PMS?

"A lack of critical nutrients seems to be a significant contributing factor to worse symptoms of PMS. Studies have shown women who suffer from PMS are more likely to have lower levels of vitamin D, calcium, magnesium, iron, and zinc, vitamins A, C, E, B6 and other B vitamins," Catherine advised.

"Ensure you get these nourishing nutrients by eating a diet rich in vegetables, low-sugar fruit, such as apples and berries, whole grain foods, and healthy fats, including olive oil, coconut oil, avocados, nuts, seeds, and organic meat, fish and seafood. Keep blood sugar balanced by including protein with every meal, such as lean meat, fish, beans, lentils, or nuts. Ensure plenty of good quality fats, such as oily fish, olives, nuts and flaxseeds, as studies show they may help reduce cramps and other PMS symptoms.

"Regular exercise which gets your heart pumping can improve symptoms of PMS, such as tiredness and depression. It increases blood flow to the brain and boosts the release of feel-good

endorphins. Relaxation is essential, too. Some women report yoga, deep breathing, and meditation can help with PMS symptoms. Even walking, reading, or simply sitting outdoors can elevate mood and alleviate symptoms."

Vanessa also suggested: "Poor gut health is the root of many health issues and a diet high in sugar, caffeine, alcohol and certain medications, including the oral contraceptive pill, can lead to lower levels of good bacteria in our gut, compromising our immune system, digestive health and contributing to hormone imbalances. Rebalancing bad bacteria, candida and yeast overgrowth with probiotics and increasing fermented foods with yogurt, kefir, and kimchi combined with an increase in prebiotic foods such as oats, bananas, onions, garlic, and vegetables and fruit can help restore good bacteria in our gut, resulting in better hormonal balance.

"Good bacteria can support healthy oestrogen, supporting the elimination and clearance of oestrogen whereas an increase in unhealthy bacteria in the gut can produce an enzyme called beta-glucuronidase, which causes oestrogen to be reabsorbed back into circulation in the body."

Manage stress

Excess stress levels can have a huge impact on your hormones and so getting this in check is important.

"Although reducing stress can seem out of our control, supporting resilience to stress with exercise, a balanced diet, reducing caffeine and supplementing with magnesium and adaptogen herbs, which help us adapt to any changes, whether emotional, mental or physical, support our response and perception of stress. With over 11 double blind placebo-controlled studies, KSM-66 Ashwagandha has been clinically shown to reduce feelings of stress and anxiety by more than 80 per cent," Vanessa suggested.

"Long-term stress can result in lowered progesterone as the body steals it to make cortisol (this is known as the progesterone steal). This causes higher oestrogen and increases symptoms associated with PMS-A, such as anxiety, due to lower progesterone, known as the relaxing and calming hormone."

HELPFUL HERBS

Herbs can also be very beneficial during PMS.

"From a botanical perspective, dong quai is a traditional herb that not only has a nourishing and toning effect on the uterus but also supports the physical and emotional aspects of our monthly cycle. It helps to naturally balance oestrogen during the entire month and particularly before the onset of a period," Vanessa explained.

"Any herbs and nutrients that support liver function will also improve hormonal balance. Milk thistle is well known as the king of liver herbs. It helps to support liver function and detoxification pathways in the liver that help to clear the body of unwanted oestrogen and oestrogen metabolites whilst also supporting the production of glutathione, the body's biggest antioxidant."

Aimee added: "Saffron has been shown to provide beneficial effects on women suffering with PMS, particularly in relation to emotional eating and cravings but also low mood during this time, with benefits seen with as little as 30mg daily."

NECESSARY NUTRIENTS

Being deficient in certain nutrients can raise your risk of experiencing a more severe set of PMS symptoms.

"Consider supplementing with vitamin B6, as low levels have been associated with psychological symptoms such as moodiness, irritability, and anxiety," Catherine recommended. "Magnesium, known as nature's relaxant, can also help with symptoms such as anxiety, mood swings, poor sleep and water retention. Try a relaxing magnesium bath or apply it topically before bed.

"Maca is derived from the root of a cruciferous vegetable native to Peru and has a long history of use for managing stress and lowering cortisol. Studies have shown it can reduce physical and emotional symptoms of PMS in women, including cramps, bloating, and mood swings."

Aimee went on: "Omega 3 and 6 essential fatty acids are essential for hormone production, therefore, supplementation from fish or seed oils are a good way to increase intake. Omega 3 has been studied specifically in PMS, with results showing an improvement in bloating, depression, anxiety, headaches and breast tenderness."

Vanessa added: "Chromium, an essential mineral required for carbohydrate metabolism and supporting the action of insulin, can be useful to supplement with to reduce cravings for sugar and support blood sugar balance, appetite control and insulin sensitivity. Higher levels of stress and anxiety deplete magnesium and with magnesium involved in more than 300 reactions in the body, levels are easily depleted. Magnesium is known as the relaxing mineral, especially for the musculoskeletal system and has a direct antispasmodic action, helping to relieve muscle tension and spasms including period pain and headaches and migraines."

