

Natural Lifestyle

LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL — NATURALLY

www.mynaturallifestyle.com

October 2021

The UK's
best
FREE
HEALTH
MAGAZINE

Your energy action plan

Recharge flagging
energy levels

Gut-friendly guide

How probiotics
can support the gut
and wellbeing

IRON

MATTERS

TOP UP THIS
MUST-HAVE MINERAL

Plus

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LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL – NATURALLY

Welcome



So many factors related to our health are intertwined, yet we so often fail to make the connection. For example, if you are run down, with a lowered immune system and a susceptibility to catch colds, it is likely your gut isn't functioning very well.

Looking at this in greater detail, we know that around 70 per cent of our immune system can be found in the gut, and so it stands to reason that if your digestive system isn't nourished and working as it should, it will affect immunity.

And so in this issue of *Natural Lifestyle*, we have turned the focus on the gut, and, more specifically, on healthy bacteria, more commonly referred to as probiotics. Maintaining a healthy gut microbiome is one of the most important elements to keeping the gut working well, and, in turn, remaining in good health, and probiotics play a key role in that. Turn to page 26, where we bring you all the expert advice on keeping the delicate microbiome in balance, and what you need to look for when choosing a probiotic.

Also in this issue, we bring you details of some of the best ways to boost your energy, starting with a healthy diet and lifestyle (turn to page 18 for more), we have a collection of fantastic giveaways for your natural health needs, and we also offer an insight into iron and why it's so important for your health and wellbeing.

And finally, we would like to thank all of our dedicated readers who nominated their

favourite store in the *Natural Lifestyle* Retailer of the Year Awards.

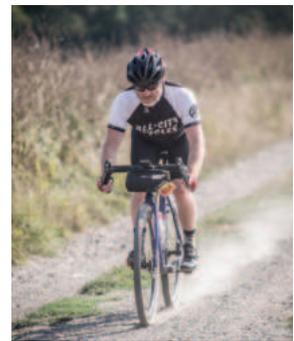
We were so delighted to read such wonderful stories from you about why your local store has made such a difference to your lives. As I write this, judging is just about to commence, before we reveal the winners in the November issue of *Natural Lifestyle*.



Rachel Symonds,
Editor

THE BEST BITS

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



It was two wheels for bike enthusiast Sales Exec, James, who went on the Tour of the Cornfields recently.



Our designer, Clare, enjoyed a beautiful day in nature when she took in the stunning countryside views.



It was a trip to Newcastle for Editor Rachel to compete in the recent Great North Run half marathon.

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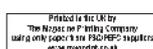
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BOOST



30
LOWDOWN



26
PROBIOTICS



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EXPLORE
IN STORE



IMMUNE DEFENSE & ENERGY

Multi Vegan™ Gummies are a brand new multivitamin from the award winning, international supplement manufacturer, New Nordic. The tasty gummy contains 9 different vitamins, is easy to take and can be used by the whole family to support the immune system and provide energy.



www.newnordic.co.uk

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Where to buy Multi Vegan™ Gummies?

Multi Vegan™ Gummies are available from leading independent health food stores, or you can purchase online at www.newnordic.co.uk

ADVICE & QUESTIONS

You are always welcome to contact our New Nordic helpline at
0800 389 1255

~ INDEPENDENT ~
Health Food Stores



SUPPORT FOR THOSE STRUGGLING TO SLEEP

A new helpline has launched to help people who are struggling to sleep.

The Sleep Charity has partnered with Furniture Village to launch the National Sleep Helpline, operated by specialist, trained advisors between 7pm and 9pm five days a week, Sunday to Thursday.

The expert team will provide callers with helpful tips and advice so they can identify appropriate strategies, talk through their problems, and point them in the direction of other organisations and services for specialist or long-term support.

It follows a survey of 2,000 UK adults conducted by OnePoll, which looked at the dangerous and worrying consequences of a bad night's sleep. Results showed more than a quarter (28 per cent) said it had affected their mental health, which rose to a staggering 50 per cent of those aged 18-24.

The study also showed the average UK adult suffers nine bad nights' sleep per month – equating to around 500m people across the country each month struggling to sleep. Furthermore, the survey found over half (57 per cent) of respondents feel there is a lack of support for people with sleep issues and almost half (48 per cent) of those polled think companies should offer support for staff who have trouble sleeping.

Lisa Artis, Deputy CEO of The Sleep Charity, explained: "It's clear that the great British public is in the midst of a sleep crisis, which is affecting national mental health, work performance and even leading to alcohol misuse."

Dr Ranj Singh, Sleep and Wellness Ambassador for Furniture Village, added: "Sleep is as integral to our wellbeing as diet and exercise, and it's concerning to see just how many people are struggling with issues relating to a lack of it. A tired society is a grouchy, unproductive and unhealthy society and there isn't enough support for people who sit wide awake in the early hours.

"Giving the nation access to expert sleep advice is an incredible way to tackle this countrywide issue and we're proud to be partnering with The Sleep Charity to help facilitate it."

People looking for help and support should call 03303 530 541.

Inside... HEALTH

Charity guide aims to make plant-based more accessible

A new guide has been created to support the older population to follow a plant-based diet.

The number of UK vegans and vegetarians continues to soar, with 25 per cent of all Brits predicted to be vegetarian by 2025, and already an estimated 14 per cent of vegetarian and vegans in Great Britain are aged 65 or older. And so, Vegetarian for Life (VfL), a charity that supports older vegans and vegetarians, has launched a free self-advocacy pack.

It explains the laws protecting those with special dietary needs, sources of support if your rights aren't being recognised, and some simple yet critical actions you can take to protect your future dignity and rights. These include making a statement of your wishes and care preferences, which future carers should honour.

Amanda Woodvine, CEO of VfL, explained: "Many people assume that veganism and vegetarianism are new concepts – something for younger generations – but that simply isn't true. Although philosophical beliefs, such as veganism, are protected under multiple laws in the UK, older vegans and vegetarians often find themselves in situations that go against their basic human rights when it comes to food.

"In later life, many of us rely on others for food – whether that is ready-made meals for home delivery, or provisions in care settings. Conditions such as dementia can be an additional barrier to maintaining control over our diets and our identity and beliefs. VfL hears time and time again from older vegans and vegetarians and their families who have been given food that goes against their fundamental dietary beliefs, particularly in social care settings. So, that's why we're launching our self-advocacy pack – a one-stop shop containing resources, guidance and tips to ensure that you get the food that you are legally, and ethically, entitled to."

Email info@vegetarianforlife.org.uk or contact VfL on 0161 257 0887 for the pack.



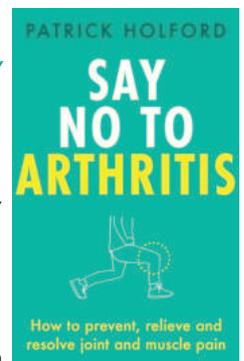
SUPPORT YOUR JOINTS, NATURALLY

If you want to learn how to ease joint and muscle pain, this new book is for you.

Nutrition expert, Patrick Holford, has penned *Say No To Arthritis: How to prevent, relieve and resolve joint and muscle pain*.

In this fully revised and updated version of Patrick Holford's classic book on the subject, he shares the latest findings from scientific studies, showing that we can do much without resorting to medication, with its unwelcome side-effects.

Written by one of the UK's leading nutritionists, features include the most effective natural painkillers, how certain fats can fight inflammation, why food intolerances can be a factor, the best bone-building nutrients and appropriate supplements, and exercising and guidance on tracking your progress.



We love

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Product Awards 2020
the healthy awards 2020



Poll reveals less than third of Brits happy with fitness levels, post-pandemic

Less than a third of Brits are happy with their fitness levels following the Covid-19 pandemic.

That is according to research commissioned by ukactive, ahead of National Fitness Day, which found that only 27 per cent of UK adults say they are as physically fit as they would like to be.

The poll of just over 2,000 adults, conducted by Savanta ComRes, also found that 51 per cent report the same activity levels, and 17 per cent saying they were more active during the pandemic.

Asked if they were as physically fit as they would like to be, exactly half (50 per cent) of those questioned said they were not, and only 27 per cent reported they were happy with their fitness levels (the remaining 23 per cent were either unsure or neither agreed nor disagreed).

Of those UK adults who were unhappy with their fitness, 56 per cent said their fitness levels prevented them from taking part in vigorous activities and sport, such as swimming, running, playing netball and football. And 12 per cent said their fitness levels even stopped them from doing gentle everyday activities, such as showering and getting dressed, washing up, folding clothes, and strolling around the house, park, or shops.

The pandemic has also seen a greater focus on mental wellbeing, and more than half (52 per cent) of the respondents said physical activity is just as important to their mental health as their physical health – a benefit felt particularly among over-55s (61 per cent).

Professor Greg Whyte, Olympian and Professor of Applied Sport and Exercise Science at Liverpool John Moore's University, commented: "Becoming more active on a daily basis often starts with a small step, perhaps by changing your routine to include a walk or bike ride, or trying a new activity such as swimming, an exercise class, or a dance class.

"Covid-19, along with ongoing and seasonal health challenges, has not gone away so it's crucial that we strive for healthy, active lives in order to improve our physical and mental recovery and resilience long into the future."

Inside... LIFESTYLE



BETTER BACKPACKS

Add some colour to your young ones' school bags with this range from Ogio.

The brand has teamed up with acclaimed street artist, Kevin Lyons, whose signature friendly monster characters have gained huge popularity and have been used in murals and various clothing and accessory collaborations.

