

Natural Lifestyle

LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL – NATURALLY

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March 2022

The UK's
best
FREE
HEALTH
MAGAZINE

Healthy hair guide

How to restore life
to your locks

Cognitive
check

Nutrients to boost
your brain power

PAW-FECT
PETS

ESSENTIAL NUTRITION
ADVICE FOR YOUR PETS

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• CUT YOUR RISK OF TYPE 2 DIABETES • LOW-CARB COOKING

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March 2022

Welcome



We use the term 'holistic' so much in this magazine, and it's such an important concept to consider. It is a term that demonstrates the fact that so many body systems are intertwined, and ill health in one area can cause problems elsewhere.

We see this in so many ways; for example, is your skin feeling dry and unhealthy, perhaps with breakouts? This could be a sign your immune system isn't up to par. Poor cognitive function, perhaps lacking in concentration and feeling a bit foggy in the brain? Maybe your gut microbiome isn't functioning so well.

These and much more are examples of the need for us to consider whole body health – holistic in the best sense of the word – and how we should see it all as one, rather than separate issues to be addressed in isolation.

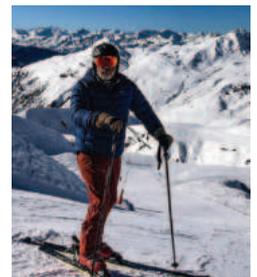
And in this issue, we have two great examples of this, the first being on our brain health. Our cognitive function can be determined by so much, poor nutrition and lifestyle being among the factors that raises our risk of brain decline. But we also know there is a link with the gut and the brain, while stress and our nutrient status is also imperative. We have gathered a panel of experts on page 16 to help you boost your brain power.

Let's also not forget that our internal health plays a role in external factors, including our hair. If you have dull, lifeless, thinning hair, these could all be signs you are lacking in key nutrients. And we have all the tips you need to keep your locks luscious and nourished with our guide to healthy hair on page 24.

*Rachel Symonds,
Editor*

THE BEST BITS

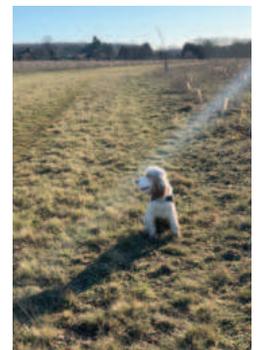
An insight into what the *Natural Lifestyle* team have been up to this month.



What a stunning day on the slopes it was for Sales Executive, James, who travelled to France for a ski break.



It was a day of activity for our Sales Director, Ruth, as she tested her brain power in an escape room.



It was a sunshine-filled brisk walk near to *Natural Lifestyle* HQ for Editor Rachel and Gus.

NATURAL LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE,
Target Publishing Limited,
The Old Dairy, Hudsons Farm,
Fieldgate Lane, Ugley Green,
Bishops Stortford CM22 6HJ
t: 01279 816300
e: info@targetpublishing.com
www.mynaturallifestyle.com

EDITOR

RACHEL SYMONDS
e: rachel.symonds@targetpublishing.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Anita Bean, Theresa Cutts,
Adrienne Benjamin, Firouzeh Ahari

THE TEAM

SALES DIRECTOR

RUTH GILMOUR
e: ruth.gilmour@targetpublishing.com

KEY ACCOUNTS DIRECTOR

ABIGAIL MORRIS
e: abigail.morris@targetpublishing.com

SENIOR SALES EXECUTIVE

JAMES LLOYD
e: james.lloyd@targetpublishing.com

DESIGN

CLARE HOLLAND
e: clare.holland@targetpublishing.com

PRODUCTION

ANNABELLE DUGGAN
e: annabelle.duggan@targetpublishing.com

ADMINISTRATION/DISTRIBUTION

DONNA WENHAM
e: donna.wenham@targetpublishing.com

ACCOUNTS

LORRAINE EVANS
e: lorraine.evans@targetpublishing.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR

DAVID CANN
e: info@targetpublishing.com

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EDITOR RECOMMENDS

Your gut, and a diverse microflora, plays an important role in the development and function of all the bodily systems and using live bacteria supplements is a great choice as part of a maintenance plan to support a balanced gut flora. **Bio-Kult** is a scientifically developed, advanced multi-strain supplement containing 14 live bacterial cultures, proven to survive the high acidity of the stomach. The added benefit is it doesn't need to be refrigerated and can be taken alongside antibiotics, when pregnant, by vegetarians and as part of a healthy diet.



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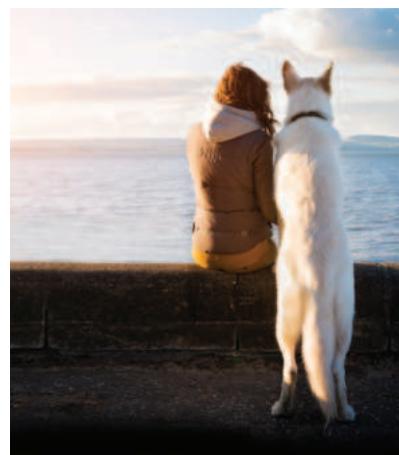
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The Covid effect on mental health

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a range of impacts on our wellbeing, not least our mental health, as a new poll has revealed.

Research has confirmed that more than one in three people (35 per cent) worry about their family's mental health, with the pandemic increasing such concerns.

The results of the poll, from digital board game group, Marmalade Game Studio, also found that worries about family increased during the Covid-19 crisis, with 60 per cent of those who were concerned saying the mental health of loved ones has deteriorated during the pandemic as lockdowns and travel restrictions prevented people from meeting up.

More than one in eight (13 per cent) of those questioned say they have relatives in care homes who they were unable to visit during the crisis. And the strain on relationships is also being felt by couples – around 1.2m adults said they expect to split up with their partners over the year ahead after delaying the break-up because of the crisis.

Michael Willis, Co-CEO at Marmalade Game Studio, explained: "The Covid-19 crisis has kept family and friends apart for good reasons to do with physical health but that has clearly taken a toll on mental health. More than one in three people are concerned about the mental health of family members, which highlights the need to try and provide support by staying connected."

Digital gaming has proved to be important for mental health – 16 per cent of European Union gamers say being able to play games online and connect with others, particularly families helped during lockdowns and 42 per cent say playing multiplayer games during lockdown made them happier.

Inside... HEALTH



KIDS CALLING FOR MEAT TO BE TAKEN OFF THE MENU

Plant-based is growing in popularity, and it seems the younger generation is driving the change.

A new nationwide study has revealed that a staggering 84 per cent of families with school aged children are aiming to reduce their meat consumption this year, spurred on by their kids, as well as wider ethical and environmental reasons. In fact, according to the study, more than one in 10 (14 per cent) school aged children have insisted that their parents serve up less meat, while 11 per cent have demanded that the whole family become vegetarian.

The study of 1,500 parents of school aged children, commissioned by vegetarian brand, Linda McCartney's, found 39 per cent of kids want their family to eat less meat for health reasons, 32 per cent for animal welfare and 34 per cent to achieve a more varied diet. In addition, 22 per cent want to reduce the meat in their diet to help future generations, while 27 per cent feel it's ethically the right thing to do.

Yet the poll also uncovered barriers to reducing meat intake, including not knowing many meat-free recipes (25 per cent) and thinking that meat-free meals won't fill them up as much (25 per cent). The top reasons include a perceived high cost of meat alternatives compared to animal products (38 per cent) and 35 per cent worrying that cutting back on meat will mean their weekly shopping bills will increase.

However, the research revealed that of those parents who reduced the number of meaty meals they served up in 2021, a saving was actually made on their weekly shop – on average £21 per week – equating to a whopping £1,092 every year.

Rebecca Fairbairn, Head of Marketing at Linda McCartney's, commented: "This research shows that there is enormous appetite within the UK for more meat-free meals, yet a real misconception still exists around the cost of a meat-free diet – despite families actually saving money by making the switch."

Overcome your sleep woes

With new research revealing Wednesday is the worst day of the week for sleep, experts are highlighting the importance of good nutrition for healthy shuteye.

A new poll from ethical supplement company, Viridian Nutrition, has revealed that we are a nation of bad sleepers, averaging just 5.9 hours a night. Half of all Brits have also revealed they can't get to sleep, and often wake up in the night, and only a handful – five per cent of people across Britain – sleep well all the time.

For those who do manage to get some much needed shut eye, a significant proportion still suffer with heavily disrupted sleep, especially on Mondays, and Wednesdays. And the effects can be huge; people aged 25-34 say they have less energy and feel more stressed than most of the population, and 57 per cent of women report lower energy levels compared to 42 per cent of men. However, only four per cent of Brits are full of energy all the time.

But the good news is that diet and one particular mineral may help, as explained by Viridian Nutrition's Director of Nutrition, Aimee Benbow. She advised that magnesium deficiency is very common and has been shown to result in low levels of the hormone, melatonin, which is the hormone needed for sleep.

Magnesium is found in many plant-based foods, including spices, nuts, cereals, cocoa and green leafy vegetables, such as spinach. Taking a magnesium supplement could also provide a nutritional benefit.

Aimee explained: "Poor quality sleep can impact every aspect of our daily lives, and the results of our survey has shown a vast amount of people are experiencing lack of energy and broken sleep. This can impact on quality of life, coping mechanisms and overall happiness. Continued broken sleep can affect us greatly.

"We are living through stressful times, but there are things we can do to calm our bodies and increase our energy levels. Magnesium can bring significant nutritional value, but many don't recognise the huge impact it can make. In fact, over half of people in our survey had no idea the role this mineral plays in our health.