Natural Lifestyle Top Picks



The Good Guru Vegan Magnesium

Vegan Magnesium combined with Vitamin B6 provides a multitude of well-being benefits. It's a great combination for women experiencing symptoms of PMS. Magnesium contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue and contributes to normal bone and muscle function. Magnesium Glycinate 500mg, Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxal-5-Phosphate P5P), Brown Rice Flour, Magnesium Stearate (Veg Source).

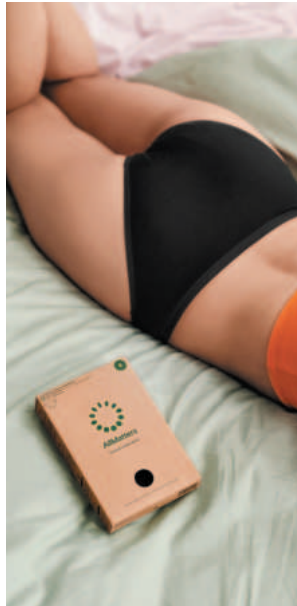
thegoodguru.com



NEW: AllMatters Period Underwear

AllMatters has brought the award-winning, Danish menstrual cup, OrganiCup, to millions of women all over the world. Now we launch the AllMatters period underwear that is your reusable, comfortable, and leak-free period solution. It feels like regular underwear but has built-in layers that serve different purposes – from absorbing your flow to keeping you safe, dry and odour-free. Made from high-quality materials like TENCEL™ and VEOCEL™. Comes in 7 sizes in black bikini style. The little things you do daily can have a big impact on our planet – our products are made with that in mind. Because it AllMatters.

www.allmatters.com



Period Positivity with Cleanmarine For Women

Periods can bring with them emotional or physical symptoms which make it impossible to continue with daily life as normal month on month!

Through extensive clinical

research Cleanmarine® for Women has become a proven solution to effectively reduce typical symptoms.* It is a phospholipid omega 3 based supplement which provides excellent levels of two omega-3 fatty acids, EPA and DHA alongside rosemary oil, vitamin D and vitamins B1, B2 and B6 which all positively affect hormone balance, energy levels and skin health.

*Based on a peer-reviewed study: For Women <http://bit.ly/LPqi5q>

Website: www.cleanmarineuk.com

Email: hello@inspiredhealth.co.uk



Magnesium Bath Flakes

Designed to support optimal physical and mental wellbeing, Magnesium Mind, Relax and Revive Bath Flakes are three brand-new

additions to BetterYou's iconic, pill-free magnesium range. Combining essential magnesium with naturally sourced essential oils - from sweet orange and basil, rose geranium and bergamot to grapefruit and eucalyptus - the mineral flakes provide the ultimate bathing experience. Add to a warm bath two to three times per week to increase magnesium levels, stimulate blood flow and relieve tension. Offering a convenient and effective alternative to traditional tablet supplementation, the range is certified vegan, palm oil free and is housed in fully recyclable packaging.

www.betteryou.com



Winter heroes

Give a cough, cold sore or blocked nose a run for its money with one of these winter helpers.



Sore no more

A cold sore will often appear when you're feeling rundown or have a cold as the dormant virus uses the opportunity to overrun your immune system.

HerpoTherm is a unique medical device which uses thermotherapy to trigger a localised immune response to overcome the virus. If used at the first sign of a cold sore, it can often prevent it appearing at all.

Get it off your chest

There's nothing worse than a cold which seems to linger on for weeks, especially when it gets on your chest.

Herbatom is a unique combination of herbs which help repair and strengthen the important mucus membranes in the respiratory system, especially if it is compromised by asthma or allergies. Online reviews hail it as a must have product.



Manuka magic

If you have a medicine cabinet with several bottles of different cough liquids, it's time for a clear out.

Otosan Fortuss cough syrup is suitable for all types of coughs and only contains natural ingredients, including manuka honey and a combination of soothing herbs. It's suitable for all the family from one year and tastes wonderful.



Wash and go

Nasal irrigation gives instant relief from blocked noses, sinusitis and allergies and also helps if you suffer from snoring!

The Otosan nasal wash system is unique as it contains the addition of hyaluronic acid, which not only helps in healing the nasal and sinus cavity but it also draws moisture to the area helping to maintain the natural nasal barrier, which acts as a physical barrier against bacteria and viruses.

Products featured are available from your local independent health store

Ask the experts



NUTRIENT BRAIN BOOST...

by Dr John Briffa

What are the most common reasons our brain function can decline?