These backpacks are loaded with technology and features that will have you ready for the new school year. The bag features a padded internal 15in laptop sleeve, durable 600D polyester body, internal organisation panel, hidden valuables pocket, a secure smartphone pocket, mesh water bottle holder and cushioned back for extra comfort.



HEADING BACK TO CLASS



Now that restrictions are lifted, a yoga studio has reminded of the benefits to heading back to in-person classes.

Karen Kirkness, founder of Meadowlark Yoga, has set out the top five benefits of returning to classes, post-pandemic.

- **Satisfaction vs somatic closeness** – jumping into Zoom yoga classes is one way we have all stayed fit and sane, and for many of us, the online format continues to deliver a feeling of satisfaction. However, the online space is bereft of the sensory stimulation that you get walking into your community yoga studio. This sensory experience reinforces our choices by creating and strengthening deeply rooted psychosomatic memories that help us navigate future behaviour and strengthen our health and wellness choices.

- **Convenience vs connectedness** – there is no easier way to smash through a yoga practice than to roll out of bed and onto your mat in your PJs. When you have

to actually get dressed and present yourself to a room of humans, you're coming together with those people in a shared social contract. In the moment we all decide to be here, now, even though it was hard and required some sacrifice, there is a kind of next-level connectedness.

- **Accountability vs actual joy** – showing up to a studio class is about the authentic feeling of wanting to be there, doing the yoga that you love, surrounded by people who feel the same way.

- **Mammalian basics** – pandemic notwithstanding, as mammals, we need eye contact, shared biorhythms, hugs, vocal subtlety, pheromonal interaction, and many other aspects of nonverbal communication that the online format can never accommodate. Our fascial instruments need to vibrate in proximity with other humans as a matter of physical and spiritual health. Our neuroendocrine system is very sensitive to loneliness and in biological terms, our Zoom-based lives have left us biochemically and vibrationally isolated. Being in-studio offers our bodies a higher vibration.

- **Performance enhancement** – a final major reason for getting back in the studio is to get gently but firmly pushed, to feel the burn of training in that zone of opportunity where our bodies learn how to be stronger. Under the guidance of a teacher with others working on the same project is where most of us would rather practice and train. In-studio, the teacher can focus on seeing and feeling the students in the room, respond to the nuances of physical proximity, not having to spend valuable time and attention on the tech aspects.

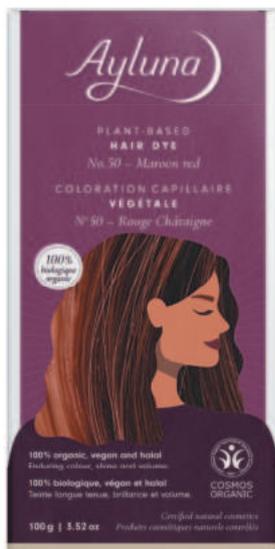
FALL INTO AUTUMN

Fall in love with these natural and organic beauties

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www.ayluna.co.uk | £12.90



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Feeling lethargic, low and in need of a little pick-me-up? The SOiL Organic Aromatherapy Revive Remedy Roller is a synergy blend of comforting geranium, rosemary and uplifting grapefruit organic essential oils that will help to boost your mood and lift your spirits. Simply apply to the pressure points to stimulate and energise the body and mind.

www.soilorganics.co.uk | £4.70



ALL DOLLED UP

With the benecos It-Pieces Pretty Cold Palette you can create the perfect glam look for special occasions or a more natural day time look. This palette contains a highlighter, a blush and four eyeshadow shades, all made using skin-loving natural and organic ingredients, to conjure up your look. The tray is refillable, perfect for mixing and matching your favourite benecos It-Pieces, let your imagination run wild!

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www.benandanna.uk | £8.95



GET THE GLOW

Indulge your skin with the finest in natural beauty with this new creation from Antipodes.

The New Zealand skincare brand has launched Glow Ritual, a natural vitamin C serum featuring clean, sustainably sourced ingredients, including kakadu plum, a rich source of vitamin C. It also features the antioxidant compound, Vinanza grape and kiwi, a sustainable by-product of polyphenol-rich sauvignon blanc grape seeds and kiwifruit skin, which helps brighten skin and address pigmentation. Furthermore, plant hyaluronic acid boosts water, while bakuchiol, 'nature's retinol,' offers smoother, firmer skin without irritation.

The light-wear serum is free from toxic ingredients and suits all skin types.



Inside... BEAUTY



KIND TO YOU, KIND TO THE PLANET

AllMatters is an exciting new range of ethically produced, eco conscious products.

Formerly known as OrganiCup, the brand specialised in producing menstrual cups. But as demand for eco-friendly products grows, the experts have expanded the offering and at the same time, rebranded to now be known as AllMatters.

The team behind the brand explain that small changes can have a big impact and so wanted to extend the product range to offer more products that can be reusable.

The range, which includes menstrual cups and hand and body washes, is developed with water conservation in mind; water has been removed and they have formulated a powder of gentle ingredients, which you can easily mix with water at home in the AllMatters reusable bottle. The products come in an unscented foaming formula, with no unnecessary ingredients added.



GREEN BEAUTY

To mark a decade since it was created, an organic skincare brand has placed the focus on sustainability with its new range.

Founded in 2011 by Dr Pauline Hili, a renowned organic skincare expert with over 30 years of expertise and Fellow of The Royal Society of Chemistry, Nourish London is a British organic skincare company that offers scientifically developed, highly effective, certified organic, vegan and cruelty-free skincare powered by ingredients from nature that are kind to the skin and our planet.

To mark the milestone, the brand has created the new Limited Edition – Celebrating 10 Years of Green Beauty Collection, packed full of omega-rich oils, antioxidants, essential vitamins and minerals to hydrate and rejuvenate the skin.

The collection comprises Kale 3D Cleanse (30ml), Antioxidant Peptide Mist (15ml), Argan Anti-Ageing Peptide Serum (15ml), Argan Skin Renew Moisturiser (50ml) and Probiotic Multi-Mineral Repair Mask Sachets (two 5ml), presented in an organic handmade toiletry bag from fair trade organisation, Freeset.

Must have mask

Give your skin some nourishment as the weather turns colder with this ethical option from Evolve Beauty.

The organic, vegan and eco conscious brand has unveiled its new True Balance SOS Treatment Mask, designed to clear and balance blemish-prone/oily skin using quora noni, a microbiome communication hacker, and white willow, a natural form of salicylic acid, both carefully blended into a soothing green clay base.

The clay base is perfect for combination and oily skin types as it works to draw impurities out from the pores, and is also suitable for all skin types, including sensitive skin. The new True Balance SOS Mask can be used in conjunction with other Evolve masks to give the skin what it needs, where it needs it.



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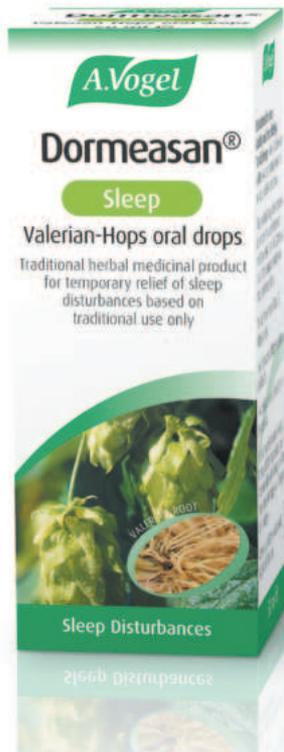
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www.natbrands.co.uk

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THE SCIENCE OF IRON

A crucial mineral for many functions, are you getting enough iron?

If you find you can be lacking in energy frequently, you have noticed your skin looks pale, or you experience dizziness and shortness of breath, these may all point to you lacking iron.

And you wouldn't be alone as iron deficiency anaemia – which, as the name implies, is a lack of this mineral – is hugely common, especially among women.

But the good news is, topping up your iron levels is really straightforward with a little consideration of what you are eating, and choosing the right supplements.

YOUR IRON NEEDS

Iron is a mineral that plays a critical role in helping red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's tissues. Without enough, the body will not make enough of the substance needed in the red blood cells to carry the oxygen. This is known as haemoglobin.

People can be lacking for a range of reasons. For example, women with heavy periods are known to be at greater risk because of monthly periods, as iron can be lost in blood, while those who are pregnant can also become deficient as there is such an increased blood volume. Vegetarians and vegans may also be at greater risk by not eating red meat (which contains high amounts) if they don't ensure they add in alternative foods that also contain iron.

Symptoms of iron deficiency can vary and can be mild to the point that you may not realise you are lacking. The most common signs are fatigue, and when the deficiency is particularly bad, this can be extreme, a fast heartbeat and shortness of breath, brittle nails, and headaches.

If you are concerned, there are many easy iron tests you can do that can confirm if you are lacking. If you are, a supplement is to be recommended.

EATING FOR IRON

There are many foods that are rich in iron and so trying to up your intake of these is really important.

Meat and eggs are rich in iron and so good options for those who eat an animal diet (known as haem iron) but there are many plant-based options too (which is important so that you are watching your intake of red meat), known as non-haem iron. Healthy choices include leafy green veg, pulses, nuts and seeds, and dried fruit, such as raisins and apricots. If you are particularly concerned, you can also find iron-fortified foods, but be sure you check the ingredients list that the food isn't loaded with additives and sugar, as this will be counter productive to overall good health.

Be aware that caffeine can inhibit absorption so try not to drink tea or coffee when consuming iron-rich food.