"As well as poor sleep, low magnesium status has been linked to low mood, fatigue, stress and hormonal imbalance. It can be confusing to find the right diet and supplementation so we recommend people head to their local independent health store to get advice on the nutrients that can help with natural sleep."

We love♥

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NATURESPUS COLLAGEN PEPTIDES This supplement features a unique, highly absorbable hydrolysed formula that provides all six major collagen types (I, II, III, IV, V and X), derived from clean sources, in a complete and powerful profile for exceptional whole-body benefits.

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WHY WE SHOULD WALK

Walking can be done by anyone, or any distance or speed, and there are vast benefits to be gained.

And the outdoor experts at Millets are encouraging more people to get outside and start walking, revealing the five main benefits, including the effects it has on your physical and mental health:

- **Instant happiness:** Step outside, breathe in the fresh air and revitalise your spirit. Walking outside has even been shown to lower rates of anxiety, depression and a negative mood when compared with time spent clocking up miles on an indoor treadmill. It can also boost self-esteem.
- **A good heart:** Research has revealed that you can reduce your risk of coronary heart disease by about 19 per cent simply by walking for at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Your risk may reduce even further if you decide to increase the duration and/or distance of your daily walks.
- **Meet new people:** The UK is perfect for outdoor exploration. We recommend searching for local walking groups where you'll find like-minded people to walk with. If you're a dog owner, there are lots of dog walking groups to get involved with, some will even let you borrow a pooch for the day!
- **Save money:** Walking is an ideal way to improve your fitness without spending a fortune on expensive gym memberships or home exercise equipment. We all know that easing money woes is good for mental wellbeing.
- **Live longer:** Researchers have discovered that walking at a faster pace could actually extend your life. A recent study showed that walking at a brisk or fast pace (more than 4mph) reduces the risk by 24 per cent, rather than an average or slow pace, which can reduce your risk of death from cardiovascular conditions by up to 20 per cent.

WORK OUT YOUR SLEEP CYCLE

If you find you're not making the improvements you want in the gym, it could be connected to poor sleep habits.

According to TEMPUR Sleep Specialist and Sleep Counsellor, Thomas Høegh Reisenhus, improving quality and quantity of sleep could lead to gym gains.

"There really are a myriad of health benefits that come with enjoying different types of exercise. However, it is important to look holistically at lifestyle adjustments when embarking on any exercise routine. Repeatedly pushing your body to the limit without a thought to proper diet or rest and recovery, for example, may hinder any long-term gains you were hoping for," he explained.

"The relationship between sleep and exercise works both ways; enjoying regular exercise can improve both quality and quantity of your sleep and, conversely, sleep plays a vital role in our body's ability to recover and repair after a tough workout. Being well rested is also key to ensuring the prefrontal cortex – the area of the brain involved in rational thought – remains in control, which is crucial if you want to stick to your training schedule. In essence, good quality and quantity of sleep is vital to maintain both the physical and mental power to push yourself to the gym."

Thomas offered some specific tips, including:

- **Muscle recovery and more** – when we exercise, we're placing strain on our muscles and, as such, experience small, microscopic tears within the muscle tissue, which leaves us feeling sore after a tough workout. To heal, the body essentially stitches up the tears, alleviating any feeling of soreness, whilst strengthening muscles over time. The success of this healing process is dependent on many components, including sleep. Protein synthesis – the creation of new proteins that become muscle tissue – happens during sleep. A good night's sleep also helps boost our immune system and energy levels, which are key to tackling a tough training programme.
- **Form first** – in sleep, as well as in the gym, good form is the golden rule. On average, we spend a third of our lives asleep, so it's important to ensure we're sleeping on a supportive mattress with a quality pillow that keeps our head, neck and spine aligned. Ideally, your mattress should adapt to you, keeping your spine straight whilst spreading weight and absorbing pressure to provide relief in any painful areas of your body.
- **How to ensure a good night's sleep** – the secret to a good night's sleep begins – surprisingly – as soon as you wake up. A solid morning routine can help improve productivity by helping you better prioritise your time and anticipate what lies ahead. A sleep schedule will make it easier to adopt healthy habits long-term; ideal for when trying to stay fit. Getting up and going to sleep at consistent times each morning and night helps your body fall into a good routine, so aim to wake up at the same time every day and avoid hitting snooze, as this will leave you feeling groggy.

Inside... LIFESTYLE



Working out to give back

A yoga brand is doing its bit to reduce waste with a new recycling scheme.

Yogi Bare has introduced its new Recycle Your Mat scheme, putting a 'paws' to single-use yoga mats, whilst giving back to local communities

The eco-conscious yoga lifestyle brand is designed to not only give customers peace of mind that their old yoga mat is getting new life, and giving something back, but gives customers 15 per cent off their next yoga mat purchase.

Yogi Bare's mission is to help protect Mother Earth, while educating on materials. And so, the company has teamed up with Safer Surfacing and its mission to recycle one of the world's most commonly wasted and toughest materials – rubber. When customers send their old rubber yoga mats to Yogi Bare for recycling, they will pass onto Safer Surfacing, which will transform them into high quality rubber chipping. These rubber chippings will be used to create safe surfaces for play areas and parks, helping prevent injuries, tumbles and falls.

The old yoga mat doesn't need to be a Yogi Bare one either; the brand is accepting any brand of yoga mat that uses PU rubber and will still provide you with a 15 per cent discount off your next Yogi Bare yoga mat purchase.

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Just add colour

Hair dye can be loaded with undesirable chemicals so choosing gentler options is a good way of cutting back.

And here to help is Naturtint with its range of lighter hair dyes, ideal as we move towards spring and the warmer weather and want to lift our locks.

The range has something for all hair colours and are all vegan friendly and contain no ammonia. The permanent hair colours are made from 92 per cent naturally derived ingredients, including plant and seed oils.



Inside... BEAUTY

HEALTHY HANDS

Nourish your hands with the power of flowers with this new hand sanitiser from Weleda.

Hand sanitiser has fast become an essential part of our daily hygiene routine, but many contain harsh ingredients, leaving skin dry and sensitive. In fact, it is now estimated that over 50 per cent of the population suffers from dry and sensitive skin. The new Calendula & Chamomile Hand Sanitiser is made with all-natural ingredients, including organic grain alcohol, that provide effective antibacterial and anti-viral properties, with tests showing that it kills 99.9 per cent of bacteria and viruses found on hands.

The addition of glycerol to keep skin supple, along with pure essential oil of grapefruit to provide a delicate, fresh and natural fragrance, make this hand sanitiser skin friendly.

There is the added benefit that the calendula and chamomile used are home grown organically in Weleda's biodynamic herb gardens in Derbyshire, for the ultimate in sustainable ingredient sourcing. The vegan formulation is made with 100 per cent organic plant ingredients.



SUPERCHARGE YOUR SOAK

Soothe your senses and relax your body with the indulgent Nature's Spa Collection from Tisserand.

Featuring four scented soaks, each blended with 100 per cent natural, organic oils, we love Lavender & Neroli, a calming blend of lavender, neroli, peppermint and geranium. Or you could try Mandarin & May Chang and be transported to sunnier climes with the invigorating blend of mandarin and may chang, the ultimate feel-good fragrance.

Also in the range is Rose & Ylang Ylang, and Bergamot & Sandalwood.

Good for skin, good for the planet

Evolve Beauty has just got better after announcing it has achieved net zero status.

The brand's mission has always been to make products that are healthier, greener and kinder to us and the planet, from the ingredients it sources to the packaging it uses and the waste it creates. And now, the company says, its 2021 *Impact Report*, which it has just published, has calculated its carbon footprint and it is now net zero.

Steps the company has taken for its range includes switching from wood paper to grass paper cartons in 2021, which saved 75 per cent of CO2 emissions, and it offset all its carbon emissions, meaning Evolve removed more carbon from the atmosphere than was produced in the business.

Spring Cleaning.... ...for your skin



benecos Trio Blush

Fall in love this spring with the benecos Natural Trio Blush. The silky powder, enriched with organic macadamia oil ensures a radiant complexion. Swirl together or use separately to highlight, contour and blush, creating a flawless, glowing complexion is as easy as 1, 2, 3! Available from health stores and online.

www.benecos.uk

lavera Re-Energizing Sleeping Cream

Wake up to smooth and glowing skin with the lavera Re-Energizing Sleeping Cream. This night-time moisturiser is enriched with two complex ingredients of organic grape and vitamin E to revitalise and regenerate, combat signs of fatigue and intensely moisturise, leaving the skin feeling soft and rejuvenated when you wake. Available from health stores and online. www.lavera.co.uk



Fair Squared Olive Facial Soap

Cleanse and nourish your face at the same time with Fair Squared Olive Facial Soap. It is suitable for all skin types including normal and combination. Made from a composition of fairly traded olive oil, coconut oil and shea butter, it can easily be added to your everyday skincare routine. Each box contains 2 x 80g face soaps and cotton bag. Available from health stores and online. www.fairsquared.co.uk



Organyc Cotton Round Pads

Look after your sensitive skin this spring with Organyc Cotton Round Pads. They are made with 100% certified organic cotton to give you superior strength and softness, while being gentle on the skin. They are perfect for removing makeup and nail polish or applying skincare products. The packaging is fully biodegradable as it is made with renewable raw materials. Available from health stores and online.

www.organyc.uk



benecos Cleansing Wipes

The benecos Cleansing Wipes are the perfect solution for no-fuss makeup removal. The wipes are made from 100% cotton and filled with organic orange water, mango & aloe vera extract to gently refresh your skin. Available from health stores and online. www.benecos.uk



Ben & Anna White Toothpaste

Have you tried the best natural toothpaste on the market yet? Ben & Anna's award-winning white toothpaste with fluoride is a must for keeping your teeth and gums healthy. The formula is smooth, with no gritty particles and it tastes exactly like a traditional tubed version, making it a hit in the natural world! It's the perfect choice for anyone looking to brighten their smile without harsh agents, all in eco-friendly packaging. Available from health stores and online. www.benandanna.uk



PERFECT YOUR PET'S NUTRITION

We love them unconditionally, but do you know if your pet is getting the right balance of nutrients? Here, we explain what you need to know.



