

# Natural Lifestyle

LOVE LIFE, LIVE WELL — NATURALLY

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October 2022

The UK's  
**best**  
**FREE**  
HEALTH  
MAGAZINE

## Essential digestion

Holistic advice for  
a healthy gut and  
a healthy you

## The lowdown on vitamin D

Why we all need to  
supplement with this vital  
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October 2022

# Welcome



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It's been a hugely transitional time in the UK these past few weeks. From the start of the team compiling this issue of *Natural Lifestyle* to today, we have had the sad news of the passing of Her Majesty The Queen, the longest reigning Monarch and for most people, the only Monarch we have ever known.

It has undoubtedly been a time of huge sadness for many, with feelings of loss and grief. And whatever your feelings on the Monarchy, it is natural to be finding this a strange time, one that has been unsettling for many as we move into a new era. And it is important if you are finding this time difficult and unsettling that you allow yourself the time to talk and to reflect and above all, to be kind to yourself if you are feeling a range of different emotions.

In this issue of *Natural Lifestyle*, we focus on one of the most commonly seen health issues of our modern age, and that relates to poor digestion. For a range of reasons, including excess stress, poor diet, and much more, we can all experience problems with our gut function, but we must keep in mind that this has a huge knock-on effect to other areas of our health, including in lowering our immunity. Turn to page 14 for all the advice you need on managing your digestion and the essential supplements to support you.

Also in this issue, we bring the spotlight on the importance of vitamin D, which is critical to take as a supplement at this time of year, and we also bring you a guide to the use of collagen. You can get in the kitchen with our gluten-free baking ideas, and also bag yourself some free natural health goodies through our giveaways, which can be found on page 27.

We wish you all a healthy October and look forward to bringing you more tips and advice on maintaining your health as we move into the colder months.

Rachel Symonds,  
Editor



## THE BEST BITS

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



Editor Rachel and her dog, Gus, took in the stunning sights of the Malvern Hills for a weekend of walking and fresh air.



It was another cycling trip for Sales Exec, James, this time riding the Tour of the Cornfields, in Cambridgeshire.



It was lovely to pay a visit to the fantastic Oliver's Wholefoods, in Kew, London, and see *Natural Lifestyle* available for customers.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[www.mynaturallifestyle.com](http://www.mynaturallifestyle.com)

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2022

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## NEARLY HALF OF PARENTS CONCERNED ABOUT CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

New research has revealed that 43 per cent of parents are more concerned about their children's mental health now, due to the physical and emotional impact of the global pandemic.

Findings from Nuffield Health's 2022 Healthier Nation Index revealed that, like financial stress, concern over our families' physical and mental wellbeing can lead to lack of sleep, reduced focus, stress, and low mood. All these symptoms are likely to impact on wellbeing and productivity, both in people's personal and professional lives. What's more, parents dealing with these kinds of issues are more likely to take absence days from work at short notice to support their family.

And so, Gosia Bowling, National Lead for Mental Health at Nuffield Health, advised that finding ways for businesses to build family resilience and connectedness, as well as healthy coping strategies, is critical.

Online platforms, which provide digital, on-demand health and wellbeing advice for young people and their caregivers, can be a useful employee benefit to consider. These provide education and tools to help families understand and manage during difficult times. Content is often based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), an effective and evidence-based way, to reduce anxiety symptoms.

Nuffield believes that if your organisation doesn't have access to qualified mental health support, it should be prepared to deliver a list of specialist charities for support instead. It also points out that being a parent can be really lonely at work, so businesses should encourage social interaction and connections between parents as much as possible.



# Inside... HEALTH



## Protecting nature's key workers

The keyworkers of nature have held a miniature protest at an organic farm.

Armed with miniature placards, they gathered at Bays Leap organic farm in Newcastle, calling on new Prime Minister, Liz Truss, to take action to save nature in her first 100 days in Government.

Meanwhile, a change.org petition launched for the Organic September campaign by the Organic Trade Board on behalf of insects is gaining momentum, with over 500 signatures, giving wildlife such as earthworms, ladybirds and bees a voice for the first time.

The UK's organic industry is requesting the new PM commits to protecting wildlife in any policies – and represents the UK at the crucially important UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in December.

Farmer, Chris McDonald, manages Bays Leap dairy farm, where the protest took place, which has been fully certified organic since 2018. Chris explained that his cows graze in the paddocks on forages such as herbal lays. Each year, he works with a local beekeeper to deploy bees onto the fields to help pollinate the flowers, including red and white clover, lucerne and natural varieties.

He explained: "The human race is here because of nature, let's work with it. We've tried fighting it before and it doesn't like it. If we want harmony, we need to give nature a chance. My forages work in harmony with the pollinators – they're crucial in the balance of keeping my farm successful."

The theme for this year's Organic September was 'Nature would choose organic.' This reflects that if wildlife such as bees, earthworms and ladybirds had a voice, they would want more farming to be organic, reducing their exposure to chemical fertilisers and pesticides, helping to keep the delicate ecosystem in balance.