It should also be noted that vitamin C is needed to help the body absorb iron so ensuring you're getting plenty of this nutrient is also recommended. Ideal foods include citrus fruits, broccoli, leafy greens and tomatoes.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT SUPPLEMENT

There are different forms of iron that can be found in a supplement, and very often, the type that may be prescribed by your GP will be ferrous sulphate – this can lead to the unpleasant side effect of constipation so it's worth checking what form you are taking.

If you want to buy an iron supplement, start with your health food store as they will stock a wide variety – some with added nutrients that can aid in the absorption.

In terms of the form, try to look for those made with ferrous gluconate, as this can be more absorbable.

An iron supplement needs to be taken daily and, as with food, try to avoid drinking caffeine when taking a supplement as this can stop it being absorbed so well.

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Hübner Iron VITAL

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NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



Avalon Organics NEW Vitamin C Renewal Cream

A pioneering new Vitamin C complex means you can expect both double the skin hydration and protection from environmental pollutants with this Avalon Organics Renewal cream. The rich creme emulsion offers all the anti-aging benefits of traditional Vitamin C but this new Triple C Complex by Avalon Organics is also infused with Olive Squalane, Kakadu Plum, Turmeric, Licorice Root and Milk



Thistle - and so loaded with replenishing antioxidants. Consumer testing showed 94% of people experienced dramatically more hydrated and glowing skin after 4 weeks of use. Available from all good health stores and pharmacies nationwide.

Turmeric: the super spice

Spices and herbs have perhaps the highest antioxidant activity of any foods. But turmeric stands out, thanks to its content of curcuminoids – potent pigments which give this super-spice its bright yellow-orange colour. Also known as 'the golden goddess' in India, turmeric has been used for centuries to treat aches and pains due to its powerful anti-inflammatory properties, helping to purify the blood and enhance circulation. Research has shown promising results in turmeric's ability to help manage muscular and joint pain making this the perfect supplement to help beat those annoying niggles.



www.pukkaherbs.com

The Leaf Life Laidback Lemonade

Welcome to The Leaf Life, A CBD infused lightly sparkling range of drinks.

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



www.theleaflife.co.uk

Uplift Naturally

Many people dread the onset of Winter because it heralds the shortening of daylight hours, the drop in temperature, feeling of damp and overall grey hue's. These grey days can be eased by creating a "sunny" ambience in the home or office. Use oils that remind you of summer and the sunshine, like bright citrus oils such as sweet orange, grapefruit and lemon. Simply add to an oil burner or diffuser to create a warm and fragrant atmosphere, these citrus oils are also best-known for their uplifting therapeutic benefits, to give you a much-needed boost this Winter.



www.absolute-aromas.com

Refresh with Rose

Our Rose hydrosol water is the condensed water that remains after the rose essential oil has been extracted from the rose petals by distillation. This water captures the aromatic and nourishing properties that are present in the rose plant, making it a wonderful spritzer for skin, face or hair. Its soothing, nourishing, and cooling properties make this product a must have in any skincare routine, perfect for spritzing over the skin after cleansing to tone and soothe. Especially suited to dry, or mature skin types, although all skin types can benefit from this beautiful Rose hydrosol.



www.absolute-aromas.com

ESSENTIAL AROMATHERAPY

Essential oils offer a wide variety of health and wellbeing benefits and couldn't be easier to incorporate into your daily wellness routine.

Considered one of the gentlest forms of natural therapy, aromatherapy – which involves the use of essential oils – has been used for centuries to support our wellbeing, balancing mind, body and spirit.

The beauty of aromatherapy is there is an essential oil for every kind of need you might have, whether it's easing stress and anxiety, promoting healthy sleep, to pain management and soothing sore joints. It is a safe form of therapy to use for everyone and can be incorporated into your wellbeing routine in a variety of ways.

Here's what you need to know about gaining the most benefits from aromatherapy.

AROMATHERAPY EXPLAINED

It is considered one of the oldest forms of complementary medicine, which utilises blends of essential oils that have been extracted from plants, which includes the flowers, leaves, roots and seeds, among others. Each essential oil has its own profile of wellbeing benefits.

There are various ways to benefit from aromatherapy; there are essential oils and other products you can buy from your health food store to use in the home. Or, if you want to really understand the right oils for you and gain the most from it, you could see a qualified aromatherapist; they can then gain a better insight into your health concerns and make recommendations specific to your needs.

In terms of using it in the home, essential oils can be used in the bath, in diffusers, body oils and creams, and via inhalation, among much more, each with their own safety measures required so it is important you follow manufacturer guidance.

PICK YOUR OILS

There are so many essential oils that can be used as part of your aromatherapy routine, and it may be that you try a few different ones or combinations to work out what suits you best. Here, we highlight a few that we love:

- **Neroli** – with a sweet scent, neroli is useful if you have trouble sleeping.
- **Geranium** – this is a hugely popular oil thanks to its hormone balancing benefits, especially for menopausal symptoms. It is also balancing for the mind.
- **Roman chamomile** – there are a range of benefits from this oil, ranging from supporting those with skin issues to easing urinary issues, such as cystitis.
- **Ylang ylang** – one of the most commonly used oils, ylang ylang has a range of benefits, including for easing stress, balancing the skin, and to calm.
- **Frankincense** – a warming oil, this is ideal for easing tension and is also good for older skin.
- **Bergamot** – with a citrusy aroma, it is uplifting and can be used for calming. It is also known to have benefits with digestion.

TRY THIS

Absolute Aromas
Lemon Myrtle

Primavera Clean Air
Essential Oil Blend

Natural by Nature Oils
Neroli Facial Oil

Tisserand Total
De-Stress Massage
& Body Oil

REVIVE YOUR *energy*

If you're lacking in energy, you're not alone – and so here, *Natural Lifestyle* brings you a holistic guide to boosting your levels.

Life is busy, especially post-pandemic as we get back to a more normal way of life. Combining family life with work and socialising – and everything in between – can mean a healthy diet and lifestyle may fall by the wayside.

But what many don't realise is nutrition and lifestyle choices have a huge effect on your energy levels, particularly if you are experiencing certain nutrient deficiencies.

Alice Bradshaw, Head of Nutrition Education and Information at Terranova Nutrition, explained: "Low energy can make life challenging in many ways. It can make it difficult to be productive at home or work and can impact on mood and mental health."

Lindsay Powers, Nutritionist and Health Coach at Good Health Naturally, added: "There are so many reasons we may suffer from lack of energy, including medical conditions, but our lifestyle is often a significant factor. Poor eating habits, excess caffeine or alcohol intake, dehydration, lack of sleep or prolonged stress are common factors contributing to low energy levels."

And keep in mind it's not just feeling tired – there are longer-term issues that prolonged fatigue is linked to.

Ella Owen, Nutrition Advisor at Kinetic, which has the Nature's Answer and Garden of Life brands, advised: "Anaemia is one condition that your doctor can check for. Anaemia is to do with a fault in the production or formation of healthy red blood cells needed to carry enough oxygen around the body. Oxygen is involved in energy production at a cellular level."

Alex Kirchin, Technical Manager at Nordiq Nutrition, added: "Gut flora and the microbiome may also play a crucial role in energy metabolism, along with immunity. There is a growing field of research suggesting that we need to avoid getting too comfortable and that there is a 'sweet-spot' of transient stress through diet, lifestyle and activity that can help us adapt and thrive within our environment."

And Helen Ford, Head of In-house Nutrition at Glenville Nutrition Clinics, went on: "Low energy may indicate problems with blood sugar and would be worth checking something called HbA1c, which is a picture of blood sugars over the last three months. It is also worth ruling out hypothyroid (underachieve thyroid), which is responsible for every cell in the body. Severe low energy may be chronic fatigue syndrome. It's not entirely clear what causes chronic fatigue syndrome. Possible causes include an infection or problems with your immune system or hormones."

NUTRITION EXPLAINED

Let's look in greater detail at diet, and why it can hit your energy levels.

Susie Debece, Food Scientist and Nutritional Therapist working with Abundance and Health, UK distributors of Altrient supplements, explained: "There are many reasons behind lack of energy, from drinking too much alcohol, to an underlying undiagnosed infection, to heavy metal toxicity or lack of sleep and ongoing stress. But by far the most common reason for feeling like you've lost your va-va voom is poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle."

"Take a look at your diet and see how many slow-release energy foods you eat on a daily basis. It's brown rice, lentils, pulses and wholegrains (oats, quinoa, rye, spelt, brown rice). These foods come with a collection of B vitamins needed to convert carbs into the kind of sustainable energy that can put a bounce into your day, unlike refined carbs in white rice, pasta, cakes, biscuits and pastries, which tend to give a quick rush of energy, followed by an even bigger energy crash. The refining process has stripped these foods of their B vitamins so when you eat these foods, you're burning through your levels of B vitamins."

Alice went on: "The energy that our bodies require to function comes from the foods that we consume, primarily carbohydrates and fats. Certain nutrients, in particular, B vitamins, are involved in the release of energy from these foods. Low iron levels are commonly seen in people who complain of fatigue or low energy levels. Iron is an important component

of red blood cells and aids in the transport of oxygen from the lungs to the cells of the body. Without adequate iron, you're likely to experience fatigue, shortness of breath and poor cognitive function amongst other symptoms. Vitamin C also plays a role in that it enhances the absorption of iron from foods."

In terms of specific nutrients, Helen advised: "Being tired all the time can be a sign of nutritional deficiency. This could include low levels of vitamin D, vitamin B12, iron and magnesium. Low chromium can also exacerbate the blood sugar highs and lows which results in energy dips."