We can spend lots of money on our pets, from ensuring they have the comfiest bed to the latest toy to play with. But when it comes to nutrition, how closely do you examine if your pet is getting the correct balance of nutrients?

Like humans, pets do require certain nutrients, which can become especially important when they get older and issues such as joint problems can come to the fore. Of course, we would not advocate you giving a human supplement to your pet but do remember there are a great many pet nutrition products – and your health food store is a great place to find them.

THE BASICS

You will have your food of choice for your animal, but just be sure that it doesn't have any artificial additives and flavours; this can be counterproductive to ensuring your dog is getting good nutrition to support a healthy gut, energy and coat, among others.

Seeking an organic pet food is a good way of ensuring it doesn't contain any nasty ingredients or unwanted additives, including refined sugar. Some people also choose to have grain-free recipes as there is concern excess grains can cause allergies; many brands state on the label if they are free from grains.

Try to ensure food contains essential fatty acids, as these are important to animals for their joints and their coat, while fibre is also an important consideration.

A raw diet, especially for dogs, is becoming increasingly popular but this does take planning and fridge/freezer space – do your research to make sure it is of benefit to your animal.

Always remember that whatever animal you have, if you make changes to their diet, you should do it gradually, slowly introducing the new food and phasing out the old. Otherwise, it can lead to upset tummies.

NUTRIENTS TO NOTE

Animals are all different and have varying nutrient needs. This is also the case even if the same animal as it depends on breed and size.

In terms of general advice, like humans, animals need a balance of nutrients, but important ones to consider are those that support the joints; certain breeds of dogs, for example, can experience arthritic-type conditions when they get older.

Nutrients for dogs, which can be found in specific pet supplements for joints, includes glucosamine, essential fatty acids, hyaluronic acid and the likes of vitamins C and E.

Essential fatty acids are also important in terms of a supplement to maintain healthy skin and coat, along with brain function.

Animals, especially dogs, also need gut support and you can find a range of probiotic-type products with different healthy bacteria, along with the likes of the fibre, fructooligosaccharides.

If you have an anxious pet, there are also supplements to help; look for those made with essential oils and the likes of lemon balm to calm. These can also be found in diffusers that you plug in.

WATCH THE WEIGHT

Although you might think your pet is hungry, especially when it comes to dogs, you should always follow recommended guides for daily calorie intake and make sure you don't give too many treats. Animals that become overweight can have a range of health problems, including joint and heart issues.

Always stick to guidelines depending on their weight and age; you can find many pet food calculators online. Always keep in mind how active they are; if you have an older animal, who spends more time indoors, they will need less food than an overly active younger dog, and their needs may also change if they have been neutered.

It's worth weighing your pet regularly too to keep a check on it.

TRY THIS

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Vega Grain-free
Dry Dog Food

Helios Homeopathy
Pet Kit

Green People
allPaws Cleansing
Dog Shampoo

Syno-Vital Pet

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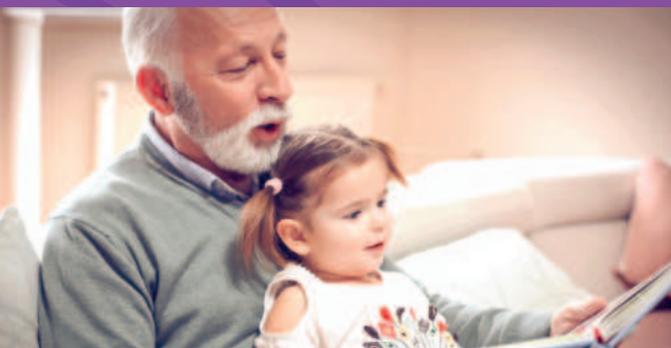
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NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



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altering the taste, is Gluten-free and suitable for vegetarians. The convenient daily sachets provide an easy way to increase levels of good bacteria in your gut, helping balance your overall health and wellbeing in just 7 days. Scientific data shows that daily use of Bimuno increases bifidobacterial levels within 7 days, results may vary.

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Alara Organic Gluten Free Scottish Oats

Alara Organic Gluten Free Scottish Oats are grown in beautiful and wild Scotland, where unspoiled nature, the long summer sun and fertile soils combine to create tasty oats with an exceptional nutritional profile. They are grown on organic and fully gluten-free farmland, and also milled on-site at a historical mill that has been operated since the 1880s. As described by many, these gluten free oats create porridge with "a creamy texture and delicious nutty taste from oats that have kept their character beautifully". A delightful and unique porridge also suitable for coeliacs.

www.alara.co.uk



the Good guru - Vegan Good Sleep Capsules

Formulation Include: Hops extract 120mg for its sedative effect, Montmorency cherry extract 100mg to increase tryptophan, Lemon balm extract 120mg to promote calm, Griffonia seed extract 80mg a natural source of 5-HTP, L-theanine 100mg boosts GABA and enhances ALPHA brainwaves for better REM sleep plus Magnesium glycinate 50mg & Calcium citrate 70mg. Vegan, is non-GMO, soy-free, gluten-free. The capsule is made using a Cassava starch (StarchCap™). Dosage: Take 2 capsules (20 minutes before bed) Vegan Good Sleep 30 caps RRP - 6.95, 60 caps RRP - 12.95, 90 caps RRP - 17.95

www.thegoodguru.com

email: info@thegoodguru.com

Tel: 0208 773 7830

Natural Healing for Pets

Animals respond very well to homeopathy and using remedies for minor ailments and injuries straightforward, however for serious or longstanding complaints veterinary advice should always be sought. The Helios Pet Kit contains 24 remedies covering some of the most common complaints that can be helped at home from knocks,

strains and sprains to diarrhoea, cuts and abrasions, travel sickness, healing after surgery and much more. Also in the kit our SOeSsence Flower Formula is a great support for those emergency situations. For more information and details of our SOeSsence shampoo and healing beeswax balm please contact us.

www.helios.co.uk



SuperDog Joints & Bones

SuperDog Joints & Bones by Vitabiotics is dietary supplement for dogs that provides advanced nutritional support to safeguard their diet and help keep their joints, bones and teeth healthy. It includes calcium to help maintain the bone and dental health of your dog. It also provides essential vitamins to promote overall wellbeing, help maintain flexibility and keep your dog active. Available in delicious, braised beef flavour that your dog will love. RRP £18.95.

www.super-dog.co.uk



**GLUTEN
FREE**

LIVING WITHOUT GLUTEN

Learn about the effects of gluten and how to follow a healthy diet without it.

The alternatives

Gluten is now one of the allergens that by law must be labelled on packaging, therefore, you should be able to easily check if something contains it. However, it is always advisable to take extra caution and buy products that declare they are gluten-free on the packaging.

Your health food store is a great place to source such products as they will stock a wide range of reputable brands, from bread and crackers to healthy treats and pasta.

In terms of foods that are naturally free from gluten, there are many, and include meat, fish, vegetables, fruit and veg, rice, potatoes and lentils.

If you are buying pre-packaged foods, remember that they can be overly processed with other undesirable ingredients added, so try to check ingredient labels first. And ideally, cook with fresh ingredients and from scratch where you can.

There are a host of reasons why more and more people are cutting gluten from their diet, with many finding it makes them feel generally better, with more energy and less bloating. For some people, like those with coeliac disease, it is a necessity to avoid gluten completely, for others, they may be a little intolerant to it and so do better cutting it out or reducing intake.

Whichever category you fall into, it's important to highlight that you shouldn't cut any foods out without careful consideration and ensuring whatever you replace it with is healthy and giving you a balanced range of nutrients. Once you have done that, the good news is you can enjoy many healthy, tasty and balanced gluten-free foods.

Nutrient focus

Some people with coeliac disease may have problems absorbing certain nutrients so keeping an eye on this is important.

The charity, Coeliac UK, explains that iron deficiency is common in people with undiagnosed coeliac disease because the body isn't able to absorb the mineral from food well, so you might want to consider a supplement.

You also need to ensure plenty of fibre, which can be found in brown rice, pulses, nuts and seeds, and fruit and veg, or you could add a supplement in (make sure it's gluten-free).

Calcium also needs consideration; Coeliac UK explains that those with the disease may have an increased need for calcium compared to the general adult population. You can obtain it from many foods, including dairy products, kale, kidney beans, almonds, broccoli and dried apricots.

Bear in mind too that a vitamin D supplement is recommended for us all, especially during autumn and winter, and is especially important for aiding absorption of calcium.

TRY THIS

Clearspring Organic
Gluten Free Green Pea
& Quinoa Pasta

Redfern's Superfoods
Crisps

FREEEE Brown Bread
Flour

Alara Active Life Gluten
Free Muesli

The gluten reaction

Gluten is a protein found in a range of foods, including the grains, wheat, rye and barley. This means it can be contained in all kinds of everyday foods you buy, such as bread, flour, pizza, crisps, cakes, breakfast cereals, sauces, sweets, biscuits, and beer. It can also be found in cosmetics and in toothpastes.

There are different issues people have with it. If you are coeliac, for example, this is considered a serious illness, where the body's immune system attacks itself when gluten is eaten. This causes damage to the lining of the gut and means that the body cannot properly absorb nutrients from food. It's important to note that coeliac disease is not considered a food allergy or intolerance, but an autoimmune disease.