There are principally three forms of cognitive decline: subjective cognitive impairment, mild cognitive impairment, and dementia. Subjective cognitive impairment is where someone is aware of some cognitive impairment like memory lapses or 'senior moments', though standard cognitive testing reveals no deficits in function. In mild cognitive impairment, there are proven deficits in cognitive function, but someone can still look after themselves. And finally, dementia is a diagnosis that is usually made where cognitive impairment is at a level where someone requires support and care to live safely.

If we look from a preventative point of view, what dietary and lifestyle recommendations can you make?

Blood sugar and insulin dysregulation appears to be an important and common factor in dementia (including Alzheimer's disease). For this reason, I tend to advise a diet relatively low in carbohydrate, and perhaps some intermittent fasting (such as time-restricted eating) for those who can manage this.

Physical activity is important, as this has the capacity to increase the production of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which promotes neuroplasticity and stimulates new brain cell growth in the hippocampus (the part of the brain usually most affected in Alzheimer's).

Sleep is another critical factor, as during sleep, the brain clears proteins that can 'gum up' the brain. There is some evidence that sleeping on one's side (rather than the back) may help protein clearance and reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Sleeping on the side also reduces the risk of breathing issues at night, which may also help to reduce the risk of cognitive issues in the short and long term.

What are the key nutrients for the brain?

I'm a big fan of lion's mane mushroom for supporting cognitive function. There is some good human research supporting its use, and I've also found it to be very useful clinically.

I also favour cinnamon. This has not received much attention for its benefits for the brain, but it is well known to help normalise blood sugar and insulin. This is relevant bearing in mind the link between blood sugar and insulin dysregulation and dementia. Cinnamon also has antioxidant properties and has been shown in animals to reduce the build-up of neurodegenerative proteins. Other animal studies show that cinnamon stimulates neuroplasticity and improves learning.

I also tend to recommend vitamins B6, B12 and folate, as these reduce the levels of the amino acid, homocysteine, which appears to be a risk factor for dementia.

And for a long time, I have been a fan of vitamin D for the brain. It tends to improve mood, but also studies in animals show it can retard or even reverse cognitive issues. In humans, low levels of vitamin D are associated with an increased risk of cognitive issues and dementia.

Q Can you offer any holistic advice on the best way I can relax?

Iona Leigh advised: As a Flower Essence and Health Creation Practitioner, I approach the topic of stress, anxiety and relaxation from the mind-body-spirit perspective. If we acknowledge we have physical bodies, as well as subtle energy beings, then it is important to question what raises our life force and what depletes it.

For example, we physically depend on quality sleep, light, nutrition, water and connection with our environment and people, while our emotional balance requires positive social interactions, purpose in our life (living with meaning), mastery of skills that support our purpose, and the autonomy to live life for ourselves, according to our needs. Once any of these are missing, we feel challenged, compromised, disengaged and spiritless, which leads to stress, which opposes relaxation and peace. To feel truly relaxed in our lives, we need to address stresses that prevent us finding peace and live in accordance with our values.

So, what are the things that we can actively do to relax? Moving physically through a sport, dance or walking in nature literally shifts our energy body and raises our vibrational life force, allowing our brain to get into a creative thinking space. Our imagination is reawakened when we move and if we can do this together with other people, we begin to feel more connected to others – an experience aiding relaxation. Spending time in nature with the healing power of plants and natural landscapes allows our energy body to reset, and has been shown to enhance peace of mind and deeper sleep.

About the experts



Dr JOHN BRIFFA BSc MB BS (Lond) is a holistic medical doctor, speaker and author of nine health books. He is the co-founder of the brain health supplement brand, Synaptaid.



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



IONA LEIGH grew up making essences with her mother, Marion, firstly in her birthplace of Australia and then the spiritual eco-village, Findhorn. Iona has spent 30 years teaching how to use the Findhorn Flower Essence. As a qualified Health Creation Mentor and Advanced Practitioner with the British Flower and Vibrational Essence Association, Iona works as an essence researcher, writer, teacher and sees clients.



LISA GAWTHORNE has been a passionate vegan for years, as well as being a Team GB athlete. She is Co-founder and Director of Bravura Foods, a distribution business with brands including Panda Liquorice and Free From Fellows. She is also the author of the illustrated deck of cards, *The Vegan Deck*.

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herpotherm® is an electronic heating pen for chemical-free symptomatic cold sore treatment.

- If applied early enough, herpotherm® can completely prevent cold sore blisters
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67% 5 star reviews!



I cannot believe there is a product out there that actually works! This pen is amazing.



*At the first tingle of the cold sore I zap it ..honestly, it stops the virus in its tracks!!!!
Highly recommend!*

Ask the experts

ACT ON EYE HEALTH...

by Alice Bradshaw

What factors can contribute to poor eye health?