Lindsay highlighted certain minerals: "Magnesium plays a central role in cellular energy production. It activates adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the fundamental energy unit within the body's cells. It also helps regulate the nervous system. We have a high requirement for magnesium, especially during periods of prolonged stress, so if we are already low in this essential mineral, it can compound our feelings of tiredness and fatigue."

"Iodine is a trace element and an essential component for thyroid hormones, critical for healthy cellular and metabolic functioning. A lack of iodine can sap you of energy and result in a low mood."

Ella turned attention to anaemia, advising: "Some types of anaemia are caused by nutritional deficiencies. Anaemia can be caused by a shortfall of iron, vitamin B12 or folate in the diet, or a problem with absorption of these vital nutrients (for example, pernicious anaemia and coeliac disease)."



Eating for energy

So, what changes should you make to your diet if you are low in energy?

Lindsay suggested: "Our bodies need a full range of nutrients to function optimally, so eating a varied diet full of nourishing foods is always important. In particular, good quality proteins such as eggs, lean meat, wild fish, tofu, nuts, seeds, and healthy fats, including olive oil, coconut oil, avocados, and many different coloured vegetables."

"Studies show that starting the day with a nutritious breakfast, such as eggs or overnight oats with nuts and seeds can improve energy, concentration, and alertness. If you need to snack, don't reach for the biscuit tin; instead, opt for hummus and veg sticks or a handful of nuts and seeds."

Susie added: "Avoid pre-packaged processed foods, which have very little nutritional value, and often contain high levels of refined carbohydrates, leading to spikes and slumps in blood sugar. Replace starchy carbohydrates, such as white bread, potatoes, pasta, and sugary snacks, with complex carbohydrates, such as vegetables or wholegrains, which release energy slowly, helping maintain balanced blood sugars. Fresh fruit contains natural sugar alongside fibre to help keep you feeling fuller for longer. But avoid dried fruit as this is packed full of sugar."

And Alex advised: "You can't really go too far wrong with a diverse plant-based diet, either high quality vegan or perhaps with some lean sources of protein, plus high omega 3 sources. The Mediterranean diet certainly delivers favourably and targets the NrF2 pathway, a potent protective mechanism for cellular health and vitality."

Helen explained the importance of protein: "Protein helps to slow the conversion of carbohydrates into sugar, therefore, keeping energy stable."

And ensuring your daily food routine contains certain nutrients is important, Ella advised.

"Vitamin C and members of vitamin B complex (apart from vitamin B12) cannot be stored by the body, so foods containing these should be consumed daily. Some of the richest sources of vitamin C are citrus fruit, kiwi and berries. B vitamins are in a variety of foods, such as leafy greens, organ meats, eggs, legumes, seafood, meat and poultry, dairy products, seeds and wholegrains," she explained. "In addition, alkalising green leafy vegetables and fresh green juices can provide essential nutrients and support acid-alkaline balance."

Try this

- ★ Terranova Nutrition Life Drink
- ★ New Nordic B-Energy Mega Strength
- ★ Motion Nutrition Power Up
- ★ Garden of Life myKind Organics B12 Spray
- ★ Good Health Naturally Nascent Iodine

ADD IN SUPPLEMENTS

Once you have built the foundations with diet, you might want to add in some supplements – speak to your health food store about your specific needs.

Alice suggested: "A multivitamin and mineral can help address micronutrient intake, which supports energy production and deficiencies such as iron should also be corrected. B vitamins are synonymous with energy production as they aid with the release of energy from foods. Vitamin B12, in particular, is involved in metabolism of every cell and is vital for energy production. Deficiency often results in low mood, irritability and fatigue."

Lindsay recommended: "It is estimated that almost half of us may be deficient in iodine, a crucial mineral for healthy thyroid function. A good option is to use nascent iodine, which is absorbed quickly into the cells. Magnesium is another essential mineral to supplement daily. It is estimated that 70 per cent of the population have low levels, which plays a crucial role in cellular energy production."

"Low vitamin D is associated with fatigue. We obtain very little through diet and may not get enough through exposure to sunlight. It is, therefore, advised to supplement, especially during winter. D-ribose is a naturally occurring sugar that is vital for energy production. It is the main building block of adenosine triphosphate, the fundamental unit of energy within the body's cells."

And Alex advised: "Some of my favourite polyphenol-rich botanicals include adaptogens such as rhodiola and chaga, berries (for example, lingonberry), turmeric, green tea, broccoli and mitochondrial nourishing nutrients, R-lipoic acid, Q10, magnesium, ferulic acid, trans resveratrol, methyl forms of B vitamins and vitamin D3."

Susie went on: "There are two key supplements when dealing with low energy, both of which actively reduce tiredness and fatigue and contribute to energy-yielding metabolism – liposomal vitamin C and B complex. Not all supplements are the same in terms of how much and how quickly the nutrients get absorbed. Liposomal supplements are unbeatable for their rapid absorption and delivery into the bloodstream."

Ella highlighted a range of supplements from the plant world.

"Herbal extracts such as ashwagandha, rhodiola and Siberian ginseng (eleuthero) have been traditionally used to support energy levels and fatigue. These botanicals are often described as adaptogens and may help the body adapt to stress," she explained.

"Ashwagandha is traditionally used to strengthen and calm the body and mind. The natural bioactive constituents in rhodiola, such as rosavins and salidroside, are thought to help reduce fatigue and exhaustion. It has been traditionally used in aiding psychological wellbeing, stamina, endurance and mental clarity."

LOOK AT YOUR LIFESTYLE

We mustn't forget that elements of modern life can leave energy flagging.

Helen explained: "Make sure you incorporate regular exercise to boost endorphins and help energise you. Relaxation is also important, alongside exercise; meditation can be great or even some simple breathing techniques."

"Also ensure a good bedtime routine as sleep deprivation is going to exacerbate low energy. Try to go to bed at the same time every night, switch off devices, make sure the bedroom is dark and use magnesium spray to help with relaxation."

Lindsay added: "To lift energy, it is essential to include some rest and play in your daily routine. Find time to relax, take a walk in the woods, get out in the garden, or try stress-reducing exercises, such as yoga, Pilates, tai chi, or even dancing. Deep breathing and meditation can also be helpful to lower cortisol."

NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



Smiling from the inside out

The newest addition to the Bio-Kult range, Bio-Kult Brighten, is an advanced multi-action formulation designed to bring out your inner smile. Bio-Kult Brighten contains the same 14 strains as the original Bio-Kult product but with the added benefit of vitamins B₆ and B₁₂ which contribute to

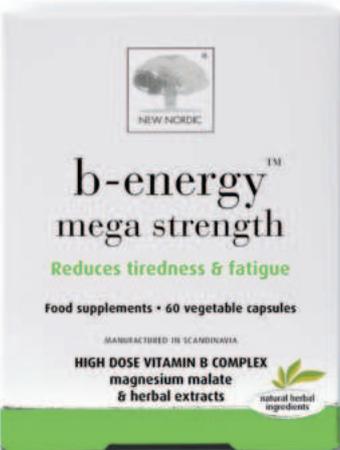


normal psychological function as well as the reduction of tiredness and fatigue. Bio-Kult Brighten also contains vitamin D and zinc which alongside vitamins B₆ and B₁₂, contribute to the normal function of the immune system. Suitable for everyday use as part of a healthy lifestyle.

www.bio-kult.com

NEW mega strength capsules that reduces tiredness and fatigue.

b-energy mega Strength contains vitamins B2, B3, B6, B12, C and magnesium which help to reduce tiredness and fatigue. This vegan, daily supplement supports your body when you need that extra energy. There's a number of reasons why b-energy mega strength can give you a full body boost as it also; Supports your



immune system, contributes to mental function & concentration and strengthens your body during stressful times

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www.bio-health.co.uk

myKind Organics Vitamin B12 Spray

Garden of Life mykind Organics Vitamin B12 is the first certified organic, wholefood, non-GMO project verified B12 spray. Garden of Life's B12 provides an easily absorbed, active natural form of B12 (methylcobalamin), at a dose of 500mcg per spray. Offered in a delicious organic raspberry flavour, Garden of Life sprays are the only certified organic spray vitamins offering a more bioavailable format that reaches the bloodstream quicker, therefore more efficiently absorbed into the bloodstream and utilised by the body. The spray bottle can be easily carried so can be taken quickly and conveniently on the go. For more information visit

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Ask the experts



A PERIOD TO CHANGE...

by Susie Hewson

Why can period products be of concern in terms of their environmental impact?

If they are made, like so many conventional period products, using petrochemical derived synthetics and plastics, and I also include dyes, minerals, and mass balanced super absorbents too, their first damaging environmental impact is in the extraction and production of the raw materials up the supply chain. Often, we only think about the disposal and not so much about the devastating local and global impact of extraction and manufacturing of raw materials.

Some reusable products can have issues with chemical treatments, plastic, and nanomaterials, so ultimate disposal after their useful life can also be damaging. Once a single use product is disposed of, should the materials or product not be certified as compostable, then the waste issue becomes a global burden and potentially contributing to microplastic pollution in the marine environment too.

How should period products be made in terms of their materials so they are kinder to the planet and to us?

It is simple; if gynaecologists and dermatologists tell us they are seeing more people suffering skin complaints due to the irritation from the materials in the products being used, then this informs us

that Natracare has been ploughing the right path these past years in campaigning for full ingredient disclosure on packaging. Choosing products made from simple materials, like organic cotton, natural absorbent fibres, free from plastics, low impact materials that can be composted to become a part of the circular economy, this is how to take care of both our planet and our skin's health too.