When you are intolerant, more often referred to as non-coeliac gluten sensitivity, you may have symptoms similar to coeliac disease, but it is not clear how the immune system might be involved because no antibodies are produced, and there does not appear to be damage to the gut lining.

If you are coeliac, you will have to avoid gluten for life. If you have an intolerance, or simply find it can leave you lethargic, it could be that you can cut back on it for a period of time and then slowly reintroduce it.

If you are concerned you have coeliac disease, it's important not to cut out gluten without first being tested, or you could skew the results. It's important to speak to your GP first for a proper diagnosis.

BETTER BRAIN

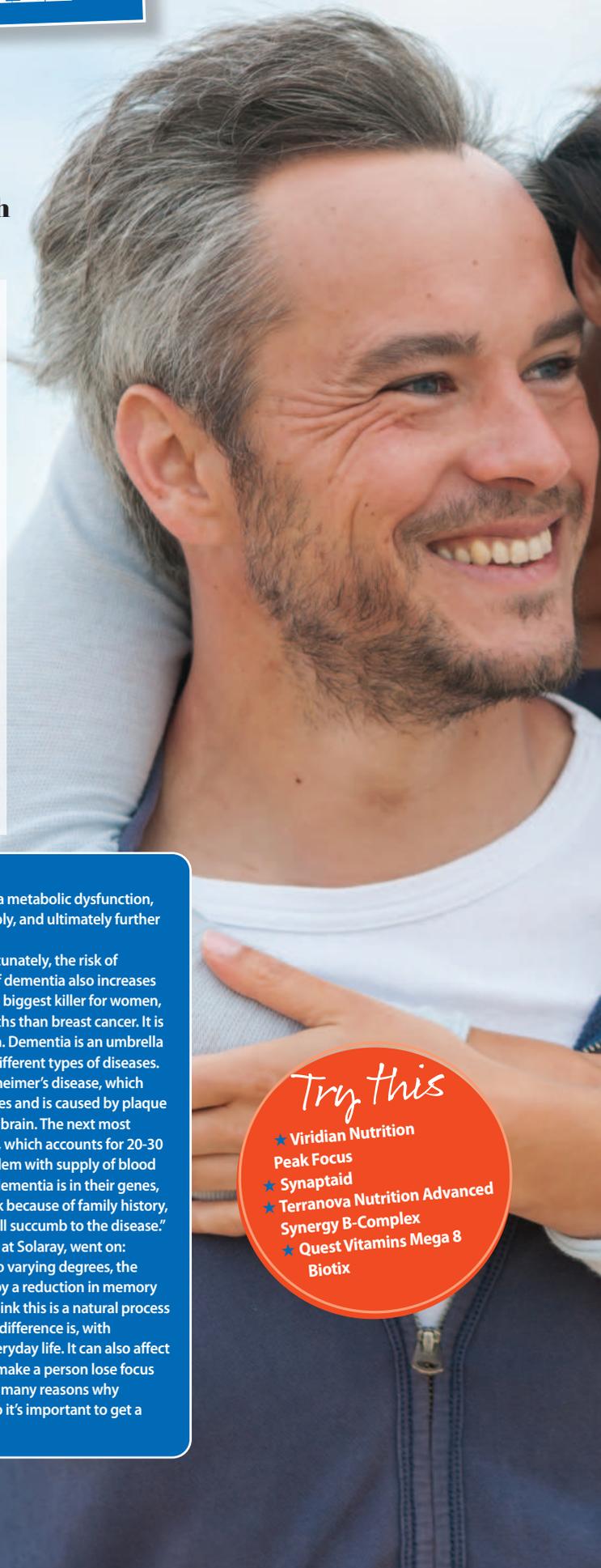
POWER

Discover how to boost your brain power with *Natural Lifestyle's* guide to cognitive health.

Our brains will inevitably show decline as we get older, but there is no definitive in terms of how much. And what's important to remember is there is so much you can do through nutrition and lifestyle to keep your brain in good health – even if you start to show signs of decline.

Dr Marilyn Glenville PhD is one of the UK's leading nutritionists and author of *Natural Solutions for Dementia and Alzheimer's*. She explained: "Our brain function does change as we get older and can affect our ability to store and retrieve information, so people often find that words and putting names to faces sometimes elude them. Some might notice memory loss and want to do something about it. Perhaps they keep going into a room and can't remember what they went in there for or reading a page in a book or magazine and realise they have to read it again because they have lost concentration. Or there may be a strong family history of dementia or Alzheimer's and they want to prevent their own cognitive decline."

Catherine Gorman, Nutritional Therapist and Health Coach at Good Health Naturally, added: "Early indicators of cognitive decline include forgetfulness, poor problem solving, inability to find the right words, difficulty understanding instructions or directions, and feeling overwhelmed about making decisions and plans. These symptoms of mild cognitive impairment are believed to affect between 10-20 per cent of people aged over 65. Difficulties tend not to get in the way of day-to-day life, but can be noticed by family and friends. For some people, the symptoms may get worse and develop into dementia."



BRAIN SCIENCE

The brain is a complex system and cognitive decline comes when cells die off. But the story doesn't end there.

Phil Beard, Technical Educator at Viridian Nutrition, advised: "Mild cognitive impairment, which is prevalent in 12-18 per cent of people older than years, is the period between the expected cognitive decline of normal ageing and the next phase of more serious neurodegenerative conditions. Not everybody is the same in terms of when they will develop these early stages, but it is vital to be able to recognise them. Whether it is for yourself or a loved one, spotting the early signs could potentially reduce the likelihood of developing a neurodegenerative condition, like Alzheimer's or dementia."

He went on: "No one cause has been attributed to what causes poor cognition, but more evidence is pointing towards how diet and lifestyle can have a significant impact on our brain health. One health condition that has recently been shown to significantly increase the risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions is cardiovascular disorders.

"Cerebral blood flow maintains nutrient and oxygen supply for neurons and helps to maintain normal brain function. Cardiovascular disease is the most prevalent worldwide disease burden and with that we have seen an increase in neurodegeneration. By starving our brain of

nutrients and oxygen, we see a metabolic dysfunction, leading to an inadequate supply, and ultimately further health conditions."

Dr Glenville added: "Unfortunately, the risk of Alzheimer's and other types of dementia also increases with age. Dementia is now the biggest killer for women, causing three times more deaths than breast cancer. It is the third biggest killer for men. Dementia is an umbrella term that includes up to 100 different types of diseases. The most common type is Alzheimer's disease, which occurs in 50-75 per cent of cases and is caused by plaque and tangles developing in the brain. The next most common is vascular dementia, which accounts for 20-30 per cent of cases and is a problem with supply of blood to the brain. People fear that dementia is in their genes, but even if they are at high risk because of family history, it is not inevitable that they will succumb to the disease."

Linda O'Byrne, Nutritionist at Solaray, went on: "Cognitive decline can occur to varying degrees, the beginnings can be identified by a reduction in memory and thinking skills. You may think this is a natural process that occurs as we age but, the difference is, with cognitive decline, it affects everyday life. It can also affect speech, decision making and make a person lose focus on specific tasks. There can be many reasons why cognitive decline may occur so it's important to get a proper diagnosis from a GP."

Try this

- ★ Viridian Nutrition Peak Focus
- ★ Synaptaid
- ★ Terranova Nutrition Advanced Synergy B-Complex
- ★ Quest Vitamins Mega 8 Biotix



CUT YOUR RISK

There are a number of factors as to why our brains decline at a different rate, some beyond our control – ageing and certain environmental factors, for example – but many can be modifiable.

“The way people live their lives – and in particular the way in which they eat – can make a huge difference to their future, slowing down cognitive decline or even reversing it. Indeed, research shows that diet and lifestyle have more to offer the ageing brain than the drugs that are promoted for it,” Dr Glenville explained.

Phil added: “Studies have shown mild cognitive impairment is transient. Meaning, we can potentially improve our cognition when we start to see early change in cognitive health. The adherence to a diet like the Mediterranean diet has shown to provide essential nutrients that enhance, maintain, and repair our brain. Nuts and seeds, leafy greens, grass fed meat and wholegrains are some of the best nutrients we can consume for brain health, with a variety of nutrients such as, essential fatty acids, minerals and vitamins that can all combat cognitive decline.”

But there are other factors to consider, with Catherine explaining: “Mental stimulation is crucial, it really is a case of use it or lose it. Without social activities and intellectual challenges, sharpness and mental capacity may decline. Lack of physical activity can also have an impact on brain health. Studies show exercise improves cognitive performance and memory. In older adults especially, physical activity has been shown to increase the hippocampus, the part of the brain responsible for memory, learning and emotion.”

Alice Bradshaw, Head of Nutrition Education and Information at Terranova, also commented: “There are numerous causes of cognitive decline. These include damage to neurons in the brain or a neurodegenerative disorder. Conditions such as Parkinson’s disease or dementia result in potentially severe cognitive impairment. Some medications, such as sedatives, may compromise brain function. Hormonal imbalances, along with nutrient deficiencies, high homocysteine levels, depression and anxiety can all result in some level of cognitive decline.”

And she raised the gut, explaining: “A healthy gut is vital for cognitive function and imbalances in the gut microbiome can produce inflammation which alters brain function. Other health factors which compromise brain health include insulin resistance, decline in hormone levels, elevated homocysteine levels and oxidative stress.”

PREVENTION PLAN

Thinking about your brain health before you have a problem is important, and this involves simple changes to how you live.