Eye health is often taken for granted until something goes wrong. Multiple factors contribute to vision disorders, including eye strain, short-sightedness, glaucoma and age-related conditions, such as macular degeneration and cataracts. Many eye conditions are more prevalent in the ageing population and issues such as short or long-sightedness can be hereditary. Individuals who use screens for many hours during the day are also at risk of increased eye strain. People with diabetes need to be especially aware of their eye health and this condition increases the risk of many disorders, including diabetic retinopathy, macular oedema, glaucoma and cataracts. If left unmanaged, these conditions may lead to loss of vision.

How much of a role can our diet and lifestyle play in the health of our eyes?

Like all our organs, the health of the eyes is influenced by nutrition and lifestyle. Clinical studies show that a diet rich in the antioxidant nutrients, vitamins A, C and E, zinc and selenium, along with carotenoids and certain botanicals is most supportive to the health and functioning of the eyes.

Alcohol consumption has been correlated to poor eye health and free radicals (from cigarettes, ultra-violet light, burnt foods etc) are known to be

detrimental. A healthy lifestyle that incorporates good nutrition, adequate sleep and stress management is the most effective way to ensure good eye health. It's also important to be mindful of time spent on screens, as well as using sunglasses to block excessive ultra-violet light from the sun.

What is the best plan to follow in terms of foods and supplements to keep our eyes healthy?

Studies suggest that a diet rich in antioxidants (primarily found in fruit and brightly coloured and dark green vegetables) is the most effective way to support eye health via nutrition. Additionally, avoiding excessive sugar, processed foods and too much alcohol are also important components to eye-supportive nutrition.

Lutein, one of the best-known carotenoids, is especially protective towards eye health. Research has demonstrated that it has anti-inflammatory properties and may be one of the most beneficial nutrients to support those with age-related macular degeneration, a leading cause of vision impairment in the ageing population.

Supplements for eye health will typically provide lutein, along with other eye-supportive nutrients, such as alpha-lipoic acid, vitamin C, zinc and astaxanthin, as well as botanicals such as bilberry and/or blueberry.

Q I would like to make the switch to being vegan – can you explain the best way to make the switch easier?

Lisa Gawthorne suggested: Patience is key with this. If you try and eliminate everything out of your diet overnight, you are more than likely to feel pressure to rush to find alternatives and that doesn't give you any time at all to decide what you like and what you don't like. There are

so many vegan products on the market now and I really do believe that you have to understand there will be a trialling phase – to allow you to decide, for example, which plant-based milk works best with your drinks, which vegan cheese you like best and which of the meat alternatives you enjoy most.

Everyone's taste buds are individual, and you have to respect that. If you rush the process, you may end up choosing things that you have a bad taste experience with and don't end up

enjoying and this will hamper your chances of continuing with it in the longer term. So, give yourself time and space to explore the category and work out all your best meal options, that way you will feel that it's a more comfortable transition. Start with the dairy alternatives, then move on to main meals, then look at snacks etc until you have fully transitioned across all areas. As a guide, it can take between one to three months to achieve this. It's obviously quicker if you are already vegetarian.

“Studying at the College of Naturopathic Medicine helped me get my life and my good health back”

Nikki Webster, CNM London Nutritional Therapy Graduate, details the positive impact training has had on her life and career.



Nikki Webster

I lost two people very close to me to cancer at a young age. Losing someone so young and seeing what cancer can do to the body was heart breaking and a real wake-up call to appreciate how important it is to look after your own health.

After university, I had a couple of stressful life events, which led me down the route of orthorexia. Being uninformed about nutrition, I followed 'health' trends which were not healthy at all. As a result, I experienced some difficult health conditions: endometriosis, chronic UTIs, acne, candida, anxiety, panic attacks and *C. difficile*. My health just seemed to be worsening with medication and symptoms kept recurring, while new ones appeared. I decided to look into nutrition, and it was the best thing I ever did. I worked with a nutritional therapist for a year and slowly, we built my health back up to a good place again. After seeing the positive effects of nutritional therapy on my own health, I embarked on the biomedicine and nutrition course at CNM.

As an Outreach Support Manager for the Centrepunt charity, I developed programmes to help engage young homeless people back into education and to help sustain their tenancy. I loved my role, but it was becoming very office-based and I had never seen myself as someone doing a nine to five desk job. I wanted to be self-employed and work with people wherever and whenever I wanted. Having always been interested in nutrition and natural therapies, once I started studying at CNM, I knew it was the right field for me. And the more I learned, the more committed I got to changing my career path.

I loved every single element of being a student at CNM. The lecturers had so much enthusiasm in their teaching and their deep knowledge was incredibly inspiring. Along with the lectures, the clinics were exciting

and prepared us for our own practice. In the three years I was at CNM, I learned so much more than I could have expected or hoped for.

I have set up my own nutritional therapy business called Nutritional Wellbeing, which covers all areas of nutrition and health, with an emphasis on nutrigenomics and gut health. I offer one to one nutritional therapy consultations privately and also through Rich Therapies integrative health practice. I also do wellbeing talks for businesses and am part of a London-based wellbeing-at-work initiatives collective.