If choosing a reusable, washable pad, try to avoid those that contain nano silver, which The Women's Voices for the Earth has concerns over for potential migration into the body, or be cautious of fabric treated with water repellents; these are chemicals of some concern, and so we should be watchful of greenwashing. Remember that even reusables have an end of life, and they are just as likely to end up in landfill at some point.

Can you explain why organic is a good option?

Cotton is a tried and tested material that is known to be gentle on the skin and less aggressive as an absorbent material than viscose, especially in tampons. However, certified organic cotton is more beneficial because it is grown without the use of hazardous pesticides, insecticides or herbicides, which is safer for consumer products and certainly so for the health and wealth of farming communities.

Q How can I make simple changes to my diet and lifestyle to ensure my body can cope with stress?

Joe Welstead suggested: The world is a stressful place. Things are complicated. Work, nutrition, exercise, family, news of the world – it's a lot. When it comes to making lifestyle changes, I have just one recommendation: keep it simple.

Every couple of years, a new meta trend appears in the world of nutrition. Remember the good old days of the paleo diet? Or you might have fond memories of carb-loading the day before a long run? Today, many endurance athletes swear by the (almost) carb-free keto diet.

Here's the crutch. All dietary trends have one commonality: they put you in control. By taking ownership of your meal plan and by setting a simple structure to adhere to, it makes it much easier to stay on track. If the common benefits of a lifestyle change lay in its simplicity, make it something you love. A nutritional and workout plan you know you'll want to stick to because it brings you joy and energy – not stress and restriction.

Write down a simple list of healthy foods you love. I'll start: my favourite sauce in the world is fresh chimichurri, full of bone-strengthening minerals and stress-busting vitamins. I make it weekly.

Next, list two to three supplements that you know make you feel better. Finally, jot down one to two exercises that make you smile. It might be cycling, swimming, or playing ping pong with a friend. Do this twice a week or more. And just like that, you have a simple stress-busting plan that you can stick to effortlessly.

About the experts



SUSIE HEWSON is the founder and owner of organic brand, Natracare. She's an eco-warrior, a pioneer, and developed the world's first brand of organic and natural period products in 1989.



THERESA CUTTS is an independent nutritional consultant working with a wide range of brands in the natural products industry, including the supplement company, AllicinMax.



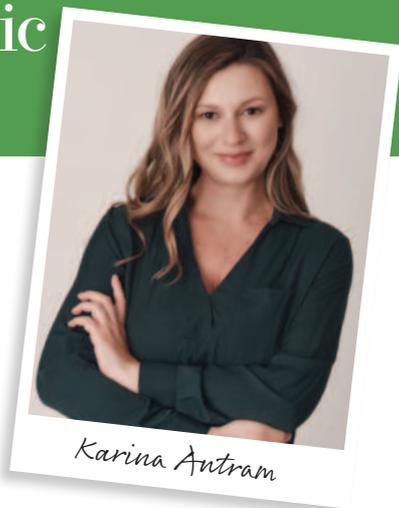
JOE WELSTEAD is a former international swimmer turned performance expert and founder of Motion Nutrition, whose award-winning supplements focus on stress relief, sleep and energy.



CLIFTON FLACK is the CEO and Founder of CITECH, a company specialising in CBD products.

‘Studying at the College of Naturopathic Medicine is life changing’

Karina Antram, CNM Nutritional Therapy Graduate, explains the impact her studies have had on her life.



I was Head of HR for a fast-growing Fintech company, and I decided to change my career path for a number of reasons. I felt unfulfilled and I was stressed, tired and exhausted all the time. I was so burnt out so when lockdown hit, it was a chance to leave my job and pursue my dream of having my own business. I started NOCO Health, a nutrition clinic specialising in energy, stress, digestion and pre/post-natal support.

I've always suffered from gastrointestinal issues, and I was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome in 2014 and Lyme disease in 2018. On some occasions, the gastrointestinal pain was so bad that I ended up in hospital and in 2018, I was sleeping for up to five hours during the day. I was fed up of going to the doctors and being shipped out after five minutes, with a diagnosis I felt was incorrect or given to me too quickly without any testing to find the root cause.

My best friend was also diagnosed with terminal cancer so I signed up to the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) because I never want anyone to have to go through what she has. If I can help educate anyone to reduce the risk of that outcome in some small way, at least something positive will come out of this.

After lots of research, CNM's course appealed to me due to its functional medicine approach, with a real emphasis on treating the root cause and not just the symptoms, which I think is an exciting and game-changing field of nutritional science. The quality of teaching, course content and amount of clinic hours at CNM is excellent. I've also made some wonderful friends, who I wouldn't have ordinarily met, who are kind, inspiring and lovely to be around.

I've never really felt my body operated optimally and whilst I think a large part of this was due to working in stressful industries, I also think it's because I didn't have the knowledge that I now have to really change my health at a cellular level. Everything I've learnt so far has been life changing and I'm now feeling the best I've felt in years.

I run NOCO Health, which has been years in the making. I really enjoy working with clients to fully understand their health issues. I genuinely believe that I can help reduce or eradicate their symptoms by following an evidence-based nutrition and lifestyle protocol. Starting my own business has enabled me to work flexibly and create a better lifestyle, I can already see the benefits to my health and happiness. Three months ago, I had my son, William, and my business has allowed me to be a mother and business owner.

Enrolling onto CNM's Naturopathic Nutrition diploma is the best investment you can make for yourself. It is truly life changing.

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Ask the experts

CHOLESTEROL WATCH...

by Theresa Cutts

What causes people to have high cholesterol and why is it a concern?

High cholesterol levels can be caused by a number of factors, including eating too much saturated fat, having excess body fat, smoking, diabetes and more. A family history of familial hypercholesterolaemia, a genetic condition where you are born with high cholesterol levels, can also be a cause.

Cholesterol is needed by the body and not all cholesterol is bad. It becomes an issue when the types of cholesterol in the body get out of balance. The most well-known forms are low density lipoproteins (LDL) and high density lipoproteins (HDL). In a healthy body, we want more of the HDL and lower levels of the LDL. The LDL form sticks to the walls of the arteries and builds up, narrowing the arteries, making it harder for blood to flow through. This can lead to arterial disease and in severe cases, to a

heart attack or stroke. The HDL collects cholesterol from the blood stream and takes it to the liver, where it can be broken up and excreted.

What role does the diet play and what changes should we make?

Much of our cholesterol is derived from the diet. The good news is that we can have a significant impact on our levels. A Mediterranean style diet with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, wholegrains, nuts and seeds, plus healthy fats such as olive oil and avocado oil, is ideal. Keeping refined foods to a minimum helps keep us healthy and reduces the intake of saturated fats.

Porridge or an oat-based breakfast is a good choice too. Oats contain soluble and insoluble fibres. The beta glucan present helps maintain healthy cholesterol levels.

Regular exercise and managing a healthy weight also makes a difference, not just for healthy cholesterol levels, but also for our general health.

What are plant sterols and stanols, and what role do they play?

Plant sterols are compounds that have a structure very similar to the cholesterol made in the body. Beta-sitosterol, campesterol and stigmasterol are found in a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds.

Supplements can also be used, and they contribute to the maintenance of normal blood cholesterol levels. One study combined plant sterols with allicin from garlic. Volunteers with elevated cholesterol in an open diet study took the supplement for 42 days, were tested again, and all showed a significant reduction in total cholesterol levels.



How can CBD help me stay more relaxed?

Clifton Flack advised: Living in today's world could be really unnerving. The constant stream of information, sounds, and running around can get really stressful and cause a feeling of unease and worry. This can lead to irritability, and inability to get a good night's sleep, which can seriously harm your activities and affect your behaviour.

Many people have started talking about CBD and how it can help maintain daily balance. One

of the ways it does this is by helping to ease that feeling of worry and enjoy positive sleep patterns. Many people hear that CBD can be good for the quality of sleep and think of it as something that makes you drowsy as it is related to cannabis. This is far from reality.

CBD is a cannabinoid compound and is a significant component of the *Cannabis sativa* species. CBD in the UK is extracted from the hemp plant (*Cannabis Sativa L.*) which contains very little in the way of psychoactive cannabinoids, like the well-known THC. That is

where marijuana and hemp plants differ. Hemp is naturally low in THC and has an abundance of CBD. Marijuana might very well make you drowsy but CBD won't.

Our bodies naturally produce cannabinoids that interact with our endocannabinoid system. It's a natural process. Using CBD boosts our natural cannabinoids and supports the efforts and can help keep you in the moment and in tune with your surroundings. All of this naturally promotes calmness, balance, and good quality of sleep.

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Your friendly BACTERIA

Bacteria isn't the most appealing of terms, but when it comes to your gut, focusing on the good kind can ensure you remain in good health.

We can sometimes underestimate the pressure we place on our guts, whether through a diet lacking in adequate nutrition, poor lifestyle, not to mention excess stress, and much more. All of these can mean our microbiome – that delicate system in our gut – is lacking in friendly bacteria. In simple terms, when this happens, it may mean your gut has too much bad bacteria, which can dominate and then produce a range of symptoms – which is where probiotics come in, as they support a healthy gut microbiome. But knowing what you need, and why they are so important, can be confusing, and so here, we offer you expert advice on choosing the right probiotic.

AN EXPLANATION OF PROBIOTICS

In terms of what probiotics are, Alice Bradshaw, Head of Nutrition Education and Information at Terranova Nutrition, explained: "Probiotics (also referred to as microflora or beneficial bacteria) are live micro-organisms that help to restore and repopulate the gut with the beneficial bacteria that are naturally found there."