For more information, visit [www.GoOrganicUK.com](http://www.GoOrganicUK.com) and to sign the petition, head to [www.change.org/NatureProtest](http://www.change.org/NatureProtest)

## UNLOCK YOUR UNCONSCIOUS

Learn to interpret your dreams with a new guided journal.

*The Dream Journal, Track Your Dreams and Work Out What They Mean* has been penned by Anna Barnes to help you record your dreams and reveal their hidden meanings.

Throughout human civilization, dreams have always been regarded as a mystery. We have them every night, and yet they are full of the strangest, most vivid imagery. Many people think that by learning to interpret the symbols that we see in our

dreams, we can apply the information they reveal to our daily lives and help us understand ourselves better.

To help you on this journey to understanding your dreams and their meanings, *The Dream Journal* is packed with helpful information, tips and advice so that you can improve your dream recall, identify common dream symbols and concepts, and explore themes and imagery in your dreams. It also provides plenty of space to chronicle your visions and includes a range of quotes from some of the biggest dream experts and philosophers to help you reflect on your visions and interpret them with greater confidence.



## We love♥

### LAMBERTS NEURO-LOGICAL

Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA) is a fascinating nutraceutical ingredient that is produced by the body as a direct response and repair mechanism to inflammation and pain. Given the solid and growing research base to clarify the value and safety of PEA, Lamberts has developed Neuro-Logical, providing the highest quality PEA (OptiPEA), enhanced with vitamins B1, B6 and B12. The capsules are made, tested, and packed in the UK to ensure consistent high quality, and are suitable for vegans.

### JUST T BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE

A gentle black tea, perfect for the wintry months, cinnamon and hints of vanilla and apple combine with spicy black tea. Baby it's Cold Outside is UTZ certified, 100 per cent certified organic, biodegradable and in FSC certified packaging, as well as being 100 per cent plastic-free.



# Support your body's *defence*

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- Free from gluten and lactose.
- Suitable for vegetarians & vegans.



## Plant-based purity

Soothe congestion and balance the skin with this new purifying serum from Green People.

Charlotte Vøhtz, the founder of the organic brand, has expanded her signature skin care collection with the creation of Age Defy+ Purifying Balancing Oil Serum, designed to combat skin congestion in adult skin.

Using stem cells from ginger leaf extract, it is ideal for adult acne-prone skin and blends cutting-edge age confidence botanicals with sebum-balancing phytoactives.

Ideal for adult skin affected by blocked pores and frequent breakouts, this complexion-calming organic oil serum can be applied directly to blemishes or combined with day creams and moisturisers and used to balance the skin's sebum production.

The ginger leaf plant cell extracts used to make this 99 per cent certified organic oil serum balance the skin's sebum production to help decongest clogged pores and restore skin clarity and confidence to women experiencing blemishes in their 30s, 40s and post-menopause. It also features nourishing black cumin seed oil and balancing jojoba oil, along with anti-inflammatory petitgrain twig oil.



## Inside... BEAUTY

### Scentered and soothed

Ease your mind and soothe your senses with this new set from Scentered.

The Mindful Escape Meditation set is the ultimate remedy for escaping a busy mind, created by the aromatherapy lifestyle brand known for its 100 per cent natural and sustainable products.

The set includes a 100 per cent natural Escape Aromatherapy Balm, 12 pure Beeswax Meditation Candles with 20-minute burn time and an Engraved Brass Holder to remind you to stop, inhale and reset.

The Mindful Escape Meditation set has been designed to create 20 minutes of mindfulness. The idea is you light one of the candles in the mini brass holder, apply the Escape balm – with notes of oud, frankincense and sandalwood – to pulse points and temples, then let it do its job.

### MAKE THE ETHICAL SWITCH

We want to know the people who grow and produce ingredients in our skincare are paid and treated fairly, and the people at the Fairtrade Foundation have you covered at every step of your beauty routine.

Here, the organisation offers some ideas on Fairtrade beauty products that ensure farmers benefit from a fair price and are kind to the environment too.

What about Honeystreet Handmade Sunshine Bath Bomb?

After a long day, feel the warmth of the sun's rays on your skin, from the comfort and safety of your bathtub. It has combined a range of citrus essential oils to create the Fairtrade certified Sunshine Bath Bomb, to help you to feel energised and ready for anything.

Add some nourishment to your lips too with Mumanu Organic Lip Balm, enriched with Fairtrade coconut oil, shea butter and cocoa butter. Mumanu has also eliminated plastics from its packaging. Or why not add a slick of colour with Odylique's Organic Mineral Lipstick? Available in eight shades, including this Apricot Sorbet, and with a creamy, nourishing texture, Odylique lipsticks are 100 per cent natural and bursting with organic plant oils and butters, including jojoba and Fairtrade shea to provide a moisturising vitamin-boost to your lips.

And when it comes to personal care, you're covered there too with FairSquared Spearmint Toothpaste, available in a zero-waste glass jar. It leaves behind a pleasant fresh feeling in the mouth and gently cleans the teeth and gums and contains Fairtrade peppermint.



### BE A BENECOS BEAUTY

Overhaul your beauty regime while making some sustainable changes with these new creations from Benecos.