Dr Glenville commented: “What you eat can have an enormous impact on memory as you age and also help to reduce your risk. We know that the Mediterranean diet has been found to reduce the risk of mild cognitive impairment by 28 per cent and reduce the risk by nearly 50 per cent of this progressing to Alzheimer’s.”

“The advice is to increase consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables, olive oil, eat more oily fish and keep sugar and processed foods to a minimum. Making sure you keep blood sugar in balance is also important as blood sugar and insulin have been so closely linked with increased risk of Alzheimer’s that it has been suggested that Alzheimer’s should be called type 3 diabetes. Research suggests there is a 20-30 year interval between the first development of amyloid plaque in the brain (characteristic of Alzheimer’s) and the onset of dementia. So, no matter what your age, it’s never too late to start taking preventative measures.”

There are also other factors to consider, as Catherine advised:

“There’s lots we can do to support our brain health, and it is never too soon to start. Stay mentally active, learn a foreign language or a musical instrument, try crossword puzzles or sudoku. Remain socially active, meet up regularly with friends and families, join groups or societies, volunteer with local charities. Interaction with people can help ward off loneliness and depression, both of which can contribute to memory loss.”

Alice added: “Regular exercise regulates mood and increases brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a molecule that enables the brain to process new information and enhance learning and memory. Exercise can help regulate inflammation and improve sleep (vital for stress management and good cognitive function).”

And what steps can be taken if you experience decline?

“Take action immediately, it is never too late! Long-term research in Finland, on a group of seniors aged between 60-77 showed switching to a diet high in vegetables, fruit and fish, but low in sugar, combined with exercise, and brain training, improved cognitive function,” Catherine explained.

BRAIN NUTRIENTS

The brain needs to be fuelled correctly and deficiencies can be detrimental to cognitive function. Supplements can be beneficial, but do talk to your health store if you need something specific, and also inform your GP if you are taking any medication.

Linda advised: “Essential fats have anti-inflammatory properties which may protect the brain. Fish oil contains both EPA and DHA, two types of omega 3. Both have been linked with the maintenance of normal brain function, especially in milder stages of cognitive decline. Omega 3, 6 and 9 fatty acid intake in the Western diet is typically low so taking a supplement with all three fatty acids encompasses the benefits of all three. These supplements may help maintain healthy cholesterol levels, improve mood, enhance brain function and maintain cardiovascular health.”

Phil suggested: “Magnesium helps regulate many enzymatic reactions and is integral in brain homeostasis. When deficient in magnesium, our brain demands more magnesium, increasing the neuroexcitatory transmitters

and causing an imbalance. Choline maintains the levels of acetyl choline, which can improve our short term-memory and maintain attention.

“Brahmi has been shown to improve our memory via the inhibition of acetylcholinesterase. Ginkgo can improve blood flow to the brain and help with neuroinflammation. Lemon balm has a variety of benefits for brain health, but research has shown it can improve feelings of stress and our short-term memory and reaction times.”

Meanwhile, Alice suggested: “B vitamins are vital for the protection of cognitive function. In particular, B12, B6 and folic acid are required to prevent the devastating consequences of excess homocysteine, an amino acid produced when proteins are broken down. Resveratrol, a compound found in grapes, red wine and many other plant foods, has been extensively researched for its role in modulating the ageing process, including cognitive protection. It is thought that this antioxidant may curb the development of inflammatory metabolites within the

brain and protect the integrity of the blood brain barrier.”

Dr Glenville added: “The amino acid, acetyl-L-carnitine, can be helpful as it increases the brain receptors that would normally deteriorate with age so helpful for memory loss, Alzheimer’s and other types of dementia.

“People with Alzheimer’s have been found to have a shortage of the neurotransmitter, acetylcholine, in the brain and drugs which mimic acetylcholine are often used as a treatment for Alzheimer’s. Acetylcholine is critical for memory and brain function. L-arginine is an essential amino acid and gets converted to nitric oxide, which is a neurotransmitter in your brain, thought to be one of the chemical messengers involved in learning and memory.”

Catherine continued: “The brain is full of receptors for vitamin D, a deficiency has been linked to Alzheimer’s disease. If inflammation is a problem, anti-inflammatories like curcumin or serrapeptase could be useful. Vinpocetine is a compound derived from periwinkle. It can support brain blood flow, memory, concentration and cognitive function.”

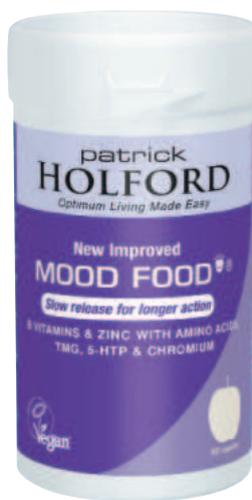
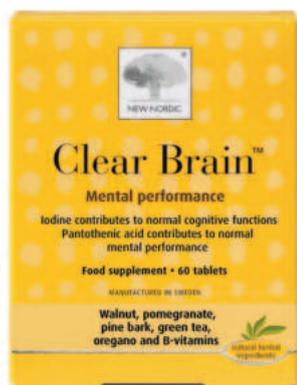
NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



Support your brain performance

The brain is the largest and most important part of your nervous system. It receives and coordinates signals from your senses, movement and memory. New Nordic developed Clear Brain and it's based on a natural extract combination, vitamins and minerals to support brain performance. The content of iodine contributes to normal cognitive functions. Pantothenic acid contributes to normal mental performance. Riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B6 and B12 reduces fatigue and contribute to the normal function of the nervous system.

www.newnordic.co.uk



Mood Food

Mood Food supports the 'Feel Good Factor' and is suitable for customers with stressful lifestyles. Designed by pioneer nutritionist Patrick Holford, this unique, natural formulation has been created to support chemicals in the brain as well as nervous system activity. 5-HTP and Tyrosine are both effective in helping to improve mood. The combination of vitamins B6 and B12 as well as Folic Acid contribute to the normal functioning of the nervous system and help reduce tiredness and fatigue. Vitamin B12 also contributes to homocysteine metabolism as does the vitamin B3. Zinc is included for normal cognitive function. Registered by the Vegan Society.

www.holfordirect.com

Forget me not

Emerging research suggests that the gut microbiome may also play an important role in brain health and cognitive function. Why not try supporting your brain and your gut with Bio-Kult Mind, an advanced multi-action formulation designed to target cognitive function, containing live bacteria *Bacillus subtilis* PXN® 21®, bioavailable flavonoids, grape and wild blueberry extracts, and zinc. Zinc contributes to normal cognitive function and the protection of cells from oxidative stress. Zinc also contributes to the normal function of the immune system. Bio-Kult Mind is suitable for everyday use as part of a healthy lifestyle.

www.bio-kult.com



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optimum amounts for normal psychological function

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www.naturalhealthpractice.com



Power Up: Day time nootropic

Developed by brain health scientists, Power Up keeps your brain performing at its best. Its unique formula supports energy, maximises focus and helps you power through your day with good mood, confidence and drive. Iron Bisglycinate, Gotu Kola, Nicotinamide Riboside, L-Tyrosine, Biotin, and quick-absorption Vitamin B6 and B5 can aid mental clarity and support strong mental performance. B Vitamins, Korean Panax Ginseng, Organic Lion's Mane Mushroom and L-Taurine are all included for optimal mood, all day. Every ingredient in

Power Up is deeply grounded in nutritional science with excellent human clinical results and is safe for long term use. There are no unsafe stimulants and there is no caffeine in Power Up. Suitable for Vegans & Vegetarians.

www.motionnutrition.com

Anti-ageing all stars

Discover how Silicea Kollagen plus liquid supplement can act as your all-in-one answer to anti-ageing.

Taking care of ourselves has never been more important. We all want to make sure that we feel and look our best, especially after being locked down for so long, and there is an easy way to return to feeling great and provide some welcome care to our skin, hair, nails and joints with a daily deliciously fruity shot of Silicea Kollagen plus.

Packed full of anti-ageing super ingredients, including collagen, hyaluronic acid, silicea gel, copper and vitamin C, scientific studies have shown that the specific collagen peptides found in Silicea Kollagen plus help reduce wrinkle depth and increase moisture level of all skin types, whilst the high levels of hyaluronic acid and silica gel ensure intensive moisturising and cushioning.



Help with Silicea Kollagen plus

A daily dose of Silicea Kollagen plus contains a huge amount of collagen peptides, which are the building blocks of our skin, joints, bones, muscles, and connective tissue. Replacing levels of these vital ingredients can reduce signs of ageing and protect joints. Further ingredients such as copper and vitamic C counteract the oxidation processes to which the skin is exposed to every day, and which promote the progression of skin ageing, such as UV rays or air pollution.

Silicea Kollagen plus is completely free of added sugar, sweetener, preservatives, and colourants, and easy to consume, no matter where you are. The handy sachets make it possible to carry the single-dose portions with you, even in the smallest of handbags, so you can enjoy on the go. Simply pour the contents directly from the sachet into your mouth or use a spoon. You can also stir it into a drink or food (such as muesli or yoghurt). So, instead of hard-to-swallow tablets or time-consuming powders, the efficiently German-manufactured, deliciously fruity sachets of Silicea Kollagen plus are your easy and complete solution to anti-ageing.

Skin ageing explained

Our body produces collagen naturally to keep our skin looking smooth and firm, plump and toned. However, over time, the body's collagen production slows down or even stops, levels of collagen decrease, and fine lines and wrinkles can start to appear – meaning we must find a way of getting it back into the body.

Collagen also plays a significant role in your body's overall physical resilience, maintaining healthy joints and helping your body recover from injuries. In addition, collagen and copper work in tandem to strengthen hair and contribute to maintaining normal hair colour and pigmentation.