"The diverse role of probiotics within the human body are still being discovered. Initially, research focused on the benefits to the GI tract and digestive health, however, it is now widely accepted that the balance of microorganisms within the gut microbiome is a determinant for the health of the entire body. Although the majority of people could benefit from probiotic supplementation, those with health conditions including GI issues, skin problems, inflammatory ailments and compromised mental function may be among those who could benefit greatly."

Dr Marilyn Glennville PhD, author of *Natural Solutions to IBS*, continued: "Many factors can affect the balance of these beneficial bacteria, including antibiotics, the Pill, HRT, too much sugar, lack of fibre and also stress."

Rupinder Dhanjal, Nutrition Advisor at Viridian Nutrition, added: "It is important to consider different probiotic strains have their own unique properties and health effects. Clinical effects of a number of probiotics have been studied in the following areas: antibiotic associated diarrhoea, gastroenteritis, diarrhoea, constipation, lactose intolerance, intestinal infections, traveller's diarrhoea, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, prevention of urinary tract infections, allergic disease (especially atopic eczema) and cholesterol lowering."

Ella Owen, Nutrition Advisor at Kinetik, which has the Nature's Answer and Garden of Life brands, went on: "The human microbiome is an ecosystem composed of trillions of live microorganisms living in our bodies, the majority of which are situated within our large intestines (colon). Taking care of your friendly gut bacteria can lead to a host of health benefits. Probiotics may help to maintain a healthy balanced digestive system. An imbalance in the gut microbiome (gut flora) can sometimes lead to symptoms such as bloating, gas, discomfort, constipation, loose stools and other symptoms which could be labelled as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)."

"Probiotics also have a major influence outside of the gut. Research studies demonstrate how negative changes within our gut flora can lead to greater permeability within the gut lining. This is also called leaky gut. Leaky gut may contribute to various health issues, such as skin conditions, immune related issues, food allergies and sensitivities. Probiotics supplements may help to strengthen the gut lining and reduce the knock-on effect of a leaky gut. It is thought that the richer and more diverse your gut microbiome, the lower your risk of certain health issues."

THE ROLE OF THE GUT

Our gut is not only responsible for our digestion but plays a much wider role in a range of other health areas.

Rupinder explained: "The gut microbiome is made up of trillions of microorganisms and their genetic material that resides in the intestinal tract. The gut microbiome of each individual is unique, and it can heavily contribute to how a person fights off a disease, digests food and supports psychological processes."

And Ella Owen added: "It is important to remember that 60-70 per cent of your immune system is in your gut. Having a low immune system could be an indication that your gut microbiome needs attention."

"A modern diet high in sugar, refined carbohydrates and alcohol can upset the natural balance of the microbiome by feeding unfriendly bacteria and yeasts within the gut. Stress can also have a detrimental effect on the intestinal flora. This suggests that many of us may benefit from giving our gut microbiome a helping hand. Those who have taken antibiotics recently or frequently in the past may be in greater need of probiotics. This is because antibiotics tend to kill off the good bacteria strains, as well as bad, pathogenic ones."

TOPPING UP

Certain foods contain healthy bacteria so it's always beneficial to incorporate those into your daily diet.

Alice advised: "Probiotics can be found in fermented foods such as kimchi, yogurt, kombucha and sauerkraut. Additionally, resistant starches (as found in cooked and cooled rice and potatoes and underripe bananas) can encourage the growth of beneficial bacteria within the gut. Prebiotics are fibre compounds found in foods like garlic, onion and cruciferous vegetables. These also encourage the growth of probiotic species within the gut. These foods can be easily incorporated into the diets of healthy individuals to support gut health."



DO YOU NEED A SUPPLEMENT?

The answer to this in most cases is we could all benefit from a probiotic supplement. The specifics of what you need depends on your health concerns.

"Research suggests that supplementing with beneficial microflora might be an effective way to address gut imbalances. Beneficial microflora have also been shown to support healthy immune function so those who specifically need immune support may benefit from supplementation," Alice explained.

Ella Allred, Senior Nutritionist at Quest Vitamins, advised: "Naturally, the body is full of probiotics. Our first exposure to probiotics is during natural birth and breastfeeding. When these do not happen, we may end up with a compromised probiotic level in the gut. Other factors that may interfere with our gut bacteria include antibiotics, stress, non-organic food, low fibre diets, excess sugar, tap water and the use of antimicrobial hand washes, sanitisers and toothpastes.

"As no one is exempt from all of these, the majority of the population at some point in their life have had a compromised probiotic level. The majority of the population benefits from taking regular probiotic supplements to help counteract negative influences."

And Dr Glenville added: "Those with digestive issues will often benefit from a probiotic. These can include problems such as flatulence and bloating and there might also be constipation or diarrhoea. I would also recommend supplementing for those with poor immune function, those who are taking or just taken a course of antibiotics or about to travel abroad. If someone is looking to generally support their health, they can take a probiotic on a regular basis."

Rupinder went on: "Certain people may be in greater need of a probiotic if the natural balance of the bacteria in the gut has been disrupted by an illness or treatment, such as antibiotics."

And what should people look for when selecting a probiotic supplement?

"I would suggest not choosing probiotic drinks as they can contain sugar, other sweeteners or a preservative. Also choose those that do not contain maltodextrin but also contains a prebiotic, which means that the beneficial bacteria use it as a 'food' to support their growth," Dr Glenville suggested.

"I would suggest avoiding probiotics containing maltodextrin as it is a very easily digested form of carbohydrate and is digested as rapidly as glucose. Maltodextrin has been shown to suppress intestinal anti-microbial defence mechanisms and may be a factor in developing chronic inflammatory disease."

Alice went on: "Probiotic supplements need to be able to reach the intestines in order to be effective, however, they must be able to survive in the presence of gastric acid and bile that are found in the upper gastrointestinal tract. Although studies do show that many strains of probiotics do not survive these conditions, there are well-researched strains that have demonstrated effective acid and bile tolerance."

Strain specific

Rupinder highlighted how to choose the right strains.

"*Saccharomyces boulardii* has demonstrated the ability to resist all antibacterial antibiotics and to treat and prevent antibiotic-associated diarrhoea. It is important to avoid taking antibiotics and probiotics at the same time during the day, as we do not want the antibiotics to kill off all of the good bacteria from the probiotic," she advised.

"*Saccharomyces Boulardii* has demonstrated anti-bacterial, anti-candida and anti-parasitic activity. This strain of bacteria works through several mechanisms to protect and fight against pathogenic organisms, including *Clostridium difficile*, *Vibrio cholerae*, *Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella enterica*, *Shigella flexneri*, *Citrobacter rodentium* and *Candida albicans*.

"Research has shown *Lactobacillus acidophilus* DDS-1 to improve abdominal related symptoms, including diarrhoea, abdominal cramping, vomiting, flatulence and overall symptoms in individuals with lactose intolerance.

"*Lactobacillus Rhamnosus* GG has been linked

with reducing symptoms of irritated skin, food sensitivities, and child growth and development. A large number of infant atopic dermatitis is associated with an allergic reaction to a food hypersensitivity."

Ella Allred added: "*Lactobacillus* strains are a good place to start. They are typically hardy and survive well in supplement form. *Lactobacillus* bacteria are also a dominant form in the gut, so it makes sense to use a probiotic that is usually found in the gut. Of the *Lactobacillus* strains, some are hugely beneficial. *Lactobacillus acidophilus* is one of the most researched strains. With a wealth of supporting research behind it, *acidophilus* is a good strain to start with."

Dr Glenville continued: "The species that I think are the most useful are those that have good evidence behind them, including *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Bifidobacterium breve*, *Bifidobacterium longum* and *Bifidobacterium infantis*. For immune health, these species are helpful; *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*, *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium longum*.

"Other probiotics that have good evidence for vaginal yeast infections in women include

Lactobacillus rhamnosus, *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Lactobacillus reuteri*."

And Ella Owen continued: "*Lactobacillus reuteri* and *Lactobacillus fermentum* have been clinically shown to support women's gut flora, immune system, and overall microbiome. Research suggests these probiotics protect the urogenital tract by excreting biosurfactants to inhibit the adhesion of vaginal and urinary pathogens. It is thought that these strains provide an adequate healthy environment and help prevent reoccurrence of infections such as cystitis.

"*Lactobacillus helveticus* R0052 and *Bifidobacterium longum* R0175 are two clinically studied strains shown to support stress management and mood by helping to reduce cortisol levels in the body."

Try this

- ★ Natural Health Practice Advanced Probiotic Support
- ★ Bio-Kult Brighten
- ★ ProVen Fit for School
- ★ Terranova Nutrition Microflora Complex
- ★ Good Health Naturally PrescriptBiotics

NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



What's your gut feeling?