I love working with people to help them achieve their health goals by connecting the dots of their health journey and discovering their triggers of what's fuelling their conditions. Once we uncover and fix the underlying issues preventing them from getting better, everything falls into place. These are the transformational moments where you know you are on the path to helping someone get well again.

• Nikki can be contacted at nikki@nutritional-wellbeing.co.uk



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NOURISHING MUM AND BABY

Having a baby is a pivotal time in a woman's life and often, the first time they discover holistic health. And so, our natural health experts offer their tips on keeping mum and baby in the best of health.

Pregnancy is a special time in a woman's life, a time of change, growth and hope, but it also places a lot of additional pressure, physically and mentally. For example, your nutrient needs change, fatigue and joint pain can be common, and sleep can be problematic.

And we must not forget that when baby arrives, nutrient demands can increase, especially if you are breastfeeding, and if you haven't met these needs during pregnancy, you may find you are lacking in certain vitamins and minerals.

Then there are the needs of baby too; what nutrients are critical in those early stages? And what health plan should be considered postnatally, to meet both yours and your baby's needs?

AVOID NUTRIENT DEPLETION

Pregnancy places a huge increase in nutrient needs, and this continues postnatally.

Katy Grieshaber, Nutrition Advisor at Viridian Nutrition, explained: "Pregnancy can deplete the body of several nutrients. Therefore, postnatal and breastfeeding mothers are urged to follow their increased recommended daily doses of many nutrients to rejuvenate depleted levels. When lactating, dietary intake of vitamins A, B1, B2, B6, B12, and D, docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), choline, and iodine goes toward making milk. Therefore, a full-spectrum postnatal supplement should contain essential vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients."

But she added: "It is equally vital to ensure that most of your calorie intake comes from nutrient-dense foods, including protein sources like fish, chicken, legumes, and eggs, in addition to a sufficient amount of vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds."

Emma Mihill, Nutritional Therapist at Wild Nutrition, added: "Growing a baby places a huge demand on a woman's body; blood supply is doubled, organs are squashed, hormones are busy, immune system is lowered to protect the baby, and the whole process can often leave the mother depleted of energy and nutrients. Pregnancy is the most nutrient-demanding phase of a woman's life. Nutrient deficiencies usually occur in the mother, rather than the developing foetus, as the baby takes what it needs from the mother.

"Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) is a type of omega 3 which is highly concentrated in foetal brain tissue and can only be supplied by the mother's intake during pregnancy and is critical for the baby's visual and cognitive development. But since the baby's levels are prioritised, it's

common for the mother to experience changes in their own brain and cognitive function.

"Supplementing omega 3 is recommended, since an intake of oily fish during pregnancy is restricted due to heavy metals in fish, and so supplementing with a clean product avoids levels falling below optimal and can help the mother's memory, mood, and brain support. Iron (and stored iron called ferritin) are usually checked by the midwife or doctor throughout pregnancy, as this is a common deficiency needed for increased blood volume and will leave mothers feeling exhausted and lethargic if levels drop."

Women should remain aware of deficiencies after they have given birth.

"Postnatally, a mother's body is facing the parallel demands of healing, recovering and rebalancing from pregnancy and birth. If she is breastfeeding, this places a further nutritional demand on her, alongside the challenge of broken sleep," Emma advised.

"Continuing to supplement with a tailored pregnancy multi-nutrient will help to replenish nutrient stores, alongside additional vitamin D and omega 3. I'd recommend having a blood test six to eight weeks postpartum to check iron levels and thyroid health. Both may need support postnatally."

Emma also suggested a focus on our gut health.

"Probiotic support during pregnancy has benefits for mother and baby. From immunological support and reduced risk for allergies in infancy, to cognitive development and maintenance of healthy maternal weight gain and birth weight, an optimal microbiome also plays a role in protecting against pre-eclampsia, gestational diabetes, and vaginal infections in pregnancy," she explained.



FOOD FOCUS

Whether cravings, morning sickness or fatigue, diet can change during pregnancy and can lack in foods we need for good health. This can continue post-pregnancy, so it's important you take steps to ensure you nourish your body with the right food.

"A healthy postnatal nutritional routine consists of a wide variety of fresh, healthy foods in your diet," Katy advised. "Aim to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables daily. These portions can come in varying forms, such as fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juiced and can be part of your daily allowance. Avoid anything with added salt or sugar."

"Starchy foods are an important source of energy, nutrients, and fibre. You can consume a variety of starchy foods types: bread, potatoes, breakfast cereals, rice, pasta, and noodles. Opting for wholemeal options, instead of refined white, can provide beneficial nutrients to help support your diet and lifestyle as much as possible."

Katy also explained why protein is such a critical component of a healthy diet.