Visit your health store for your free sample



Ask the experts

NOURISH THE SKIN YOU'RE IN...

by Theresa Cutts

What causes people to experience skin conditions and is there anything we can do to reduce our risk?

Skin conditions are caused by many factors – it could be an irritation caused by something you touch, think of stinging nettles, irritating, but not long lasting. Or caused by nutritional deficits, fungal infections, hormone imbalances, poor digestion and poor hygiene.

As always, a varied diet and plenty of water are important for healthy skin. The skin is one of the key ways that our body detoxifies; too many refined foods, not enough water and not keeping the skin clean can all have an effect.

What nutritional considerations should be made to try and ease its effects?

Discover what is causing the issue, for example, is it a something you are putting on the skin, such as a shower gel? Or is your diet lacking in essential nutrients and healthy fats such as hemp and flax oil?

For symptoms of a fungal infections, such as candida or thrush, the infection can spread to other parts of the body, including the skin, often in areas where we tend to sweat such as under the arms and feet – think athlete's foot and fungal nails. A diet high in sugar can aggravate these conditions.

Hormonal imbalances including puberty and the menopause also have an impact on your skin. By supporting the body through these changes, you can improve the overall health of the skin. Reducing refined fats, caffeine and alcohol can allow the body to detoxify excess hormones more effectively.

Would you recommend we add in nutritional supplements, and if so, what?

Dry skin conditions can be supported by

using omega 3 oils in the diet as a supplement or as an addition to smoothies and salads.

Allicin from garlic can have gained a great following for those with fungal conditions, and can be taken as a supplement and also used as a gel topically. Tea tree oil or oregano oil is also recognised as a topical application for fungal nails.

Supporting the body through hormonal changes can have a positive impact on the skin. Acne type conditions are often helped by a diet rich in antioxidants or supplements that include vitamins A, C and E, along with selenium and zinc.

Good skin is a bonus of a healthy body, eat a varied diet, drink plenty of water and use natural skincare products with gentle ingredients.

Q Why is it important to consider healthy gut bacteria from a young age and how can we make sure a child is getting adequate levels?

Adrienne Benjamin explained: Our gut bacteria (microbiome) begins to develop from birth and its overall role is beneficial, but there are some bacterial species and strains that may have negative attributes under certain circumstances. Maintaining a favourable balance of all species of bacteria is key to helping to prevent overgrowth of potentially pathogenic strains.

An imbalance of bacteria in the microbiome is known as dysbiosis and can lead to symptoms such as gas, digestive discomfort, diarrhoea and constipation.

Modern lifestyle factors have been shown to have an impact on the balance of the microbiome, including high sugar diets, lack of exercise, illness, infections, medications (particularly antibiotics) and stress. If a child

is eating a poor diet, with few vegetables and high levels of sugar, this can impact their gut bacteria and potentially many areas of their physiology. Whilst digestion and immunity will be impacted, dysbiosis can also affect mood, concentration levels, weight, sleep and overall health.

Probiotics (friendly bacteria) can be used as 'proxies' for the beneficial bacteria strains found in our gut. They are found in live natural yoghurt and kefir, and fermented vegetables, such as sauerkraut and kimchi. Prebiotic fibre also provides food for the gut bacteria and helps them to grow and colonise the gut. It is found in many vegetables, including leeks, garlic, onions, slightly unripe bananas and apples.

Plain live yoghurt with fruit, such as stewed apple, is a great option, but many children today do not like fermented foods, which can be sour tasting. Another option is to supplement their beneficial bacteria with a daily probiotic product specifically designed for children.

About the experts



Theresa Cutts is a Nutritional Therapist and independent Nutritional Consultant to the supplement brand, AllicinMax.



Anita Bean is an award-winning Registered Nutritionist, internationally published author and former champion athlete, who specialises in sport and exercise nutrition.

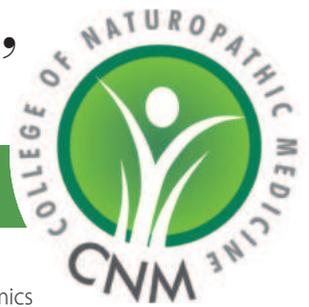


Adrienne Benjamin is a Nutritionist at ProVen Probiotics and is committed to understanding (and sharing) the ways in which the gut and the microbiome support health.



Firoz Ahari is a Director of Vitasil, distributor of Silicium health supplements. She has worked in health and nutrition consultancy for over 30 years and is a member of the Federation of Holistic Therapists and the British Association of Beauty Therapy & Cosmetology.

“Why I trained in acupuncture”



Attila Szanto, CNM Naturopathic Acupuncture graduate, details his journey into the world of natural health.



Attila Szanto

I trained as a social scientist with a PhD from the London School of Economics before discovering my interest in acupuncture and naturopathy.

Having received many acupuncture treatments and found great benefit, I naturally developed an interest in exploring this healing art. I realised I'd like to do something else for a living than academic work – something that involved my heart, and that people could benefit from in a tangible way.

CNM was recommended by a friend who had studied there and was very happy with her experience. I was particularly attracted by CNM's emphasis on providing hands-on training in acupuncture; every student has to complete 400 clinical hours prior to graduating. Having studied many years for my PhD, I couldn't see myself doing another theory-heavy degree most other institutions offer.

What I most loved about my CNM course was the wealth of lecturers' experience and the diversity of approaches to acupuncture they bring to the course. This gave me many ideas about the kind of practitioner I'd like to become, as well as how I'd want to continue to develop professionally post-graduation.

As every experienced Acupuncturist will tell you, growing into a healthcare practitioner is inseparable from one's own healing journey; otherwise, how could I offer guidance to my clients and spark their confidence in getting better? I am much more aware of the many aspects of health than ever before, and I enjoy sharing my understanding with others.

You can study Acupuncture with CNM at one of our colleges in either London or Bristol. Register today to attend a free open evening on Thursday, March 30, 2022 at <https://www.naturopathy-uk.com/>.



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Ask the experts



RECOMMENDED ROSEHIP...

by Anita Bean

What is rosehip and what is it beneficial for?

Rosehips from the *rosa-canina*, or dog-rose plant, have been shown in numerous studies to help relieve joint pain and stiffness, whilst helping to protect cartilage.

How can it specifically support my joints?

A number of clinical trials have demonstrated that rosehip powder containing a high level of galactolipid may protect joint cartilage from the damaging effects of inflammation, and significantly reduce joint pain and stiffness.

Scientists have also shown that this can switch off key genes responsible for producing specific enzymes that break down cartilage, thereby helping to preserve joint tissues. Rosehips are also one of the richest natural sources of vitamin C, an essential nutrient that plays an important role in the

formation of collagen – the primary structural component of cartilage.

These benefits can greatly improve quality of life for people with osteoarthritis, enabling them to lead a more active life.

Should I take it as a supplement and if so, what should I look for in a supplement?

Incorporating foods and supplements with anti-inflammatory properties at the earliest signs of joint pain or stiffness may therefore help reduce pain and protect against further damage.

Randomised placebo-controlled studies involving patients with osteoarthritis have shown that supplementation with the galactolipid GOPO, a key component of rosehip, for three months significantly reduced joint stiffness and pain, improved joint mobility, and reducing the need for painkillers.



What is silicium and what functions is it involved with?

Firouzeh Ahari advised: Silicium (soluble silicon extracted from stinging nettle) is a natural element needed by the human body for many processes. When it is bio-activated, it is easily absorbed both by the digestive system and the skin.

It is important in the formation of collagen, the skin's natural scaffolding, and also elastin, which keeps the skin supple. Silicium is also needed for the synthesis of elastin and collagen internally, of which the aorta contains the greatest quantity of silicium in the human body.

As humans age, the amount of silicium decreases, the lack of which contributes to premature ageing and increased inflammatory conditions, such as arthritis.

Silicium is available in liquid and gel formats, and it is important to choose a product that is bio-activated, as in this form, the silicium molecule is so small it can be absorbed at cellular level. Silicium has the ability to act not only as a carrier for other beneficial ingredients for human ailments but can enhance and accelerate their effectiveness.

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Natural hair nourishment

Your essential guide to the best natural nourishment for hair.

It gets washed, brushed, heated, styled, tied up, and much more, meaning that our hair goes through a lot of stress on a routine basis. If your diet is also lacking in certain key nutrients, it's clear why your hair might be looking and feeling less than healthy.

We should also bear in mind that hair health is hugely affected by the type of products you put on it, and if it's heavily loaded with chemicals, it can cause your locks issues.

But with a bit of natural TLC, and a product switch-up to something more natural, you can restore your locks to natural goodness.

Signs of damage

There are a range of reasons we can damage our hair, and some really obvious signs.

Charlotte Vøhtz, founder of organic brand, Green People, explained: "Damaging the hair by exposing it to excess heat, colouring and styling products can damage the hair, as can vigorously combing the hair and exposing the hair to drying lifestyle factors, such as swimming pool chlorine. Such damage leaves hair porous, dry, brittle and frizzy."

Amy Loader, from supplement brand, New Nordic, added: "The most common signs that your hair is lacking in nutrients are hair loss, when brushing or washing. And we can all recall a time that our hair was dull and drab, it's that feeling where it just 'sits' on your head. And no amount of dry shampoo and expensive serums could give it life, that's when supplements can really help to give it life!"

Sue Harrison, Head of UK and Ireland Business Manager at Mahi Naturals, which has the Bass Brushes and Bio-Kap ranges in its portfolio, pointed out there are factors out of our control.