Bio-Kult is a range of advanced multi-action live bacteria formulations, including Bio-Kult Advanced, the original 14 strain product, targeting the digestive tract, Bio-Kult Candéa targeting the gut and intimate flora, Bio-Kult Pro-Cyan, targeting the urinary tract, Bio-Kult Migréa targeting the head, Bio-Kult Mind targeting cognitive function, Bio-Kult Boosted and Bio-Kult S. Boulardii both targeting the digestive and immune systems and Bio-Kult Pregnéa to support women through pregnancy. And now the latest addition to the range, Bio-Kult Brighten targeting your inner smile. The Bio-Kult range is suitable for vegetarians and does not need to be refrigerated.

www.bio-kult.com

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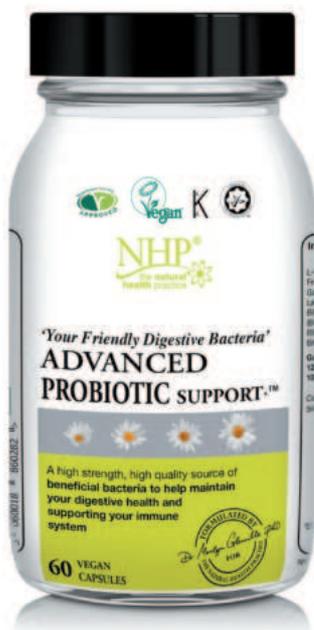
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Green Child Microflora

The microflora strains used in Terranova Green Child Friendly Microflora are developed through Rosell and CHR Hansen technology - utilising the world's most heavily researched strains of bacteria. These have a high level of acid-resistance, are stable in ambient temperatures and have demonstrated the ability in supporting child immune function and digestion. The formula is also rich in bifidogenic/ microbiota-enhancing factors provided by a synergistic Magnifood Complex of wholefood ingredients including beetroot, spinach, kale and soluble rice bran a source of beneficial fibre.

www.terranovahealth.com



Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple cider vinegar is often considered a good friend of the stomach. If you don't like to drink it, there are other ways you can get apple cider vinegar as part of your daily routine. Try our Vegan-friendly tablets or gummies and enjoy the health benefits of Apple Cider vinegar without the aftertaste.

www.newnordic.co.uk



Colomint

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

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





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GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S NUTRITION

With the youngsters now back at school and winter bugs doing the rounds, now is the time to focus on their health – and specifically, their guts.

The relationship between the gut microbiome and the development of the immune system is well recognised, with around 80 per cent of the immune cells residing in our digestive tract and the bacteria in our microbiome forming a key part of our protective gut lining.

There have been many studies demonstrating the antiviral activity of probiotics against common respiratory viruses, including upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs). Children are particularly susceptible to URTIs due to the immaturity of their immune systems and research has shown that it is the most common cause of illness among them. Contact with groups of friends in the classroom can provide the perfect environment for unwanted bugs and illnesses to thrive, particularly in the winter months, when the windows are closed and there's less chance to spend time outdoors.

Supporting the immune system to help prevent viruses is the most effective way of avoiding coughs and colds.

A HEALTHY DIET

A healthy diet and lifestyle are key factors in supporting immunity and taking a preventative approach to childhood illness such as coughs, colds and stomach bugs.

Here are five key elements to making healthy diet choices for children:

- **Eat a wide variety of foods:** We all have favourite foods and it can be easy to fall into routines of eating similar foods each day. Low variety in the diet is associated with inadequate nutrient intake and working to increase the range of different foods consumed each week can help to ensure children are getting a wide range of nutrients to support all areas of health.
- **Choose a rainbow of vegetables and fruit:** Including a wide variety of vegetables and fruit in the family's diet as frequently as possible will encourage children to eat more of these foods and support their intake of vitamins and minerals, fibre and phytonutrients, all of which are required to support their development, but also to help reduce susceptibility to illness.
- **Fill up on fish, meat and other forms of protein:** Protein is required for growth and forms the basis of bones, muscles and all body tissue, as well as hormones and hundreds of other molecules and messengers used by the body. Each meal should be accompanied by one portion, which can be identified using the individual child's hand size to gauge the correct amount.
- **Try different herbs and spices:** The inclusion of herbs and spices from an early age can help to expand a child's openness to a variety of flavours and foods, whilst at the same time supporting immunity. Particular herbs to consider include turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, oregano, basil and garlic.
- **Stay hydrated:** Being dehydrated has many health consequences as our bodies are around 70 per cent water and we lose it constantly through sweat, urine, faeces and breath. The recommended amount of water for each of us is six to eight glasses a day and the British Nutrition Foundation recommends that young children should drink the same amount in smaller portions (120-150ml per glass), whilst older children should have 250-300ml per serving.

THE GUT AND IMMUNITY

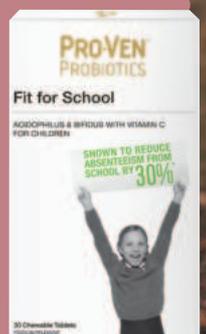
There is accumulating evidence that friendly bacteria are effective in reducing the incidence and duration of coughs and colds in adults and children.

These findings provide real substance to the claim that probiotics are more effective than other nutrients, such as vitamins C and D and zinc, which are commonly recommended for reducing risk and duration of URTIs and strengthening the immune system in general.

In two studies carried out by ProVen, the first in 2014 and the second completed in 2019, a probiotic was taken daily for six months by half of the children, whilst the other half took a dummy tablet (placebo). As well as the above findings, the children taking the probiotic also needed less medication, such as cough syrup and nasal sprays, during the studies compared with those taking the placebo.

Reader offer

Natural Lifestyle is offering readers the chance of winning one of three three-month supplies of ProVen's Fit for School chewable tablets, specially formulated for children aged four-16. Each tablet contains 12.5bn of the unique Lab4 *acidophilus* and *bifidus* friendly bacteria, combined with vitamin C to provide support for a child's immune function. Turn to 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.



RICOLA SOOTHE AND CLEAR RANGE

Ricola swears by the nurturing effect of Swiss herbs, which are all cultivated and harvested carefully in the beautiful Swiss Alps. Once the herbs are dried, Ricola blends them into its secret 13 herb mixture and turns them into soothing cough drops. It

additionally adds ingredients, such as natural menthol, lemon juice, echinacea and fair trade honey to give your throat the extra care it needs. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of five packs of its Soothe and Clear range, made up of three flavours, in addition to two 45g boxes.



NEOCELL

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with Neocell to offer readers the chance of winning one of five pots of this leading collagen powder. The collagen peptides are clinically tested for results and ethically sourced to be pure, safe, non-GMO, and gluten-free. Inside of you is your own personal fountain of youth. We know what it takes to illuminate your beauty from the inside out and Neocell has the science to back it up.



PRIME FIFTY SUPERFRUITS+

If you're looking for a convenient way to support your all-round health and wellbeing, Super Fruits+ is a brilliant addition to your routine. Containing 22 vitamins and minerals (over double that of the leading effervescent), simply dissolve one tablet in water to create a delicious berry flavoured multi-nutrient drink. With B vitamins for energy, vitamin D for bone health and immunity-supporting vitamins to support all-round health, it is made with extracts of elderberry, cranberry, blueberry, ginger and rosehip. *Natural Lifestyle* is offering readers the chance of winning one of five packs, each worth over £20.



GOOD HEALTH NATURALLY VITAMIN D3 AND K2 SUBLINGUAL SPRAY

Natural Lifestyle is offering readers the chance of winning one of five of Good Health Naturally's award-winning Vitamin D3 and K2 Sublingual Spray. As an all-in-one vegan friendly spray, it provides the most active forms of vitamin D3 and K2 for enhanced bioavailability. Its unique 'no taste' formula means it can be sprayed onto food – ideal for those reluctant to take vitamins. The dosage can be altered to suit individual requirements, with five sprays providing a full serving of 1000IU vitamin D3.

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: November 1, 2021. Or you can enter online – visit www.mynaturallifestyle.com

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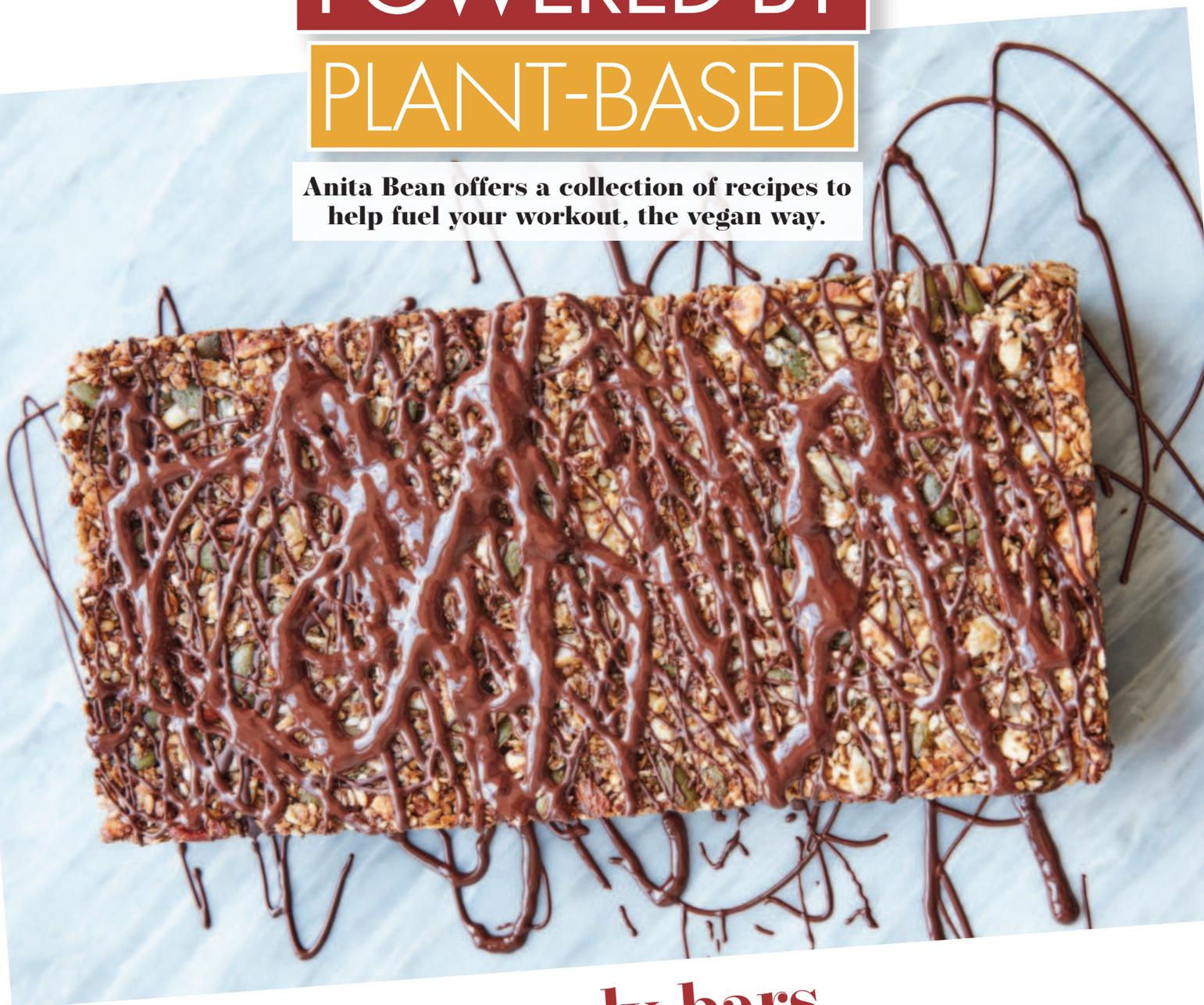
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POWERED BY

PLANT-BASED

Anita Bean offers a collection of recipes to help fuel your workout, the vegan way.