"Foods in this group include meat, fish, poultry, eggs, beans, pulses, and nuts. Consuming at least two portions of fish each week, ensuring one portion is an oily fish like salmon, sardines, or mackerel. Eggs produced under the British Lion Code of Practice (stamped with the red lion) are considered a low risk for salmonella and safe to eat raw or partially cooked," she added.

Emma went on: "Amino acids, from protein, are

essential for building new cells, which is what you're doing when creating a baby. Protein intake should be increased with every meal and can be found in the form of meat, fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, dairy, lentils, beans, tofu and tempeh, preferably organic to lighten the load of chemicals reaching the foetus.

"It is important to expose the foetus to all food groups to avoid developing any allergies in childhood. Therefore, if you don't have an allergy, then make sure dairy, nuts, seeds etc., are eaten in pregnancy. Vegetables, in all colours and varieties, ensure you are feeding your microbiome, encouraging good colonies of bacteria to grow in your gut, which can be passed onto your baby in the third trimester to seed baby with good bacteria for the first time. The increase in fibre will help keep bowels regular and easy to pass on a daily basis."

"Healthy fats like avocados, small oily fish, nuts, and olive oil are good to provide essential omegas, help with your skin and keep you feeling fuller longer. Eat folate-rich foods, such as green foliage from leafy vegetables, and iron-rich foods, including red meat, eggs, spinach, pumpkin seeds, and beans."

"Things to be mindful of in pregnancy are refined sugars and carbohydrates, caffeine should be limited as it can exacerbate acid reflux and the frequency to urinate. Large oily fish should be reduced because of exposure to heavy metals (better to take a filtered omega 3 fish oil supplement instead)."

Try this

- ★ Natures Aid Mini Drops Multivitamin
- ★ Lamberts StrongStart MVM
- ★ Terranova Nutrition Green Child Vitamin D3 400iu
- ★ Wild Nutrition Food-Grown Breast-Feeding Complex
- ★ Viridian Synerbio Mother and Baby Powder

BABY DEVELOPMENT

During pregnancy, there are key nutrients your growing baby needs for healthy development.

Katy explained: "Breast milk provides all the energy, nutrients, and fluids your baby needs to grow and develop healthily during the first six months of life. Exclusive breastfeeding is advised for the first six months to provide multiple benefits for the mother and child. However, when breastfeeding is not possible or not chosen, infant formula is the only appropriate substitute for breast milk. Introduction of foods should start from six months, due to stores of essential nutrients, such as iron, declining from birth, and by six months, these nutrients need to be replenished with food."

If we look at supplements, is this something you should consider for your little one?

Katy advised: "The Government recommends all children aged six months to five years receive daily vitamin supplements containing vitamins A, C and D. Vitamin A, also known as retinol, has many functions. Most importantly, it helps your baby's body develop a natural defence system, support their immune system, and help support good vision. Vitamin C is vital for baby's general health and boosting their immune system."

"Vitamin D is essential for bone strength, growth and developing a healthy immune system. If your baby receives at least 500ml daily of infant formula, additional nutrients are unnecessary as infant formula is fortified to contain essential

nutrients. However, if your baby consumes formula milk in smaller doses, it is advisable to provide them with the recommended vitamin A, C and D supplements. If your baby is only receiving breast milk, the Government advises giving a daily vitamin D supplement of 8.5-10mcg from birth to one year. During early infancy, vitamin D and beneficial bacteria have been highlighted as important nutrients for babies in their first year of development and gastrointestinal health.

"Supplementary iron is recommended from six months to support the increase in nutritional requirements occurring between six months and two-years-old. Iron is vital to help support rapid brain growth. Finally, supplementary omega 3 is an essential fatty acid required by all babies. Omega 3 is responsible for vision and healthy development of the eye, and is essential for the growing brain. Therefore, supplements formulated for babies alongside omega 3 are necessary during the first year to ensure fundamental nutrients are received."

She added: "Supplements to support the development of your baby includes iodine, choline, DHA and EPA. Iodine helps to keep your thyroid in optimal shape and helps baby's brain and nervous system develop. Choline is critical for the development and function of your baby's brain. Choline is a nutrient similar to B vitamins and is essential for mood, memory and muscle function."

Natural Lifestyle Top Picks



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www.terranovahealth.com



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Our 18 remedy homeopathic kit covers a wide range of common ailments and first aid for all the family and many useful remedies for



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Homeopathic remedies have a long history of traditional use and are without any known side effects, making them suitable for babies and children of all ages. The remedies come in lactose free, organic sucrose pill form and all bottles are replaceable. Please contact Helios for more details.

Website: www.helios.co.uk

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BETTER HEALTH WITH BUTYRATE

Wonder what butyrate is and how it can support your health? Read on for all the answers.

Butyrate is a remarkable little molecule increasingly being recognised for its huge potential health benefits. It's a short-chain fatty acid produced when gut bacteria break down fibre. We also get a small amount in our diet from animal fats and plant oils. Here's why you may need more butyrate in your life.