"Environmental conditions such as excessive sunlight, wind, sea air, pollution, swimming with chlorine, and lack of essential vitamins and minerals in food or insufficient water will all affect hair. Stress can also be a negative factor for healthy hair, as well as some medication. Poor brushing and ineffective detangling can cause hair to weaken, snap or pull out," she advised.

She went on: "Lack of shine is the most obvious sign that our hair is struggling. If the outer lying cuticles are not laying nice and flat, then the light can't be reflected to give a shine. Damaged cuticles can happen from excessive heat application such as blow-drying, straighteners, curling wands, chemical damage from hair services such as bleaching, and poor brushing. Even using the wrong products for your hair type can affect the condition.

"Hair snapping means the hair may be too brittle and lack elasticity, or constantly tying up the hair in the same place can cause breakage. Hair loss or hair thinning are also indicators that the hair isn't in the best of health. Some of these causes may need to be referred to a doctor as they could be an indication of an underlying health problem."

Healthy hair guide

There are some simple steps that make a big difference to hair health, it just requires change to your routine, and also your choice of products.

Charlotte suggested: "If you have hair that has been damaged by too much hair dye, heat exposure or over styling, we'd recommend using a hair care routine that blends nourishing actives that restore hair hydration with proteins that add strength and support to the hair structure. Some simple tips to look after hair health include:

- **WASHING:** Detangle your hair by combing before washing as wet hair is extremely fragile. Use a gentle, SLS/SLES-free, pH balanced shampoo to preserve the hair's acid mantle. Always rinse away all traces of shampoo and use a small amount of conditioner on hair, especially ends, steering well clear of the roots. Leave for one to two minutes, comb very gently and rinse well. Pat and squeeze hair dry – do not rub.
- **BLOW-DRYING:** Wait until your hair is at least half dry before you attempt to style it. Dry from roots to end – keep the dryer at a distance of at least 15-20cm and dry in the following order; back, sides, crown, then front. Tip your head upside down to increase volume, and dampen dry ends with a herbal mist/

foam to reduce heat damage."

Amy went on: "To keep your hair healthy you should avoid washing your hair every day, instead, wash it every third day, use cool water to wash and rinse your hair and wash your hairbrush regularly. However, in my view, healthy hair starts from the inside; of course, it's important to look after your hair from the outside also but you won't get the same results if your body is lacking essential nutrients."

Aimee Benbow, Technical Director at Viridian Nutrition, added: "Keep hair rehydrated and improve appearance and shine by ensuring you drink plenty of water and intake a good level of essential fatty acids, specifically omega 3 from either fish or seeds." And think about the tools you use too.

Sue reminded: "Use the correct products for your hair type. Brush regularly every day with a quality hair brush using the appropriate brush for the purpose such as a detangler. Use heat protectors or conditioners that contain natural protective ingredients to help prevent damage from hair equipment, tie hair back using protected covered hair bands and load the weight on different places on the head."

The internal effects

If your inner health is less than optimal, it will show in many ways, and that includes in the health of your hair.

Aimee explained: "Deficiency in essential nutrients can impact both hair structure and growth. The structure of hair is comprised of keratin, a type of protein, therefore, a diet with poor protein intake can have negative effects on the health of hair. Nutritional deficiencies have also been linked to hair loss and conditions, including alopecia."

And what signs may your hair show if you are lacking in important nutrients?

"Poor hair condition can be a tell-tale sign that the body is not getting enough of a specific nutrient or nutrients. Dry, brittle hair, although commonly a sign of environmental factors such as the use of heated hair equipment and chemical dyes and treatment, can also be down to nutritional deficiencies. Poor essential fatty acid intake, particularly omega 3, can lead to dry hair, skin and nails. Additionally, poor hair growth or excessive hair loss can be a strong indicator that something key is missing in the diet," Aimee advised.

"Various essential nutrients have been studied for their benefits on healthy hair:

- **Iron** plays an important role in red blood cell formation and blood circulation throughout the body. Therefore, iron is required to ensure a healthy circulation of oxygen and other key nutrients to the scalp. Also, various genes within the hair follicle

are thought to be regulated by iron.

- **Zinc** is required for hair growth and repair as it has a fundamental role in the structure of hair. Additionally, zinc is involved with oil secretion from glands around the follicles, which is important for hair quality and shine.
- **Vitamin A**, in research, has shown to activate hair follicles and therefore stimulate hair growth, which may be beneficial in those experiencing stunted hair growth.
- **Biotin** has been studied for both hair and nail health and growth. Deficiency has been linked to hair loss and brittle nails and replenishment of this B-vitamin has shown to improve these."

Amy went on: "There are a number of nutrients that your hair needs to stay healthy, and they're often vitamins that we don't get enough of in our daily diet. The vitamin, biotin, is very important, lack of this can lead to thinning of the hair, a daily supplement of this could do wonders.

"The other equally important nutrient is zinc, it's found in foods like beans, nuts, fish and whole grain cereals. Zinc contributes to normal hair pigmentation and can help stop hair loss. Also, look out for hair supplements that contain apple extract; when apples are picked, dried and extracted so that the desired herbal substance within the apple is preserved, it can encourage the protein to promote hair growth by increasing circulation to the scalp."

Natural goodness

It's really important to assess the chemical load in your haircare, as they can be detrimental to its health. The best starting place is choosing those that have a reputable certification for natural or organic, such as NATRUE or Soil Association. This will mean it cannot contain certain chemicals.

"Chemicals can have a massive effect. They can dry out the hair and cause it to become brittle and dull. Chemical hair processes such as bleaching, or chemicals in products, even in regular shampoos and conditioners, can also have a negative effect," Sue explained.

"Avoid products that contain SLSs, SLEs as these are artificial foaming agents that can dry out the hair and are not necessary to have as many natural shampoos have a natural foaming agent. Avoid parabens as although many are banned, some are permitted in limited amounts. They can cause multiple issues to the hair and scalp, as well as fade colour. Silicones give an artificial shine to the hair, making it appear that it is in good health when it actually may not be as it merely coats the surface. PEGs can cause irritation and may be toxic to broken skin."

And remember, nature has given us so much in terms of plant ingredients that are no. urishing Charlotte highlighted the importance of proteins for our locks.

"Quinoa is a natural grain that's a complete protein, compatible with the hair and rich in reparative amino acids. The quinoa grain is also suitable for all hair types, is gluten-free, vegan-friendly and contains all eight essential amino acids needed for healthy hair," she advised.

"The form of protein we use in our quinoa protein shampoo and conditioner is hydrolysed quinoa. We consider this the best protein for feeding strength, shine and volume into the hair. It has been naturally modified to make the protein water-liking and ensure that water and reparative nutrients can be effortlessly absorbed into the hair. Once this protein penetrates the hair, amino acids work to increase the hair's thickness, structural strength and improve manageability – without blocking other nutrients from entering the hair shaft.

"Another reason why we consider quinoa to be such a good protein for shampoo is that the bonds holding quinoa protein structures on the surface of hair shafts are easily broken by the foaming agents in shampoo, which means quinoa shouldn't build up and weigh down your hair."

Sue added: "Topical hair products that contain botanicals like willow extract, vitamin E and argan oil are all wonderful natural ingredients for the hair, helping to restore shine and protect against UV damage, leaving the hair feeling soft and glossy."

Try this

- ★ Lavera Colour and Care Organic Shampoo
- ★ New Nordic Hair Volume
- ★ Bass BioFlex Plant-Based Leaf Detangler
- ★ Salus Floradix Liquid Iron

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NATURAL SOLUTIONS TO DIABETES

Learn the importance of better blood sugar balance to reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

The UK has the fastest growing rate of diabetes in the developing world, with nearly five million people suffering from it – a colossal rise of 450 per cent since 1960. Nine out of 10 of these UK cases are type 2 diabetes.

As things stand, every two minutes, someone will learn that they have the condition – yet it's thought that nearly another million more people already have type 2 diabetes but are not being diagnosed.

But the good news is that research has shown that this is a lifestyle disease, with the WHO making it clear that a healthy diet, regular physical activity, and maintaining a normal bodyweight can all make the difference to delaying or even preventing it.



YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

What you eat has a large part to play in preventing and controlling prediabetes and type 2 diabetes.

Research from Stanford University makes it clear that a high sugar intake is linked to the development of type 2 diabetes. Even when the researchers controlled for all other food types – fibre, meat, fruits, oils, and cereals – only sugar (in its many forms) was associated with a risk of type 2 diabetes. And this association was so strong that it was independent of how physically active someone was or their alcohol intake or their weight.

As well as eliminating sugar from the diet, it is important to eat a healthy Mediterranean diet with low amounts of unrefined carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, oily fish, pulses, nuts and seeds.

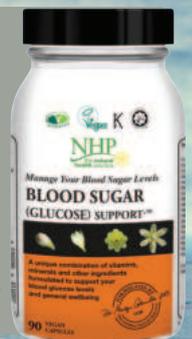
NUTRIENT CHECK

Nutrients that are important to support normal blood sugar levels include chromium, carnitine, cinnamon, n-acetyl cysteine, inositol, coenzyme Q10, alpha lipoic acid, zinc, vitamin D3, magnesium, manganese, biotin, and the B vitamins, including folic acid in the active folate form. Omega 3 supplements and also probiotics are helpful too.

Lifestyle factors that are important in order to work on prevention and controlling prediabetes and type 2 diabetes are exercise, sleep and stress. We know that being active lowers blood sugar and improved insulin sensitivity. Stress can make it harder for someone to control their blood sugar levels and not getting enough sleep increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Reader offer

A unique combination of 18 key nutrients and herbs formulated to help support your blood sugar levels and general wellbeing. This exceptional supplement is for when you want to balance your blood sugar and includes chromium, carnitine, cinnamon, n-acetyl cysteine, inositol, coenzyme Q10, alpha lipoic acid, zinc, vitamin D3, magnesium, manganese, biotin, and B vitamins, including folic acid in the active folate form. Vegan and Vegetarian Society approved, Kosher and Halal certified, *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of 15. See page 30 to enter.