Super-seedy bars Makes 8

I wanted to create a snack bar that delivered maximum possible nutrition, plus fantastic taste and here is the result: super-seedy, crunchy, nutty, heavenly bars that are high in fibre, omega 3 fats, protein, B vitamins, vitamin E, magnesium, iron and zinc. Nuts and seeds are real powerhouses of nutrients and therefore form the basis of these bars. They team beautifully with dark chocolate, which packs a hefty polyphenol punch. Perfect after exercise or anytime you want a nutritious treat.

Ingredients:

- 125g mixed seeds (or any combination of sunflower, pumpkin, sesame and flaxseeds)
- 100g mixed nuts (or any combination of almonds, cashews, Brazil nuts and pecans), roughly chopped
- 25g ground flaxseed
- 25g rolled oats
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 75ml golden, agave or maple syrup
- 50g dark chocolate (at least 70 per cent cocoa)

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/fan 160°C/gas mark 4. Meanwhile, line a 900g loaf tin (18cm x 6cm) with baking paper.
- Place the seeds, nuts, flaxseed and oats in a large mixing bowl. Add the vanilla extract, cinnamon and syrup; mix together. Spoon into the prepared tin. Press down firmly, making sure there are no gaps, and bake for about 30 minutes until lightly golden but not brown around the edges. Take out of the oven and press down again using a large spoon. Allow to cool completely.
- Break the chocolate into small pieces, place in a

microwavable bowl and heat on full power for two to three minutes, stirring at 30-second intervals until almost molten. Stir and leave for a few moments until completely melted.

Alternatively, place the chocolate pieces in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of gently simmering water, and heat until the chocolate starts to melt, then stir until completely melted. Drizzle over the cooled nut mixture.

- Pop the tin in the freezer for the chocolate to set, otherwise you can just leave to cool in the kitchen. Once cooled, cut into eight bars. They will keep in an airtight container for up to seven days.



Black bean burgers with guacamole Make 4 large or 8 small burgers

'So, what do you eat at a barbecue then?' is a question I get asked at every barbecue party. In reply, I point them to this scrumptious recipe, which is guaranteed to satisfy the most sceptical non-vegan. Made with black beans and walnuts, these easy burgers are full of amazing flavour and a brilliant source of plant protein, fibre, folate, magnesium and iron. Serve on a bun with all the trimmings or with grilled slices of courgettes and aubergines, and toasted flatbread.

Ingredients:

- 50g wholegrain bread
- 75g walnuts
- 2tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 large shallots or ½ red onion, finely chopped
- 1 small aubergine, cut into 1cm dice
- 1 small carrot, grated
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 400g can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1tsp smoked paprika
- 1tsp ground cumin
- ½tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼tsp cayenne, or to taste
- 1tbsp lemon juice
- 3tbsp finely chopped coriander
- Seeded wholemeal buns
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the guacamole:

- 1 large ripe avocado
- 1tbsp lemon or lime juice
- ¼ red onion, finely chopped
- ½ garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tomato, skinned* and chopped
- 1tbsp fresh coriander, finely chopped

Method:

- To make the burgers, tear the bread into large pieces, add to the bowl of a food processor and process until you have breadcrumbs. Transfer to a mixing bowl and set aside. Add the walnuts to the food processor, pulse until crumbly (but not too fine), then tip into the mixing bowl with the breadcrumbs.
- Heat one tablespoon of the oil in a large frying pan over a high heat and fry

the shallots or red onion, aubergine and grated carrot for five minutes, stirring frequently. Add the garlic and continue cooking for one further minute.

- Tip the mixture into the bowl of the food processor with the beans, spices, lemon juice, salt and freshly ground black pepper; process for about 30 seconds or until you have a coarse purée. It should not be totally smooth – you still want some whole beans in there for texture. Transfer to the bowl with the breadcrumbs and walnuts and mix in the coriander.
- Use a large spoon to scoop out four or eight patties and flatten them into round shapes. Transfer to a large plate and place in the fridge for 30 minutes to firm up.
- Brush the patties with the remaining one tablespoon of oil and grill on a barbecue or fry in a large, non-stick frying

pan over a medium heat for five minutes on each side until golden. Alternatively, bake in a preheated oven at 190°C/fan 170°C/gas mark 5 for 25 minutes.

- For the guacamole, halve the avocado, remove the stone and scoop out the flesh into a bowl. Mash with the lemon or lime juice. Stir through the onion, garlic, tomato, coriander and seasoning.

• Serve the burgers on wholemeal seeded buns with a spoonful of guacamole and tomatoes, red onion, lettuce and pickles, if you like.

* To skin the tomato, make a cross in the skin at the base, plunge into a bowl of just boiled water for 30-60 seconds. Remove the tomato from the water and peel with a sharp knife. The skin should come away easily.



Oven-roasted ratatouille with flageolet beans

Serves 4

This is my go-to midweek dish when courgettes are plentiful and in season. It could not be easier to make – you simply add all the ingredients to a roasting tin and let the oven do the work. It is packed with beta-carotene, vitamin C, folate and fibre. I have used flageolet beans (small, immature kidney beans, widely available from supermarkets) in this dish to boost the protein content, but you can easily substitute with chickpeas or any other type of canned beans. You can also substitute fresh tomatoes for canned when in season and add a pinch of dried chilli flakes if you like heat.

Ingredients:

- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and sliced
- 2 large courgettes, thinly sliced
- 1 large aubergine, sliced into half-moons
- 2 x 400g cans flageolet beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes

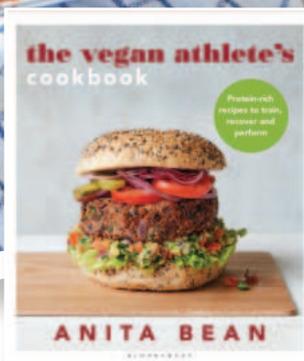
- A handful of basil leaves, torn
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- To serve, focaccia bread or couscous

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6.
- Place the onion, peppers, courgettes, aubergine, flageolet beans and garlic in a large roasting tin. Season generously with

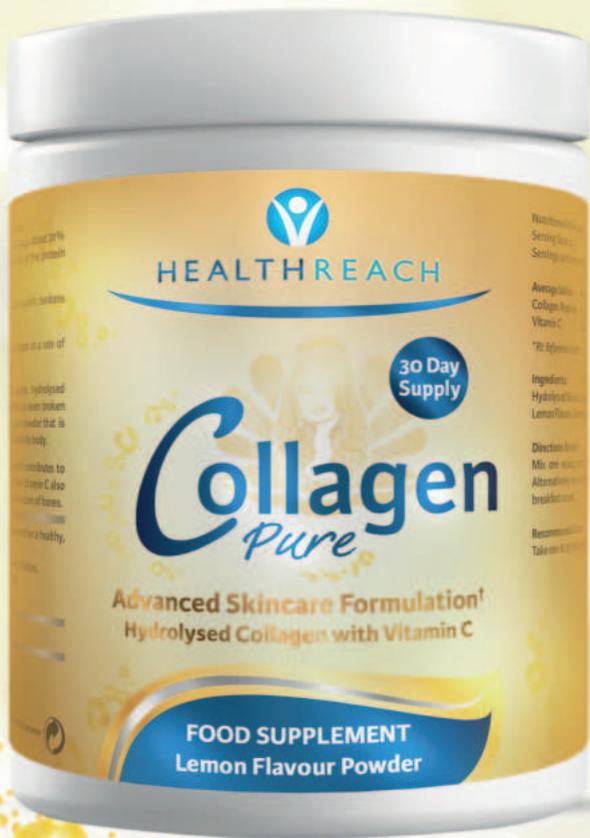
salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the olive oil and balsamic vinegar and toss so that the vegetables are well-coated in the oil. Tip in the tomatoes and spread out evenly to cover the vegetables.

- Transfer to the oven and roast for about 30 minutes. Stir and return to the oven for a further 30 minutes.
- Scatter over the basil leaves, serve hot or cold with wedges of focaccia bread or couscous.



Recipes extracted from *The Vegan Athlete's Cookbook* by Anita Bean (Bloomsbury, £16.99), available to buy now. Photography: Claire Winfield.

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