Digestive wellness

Research shows low levels of butyrate and other short-chain fatty acids are associated with diseases of the colon. Butyrate may play several crucial roles in supporting digestive health. It's the main energy source for the enterocytes, the cells which line the intestines. Without it, they would be unable to perform their essential tasks of breaking down food, absorbing nutrients, and protecting the body from microbial infections.

It may also help repair damage to the gut lining, which can be caused by all kinds of things, including pesticides, toxins, processed foods and drugs. Injury to the gut lining can lead to increased intestinal permeability, also known as leaky gut. It seems to be an increasingly common problem and can lead to issues like abdominal bloating, food sensitivities and even aches and pains all around the body.

Butyrate can be a good therapeutic option as its anti-inflammatory effects may help calm any disruption and support healing.

BRAIN POWER

Although butyrate is mainly present in the gut, a growing understanding of the links between the gut and the brain has prompted researchers to consider its role in cognitive health.

Studies show its benefits may include reducing brain fog and improving memory. It's also been suggested it may help increase levels of an important molecule called Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor, which supports the growth of healthy neurons in the brain. And it may even have a protective effect on neurons, which could be particularly helpful for people with degenerative neurological diseases.

IMMUNE HEALTH

The gastrointestinal system contains many different types of immune cells. More than 70 per cent of our whole immune system is actually based there.

These cells are primed to deal with pathogens by maintaining a low level of inflammation. It's tightly controlled, but if disrupted, can lead to problems like dysbiosis and oxidative damage. Butyrate may dampen any excess inflammation and help reduce free radical damage.

How to increase butyrate

The best way to encourage the gut microbiome to produce butyrate is to eat a high-fibre diet containing whole grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, beans and legumes. Resistant starch from potatoes and high-pectin fruits such as apples and berries can be beneficial, too, as they can help fuel a diverse number of butyrate-producing bacteria.

Some foods contain butyrate naturally. These include hard cheeses like Parmesan and pecorino, butter, full-fat yoghurt, and fermented foods, such as sauerkraut. But supplements can be a good option if you want to increase butyrate levels fast.

Reader offer

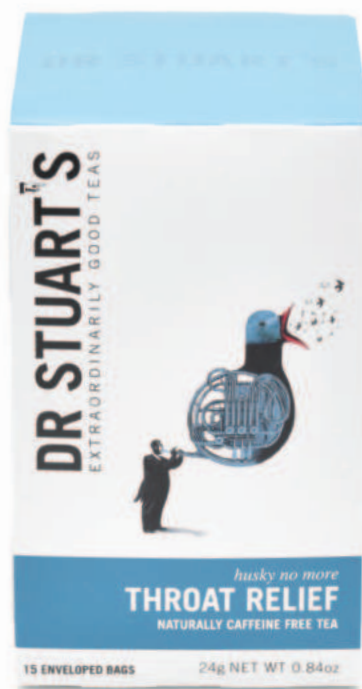
In Good Health Naturally's exciting giveaway, three lucky winners will receive a bottle of Sodium Butyrate, worth £19.95 RRP. Sodium butyrate is a short-chain fatty acid and one of the three most common in the gut that can support your digestive health and gut microbiome. Known as a postbiotic, butyric acid is fast-acting and can help to regulate inflammation in the body, while supporting the immune system. Suitable for vegans, each bottle provides 60 capsules. See opposite page to enter.



GIVEAWAYS

NATURAL LIFESTYLE

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



DR STUART'S THROAT RELIEF

A soothing herbal infusion including cinnamon and marshmallow root to help coat the throat, the Dr Stuart's range includes herbal, fruit and functional teas created by the world leading herbalist, Dr Malcolm Stuart. It is the only brand to use active botanicals, from the most prized part of the plant, promising herbs that are clean, fresh and high in essential oils that makes our teas so extraordinary. Unwind with a cup of Dr Stuart's tea – and *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of five.



BETTERYOU MAGNESIUM BUNDLE

It is well known that poor sleep can have an adverse effect on our health and wellbeing, with magnesium deficiency being one of the main factors affecting the quality of sleep we can achieve. Magnesium is required for over 300 chemical reactions in the body, and low levels can cause restless muscles that keep us awake at night. BetterYou's pill-free magnesium sleep range help put an end to restless nights, including its award-winning Magnesium Sleep Lotion, relaxing Magnesium Sleep Flakes and Lights-Out Nightly Oral Spray. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of two sleep range bundles.

VIRIDIAN VITAMIN D SPRAY

Vitamin D Spray is a unique, great tasting way to get a high potency dose of vitamin D3. Formulated by Viridian to provide an optimal dose, two sprays daily provide a 2000IU dose of vitamin D3. With a natural orange flavour, this spray is absorbed sublingually making it ideal for those looking for a pill-free way to increase their intake of this essential nutrient. An all-natural vegan Vitamin D spray containing no artificial preservatives, flavours or additives, *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of five.