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Woobamboo Electric Toothbrush Heads feature dental-grade soft tapered-tip bristles that pair with over 90 per cent of Philips Sonicare electric brush bases. These bamboo toothbrush heads are 85 per cent less plastic than the other leading brands of traditional brush heads, so you can feel good about keeping their smiles and planet clean. Made of sustainably harvested bamboo and coated in a vegan soybean wax to ensure smoothness and promote longevity through daily use, *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of two packs of two brush heads.



CLIPPER ORGANIC & FAIRTRADE GREEN TEA & MINT

Clipper's delicious Organic & Fairtrade Green Tea & Mint is the perfect balancing act. This bright and breezy green tea has been infused with a cooling menthol peppermint flavour. Crafted with pure and natural ingredients from the highest quality sources, all in unbleached, plant-based and biodegradable tea bags. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of 10 boxes.



NUTRATEA PACKS

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with NutraTea to offer readers the chance of winning one of five sets featuring three of its unique herbal blends: Lemongrass & Ginger, NutraJoint, and NutraLust. NutraTea is a specialist in herbal remedy teas that have been formulated by pharmacists and nutritionists to target specific health issues. Utilising 100 per cent natural and active botanicals that have been sustainably sourced worldwide, each tea bag can be reused up to three times throughout the day.



BIO-KULT MIND

In the new year, everyone turns to getting physically fit but are you brain fit? *Natural Lifestyle* has teamed up with Bio-Kult to offer readers the chance of winning one of 10 packs of Bio-Kult Mind and sudoku to help support your cognitive function.

ENTER HERE Please indicate below which giveaway you are applying for, complete form and post back to us at 'Reader Offers', *Natural Lifestyle* magazine, The Old Dairy, Hudsons Farm, Fieldgate Lane, Ugley Green, Bishops Stortford CM22 6HJ. Closing Date: April 1, 2022. Or you can enter online – visit www.mynaturallifestyle.com

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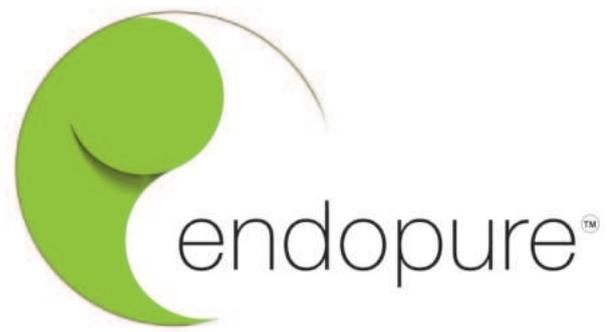
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Get creative with low carb

Low carb cooking need not mean boring. Here, Katie and Giancarlo Caldesi show how you can create tasty meals with a healthy twist.



Saag-style kale and paneer

Serves 4 as a main or 6 as a side

This is traditionally made with spinach, but I experimented recently with some leftover curly kale. It worked brilliantly and then our friend, Preeti Gohil, said she frequently makes it with a selection of greens, so now it is made with whatever I have in the fridge or garden, including cavolo nero, Swiss chard, spinach, sprout tops, spring greens, curly kale or Savoy cabbage.

Ingredients:

- 500g (1lb 2oz) kale, Swiss chard, spinach, spring greens or cabbage, stems removed and finely chopped
- 2tbsp ghee or 1tbsp butter and 1tbsp olive oil
- 200g (7oz) paneer, cut into 1.5cm or bite-sized cubes
- 3 fat garlic cloves, finely chopped or grated
- 1 hot green or red chilli, finely chopped, or 1tsp chilli flakes

- 1tsp cumin seeds
- 1tsp ground turmeric
- 120ml (4fl oz) double cream
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method:

- Boil the kale in salted water for 10 minutes or until soft. Drain and set aside.
- Heat the ghee in a deep frying pan or saucepan over a medium-high heat and fry the paneer on all sides until golden brown. Use a slotted spoon to remove the paneer

from the pan and set aside.

- Add the garlic, chilli and spices to the pan with some salt and pepper and fry over a medium heat for one minute, making sure that the garlic doesn't burn.
- Add the drained kale to the pan and stir through for a few minutes until hot. Add the cream and stir again to heat through. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Serve straight away or keep and reheat. It will keep well in the fridge for up to three days or in the freezer for up to three months.



Cinnamon and cream cheese muffins Makes 6

When I worked as an au pair in Long Island, New York, cinnamon rolls were my downfall. I came back two stone heavier and haven't touched one since. However, I can now enjoy them once more with this low-carb version. I think these are much nicer than their sickly-sweet forebears, which can weigh in at 125g (4½ oz) carbs and 880kcal each compared to mine at under 10g (¼ oz) and 322kcal! These are great to freeze; defrost in the microwave and top with the cream cheese frosting before serving.

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 150g (5½ oz) ground almonds
- 1 (125g/4½ oz) apple, coarsely grated
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 1tbsp vanilla extract

For the cinnamon butter:

- 45g (1½ oz) butter, plus extra for greasing (optional)
- 3tsp ground cinnamon
- 1tbsp honey or 2tbsp erythritol

For the cream cheese frosting:

- 90g (3¼ oz) cream cheese
- 2tsp vanilla extract

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/425°F/gas mark 7.
- Grease six muffin moulds, use a silicone muffin mould or line a muffin tin with paper cases.
- Mix the eggs, ground almonds, grated apple, baking powder and vanilla together thoroughly in a bowl. Use a spatula to transfer the mixture to the muffin moulds and smooth down the tops.
- Bake the muffins for 20 minutes or until firm to the touch.
- Meanwhile, make the cinnamon butter by mixing all the

ingredients together and set aside. Do the same with the frosting.

- Once cooked, use a thick skewer to make three holes in the top of each muffin. I circle the skewer around a little to enlarge the holes. Pour the warm cinnamon butter over the tops of the muffins so that each will be marbled with it. Set aside to cool.
- Use a dinner knife or small spatula to spread the frosting over the muffins and serve straight away or keep the muffins in a container in the fridge for up to four days.



Country-style loaf Makes 16 slices

I have had many readers ask me for a low-carb loaf they can cut into slices for sandwiches, so after much experimentation over the years, here is my sliced brown bread loaf! I have also given the method for making this into a country-style loaf, which looks gorgeous but is harder to cut into even-sized slices. Psyllium husk works as a binder to help the dough hold the rise without gluten and is available in all good health food shops and online. We prefer the husks of psyllium, not the superfine powder, which is more expensive. It will work in the same way but can produce a purple colour in your bread. You will notice there is mozzarella in the dough; you can use the inexpensive pizza mozzarella, and freeze any left over, as it grates more easily (though the soft ball of mozzarella works too).

Ingredients:

- 125g (4½ oz) mozzarella, drained, torn into pieces
- 3 eggs
- 150g (5½ oz) ground almonds
- 1 heaped tsp salt
- 2tsp baking powder
- 80g (2¾ oz) flaxseed, ground (use golden flaxseed for a lighter loaf)
- 25g (1oz) psyllium husks
- 200ml (7fl oz) cold water
- Extra virgin olive oil, for greasing
- 1tbsp seeds, such as sunflower, poppy or pumpkin (optional)

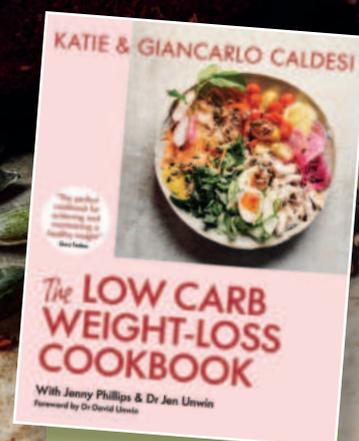
Method:

• To make the dough, put all the ingredients except the oil and seeds into a food processor and whizz until they form a ball of dough. If you prefer

to make the dough by hand, grate the mozzarella into a bowl and combine with the remaining ingredients.

- Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/425°F/gas mark 7.
- To make the bread in a tin, line a 900g (2lb) loaf tin lengthways with a piece of baking parchment cut long enough so that you have a flap either side that hangs over the long edges. This will make it easier to remove the loaf. Brush the short sides of the tin with a little oil; there is no need to line them.
- Put the dough in the tin and press it down. Press on the seeds, if using.
- To make the country-style loaf, lightly grease a baking tray with a little oil. Remove the dough from the food processor and put it on a lightly oiled work surface. Lightly oil your hands and

- mould the dough into a ball. Transfer it to the prepared baking tray and flatten the top a little so that you have a round loaf measuring about 15cm x 5cm (6in x 2in). Scatter over the seeds, if using, and press them in. Cut a cross into the top using a serrated knife, making two slashes about 2cm (¾ in) deep.
- Bake either shaped loaf for one hour or until firm to the touch. Remove from the oven and leave to cool on a wire rack (out of the tin, if using) – don't cut it until it reaches room temperature.
- Use the sliced bread as it is for a sandwich, or toast it. The loaf will keep in a sealed bag for two days out of the fridge or for five days in the fridge. The bread also freezes well (slice it first for easy defrosting) and will keep frozen for up to three months.



The Low Carb Weight-Loss Cookbook by Katie and Giancarlo Caldesi is published by Kyle Books (£20).
Photography: Susan Bell.



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