MĀNUKA HEALTH WINTER WONDER BUNDLE

Thrive throughout the winter with Mānuka Health, the most extraordinary, potent, delicious mānuka honey on earth. It is important to select the right mānuka honey to see, feel and taste the mānuka magic. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one Mānuka Health Winter Wonder bundle, containing Mānuka Health Honey, Drops and Throat Spray, worth £265. Mānuka Health is part of the Inspired Health family of brands.



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NUTRITION, THE IMPERFECT WAY

Instead of adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, Jennifer Medhurst is here to celebrate food first that can be tailored to your needs, with her new book, *The Imperfect Nutritionist*.

Carrot cake porridge bake

Serves 1

Ingredients:

- Extra virgin olive oil or coconut oil, for greasing
- 50g (1¾ oz) 100 per cent rolled oats
- ½ carrot, scrubbed and grated
- 230ml (8fl oz) any kind of milk (I like almond milk)
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- Pinch of salt
- 1 heaped tbsp raisins (optional)

Toppings:

- Yogurt
- Honey or maple syrup
- Pumpkin seeds
- Walnuts
- Orange zest
- Blueberries

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/400°F/gas mark 6 and grease a small ovenproof dish or ramekin with extra virgin olive oil or coconut oil.
- Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl, then transfer to the prepared dish and bake for 25 minutes or so until golden at the edges.
- Leave to cool for 10 minutes or so, then dollop with yogurt and a little honey or maple syrup and some pumpkin seeds, walnuts, orange zest and blueberries if you like. Enjoy straight from the dish.



Spiced chickpea coconut curry

Serves 2

Ingredients:

- Extra virgin olive oil, for frying
- 1 onion, diced
- 2tbsp fresh coriander, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 25g (1oz) fresh ginger, skin on and grated
- 400g (14oz) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 2 medium carrots, skin on and sliced into half-moons
- 1 red pepper, sliced
- 1tsp ground turmeric
- 1tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- 1tsp garam masala

- 400ml (14fl oz) can coconut milk
- Salt and pepper

Toppings:

- Fresh coriander
- Red onion, thinly sliced
- Juice of 1 lime

To serve:

- Serve with brown rice,
- Quinoa or naan

Method

- Heat a pan over a medium-high heat and add some extra virgin olive oil. Add the onion and cook for five-10 minutes

until translucent and golden around the edges.

- Add the coriander, garlic and ginger and cook for about 30 seconds until fragrant.

- Next, add the chickpeas, carrots and red pepper, and cook for about two minutes, stirring occasionally.

- Stir in the ground turmeric powder and cumin, chilli flakes and garam masala, and cook for 30-45 seconds.

- Stir in the coconut milk, season with salt and pepper, then bring to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

- Top with coriander, red onion and fresh lime juice. Serve with brown rice, quinoa or naan.

Matcha cheesecake

Makes about 6-8 slices

Ingredients:

- 120g (1½ cups) 100 per cent rolled oats
- 225g (1½ cups) whole almonds
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- 4tbsp coconut sugar
- 4-6tbsp coconut oil, melted, plus extra for greasing

Filling:

- About 300g (10½ oz) silken tofu
- 165g (⅔ cup) full-fat coconut milk
- Zest and juice of 2 lemons
- 4tbsp coconut sugar
- 2tbsp arrowroot
- 4tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2tbsp matcha green tea powder, plus extra to serve

To serve:

- Raspberries and coconut flakes, to garnish (optional)

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/350°F/gas mark 4.
- Start by making the base. Grab your food processor and add the oats, almonds, salt, coconut sugar and melted coconut oil. Blend until you have a soft, sticky dough – you may need to add one to two tablespoons more melted coconut oil.
- Grease a 23cm (9in) springform cake tin with coconut oil. Press the dough into the tin, extending it about 2.5cm (1in) up the sides. Poke the base with a fork a few times and bake for 25 minutes until brown and crispy.
- To make the filling, place the silken tofu, coconut milk, lemon zest and juice, coconut sugar, arrowroot and vanilla extract in a food processor and blend.
- Next, sift the matcha into the silken tofu mixture, and blend again.
- Pour the mixture into the cooked crust, then tap on the work surface three to four times to remove any air bubbles. Bake for a further 25-30 minutes until the top is golden brown.
- Let the cheesecake cool at room temperature for 30 minutes, then pop in the fridge for two to three hours.
- Sift over some extra matcha powder to serve. Dress with sliced lemons, raspberries and coconut flakes, if you like.

The Imperfect Nutritionist



7 Principles of Healthy Eating

JENNIFER MEDHURST

The Imperfect Nutritionist by Jennifer Medhurst is published by Kyle Books (£25).



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