The natural brand's new plastic-free and refillable Beauty ID range of certified COSMOS organic, natural, and vegan eye, lip, and cheek palettes offer infinite combinations to choose from to create your perfect bespoke palette.

With 22 all-natural eye, lip and cheek infills, housed in a plastic-free palette, with a handy mirror, the make-up infills slot easily into place, and can be refilled, swapped, and updated to become as unique as you are!

Or, if you want a palette with global flavour, why not pick from one of the four pre-designed palettes, from Florence, New York, Marrakesh or Stockholm, for a truly internationally inspired look.





# FALL INTO AUTUMN

Fall in love with these natural and organic beauties

## SHAKE UP YOUR COLOUR

Ayluna's Plant-Based Hair Dyes are enriched with moisturising plant extracts, you can achieve your dream hair colour without the need for harsh chemicals. The vegan and cruelty-free formula works with your hair's natural structure to provide lively shades, shine and volume without damaging your hair! Available from health stores and online. [www.ayluna.co.uk](http://www.ayluna.co.uk) | £13.95



## DEODORANT POWER

Ben & Anna's popular natural deodorant in Green Fusion is the go-to deodorant to help combat underarm odour this Autumn. The combination of green tea with fruity citrus notes and Mediterranean spice aromas will leave you feeling invigorated and relaxed! Natural soda has a deodorising effect while the addition of shea butter leaves your skin feeling soft. Made with only certified natural ingredients, vegan, eco-friendly and 100% effective. Available from health stores and online. [www.benandanna.uk](http://www.benandanna.uk) | £6.95



## ALL DOLLED UP

Happy nails, happy you! Get the salon finish right at home with benecos' Happy Nails Nail Polish in Sweet Plum without the unnecessary, harsh chemicals like toluene, phthalates, and parabens. The intense coverage, short drying time, beautiful shine, excellent spreadability and of course, the 20-FREE formulation keep your nails looking and feeling amazing and healthy! Available from health stores and online. [www.benecos.uk](http://www.benecos.uk) | £4.95



## ENHANCE YOUR MOOD

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. Available from health stores and online. [www.soilorganics.co.uk](http://www.soilorganics.co.uk) | £4.70



## REPAIR & CARE

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# THE HEALTHY SNACK SWITCH-UP

**We all like a snack but making sure yours isn't loaded with excess sugar and salt is an important step to a healthy diet.**

**W**hether you're a sweet or a savoury person, snack foods these days can be packed full of all manner of undesirable ingredients, with sugar and salt levels being among the most concerning. In fact, according to the NHS, we Britons really do eat too much sugar, some 700g of the sweet stuff a week, which is an average of 140 teaspoons per person.

And these have wide-ranging effects on our health, not only causing tooth decay and poor skin health but causing our waistlines to expand, raising our risk of conditions such as type 2 diabetes, not to mention affecting our cognitive function and energy levels thanks to spiralling blood sugar that is caused by excess sugar.

## Healthy choices

There are so many simple switches you can make that reduces your intake of poor quality foods that are loaded with undesirable ingredients.

- **Chocolate** – if a cocoa-based treat is your go to, then try to make the switch from white and milk versions, which can contain higher levels of refined sugar, and instead opt for dark chocolate. If it is 70 per cent or more, it will contain antioxidants that offer plenty of health benefits, and it will be lower in sugar.
- **Snack bars** – there are all manner of snack bars available, and ideally, choose those with the lead ingredients being nuts and seeds, rather than sugar being at the top of the list. And remember, it's easy to make your own too, with all kinds of healthy recipes available online. You can also swap sugary biscuits for the likes of oat biscuits, which will also have more fibre.
- **Swap sweets** – instead of sugary confectionery such as sweets, why not snack on protein-rich nuts, which also have plenty of good fats in them, or some fruit? You still need to be aware of sugar intake in fruits, but the ideal ones to keep as snacks are the likes of berries, as they are lower in sugar. You could also top berries with some Greek yoghurt for a filling snack that contains good amounts of protein.
- **For something savoury** – ditch the crisps and instead, choose unsalted rice cakes or oatcakes, spread with peanut butter or perhaps some mashed banana or homemade houmous.



## Read the labels

How many times have you picked up a product during your weekly shop and not looked at the ingredient label? We are all guilty of either shopping out of habit, for how a product looks, or on impulse, and so often don't think about checking what's in it.

Getting familiar with reading labels can make a huge difference to the load of sugar, salt and other poor quality ingredients that do nothing for your health.

The NHS advises that sugars added to foods and drinks must be included in the ingredients list, which always starts with the ingredient that there's the most of. This means that if you see sugar near the top of the list, the food is likely to be high in free sugars. Watch out for other words used to describe sugars added to food and drinks, such as cane sugar, honey, brown sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, fruit juice concentrate/purées, corn syrup, fructose, sucrose, glucose, crystalline sucrose, nectars (such as blossom), maple and agave syrups, dextrose, maltose, molasses and treacle.

Products are considered to either be high or low in sugar if they fall above or below the following thresholds:

- **HIGH:** More than 22.5g of total sugars per 100g.
- **LOW:** 5g or less of total sugars per 100g.

## A WORD ON ORGANIC

We should also make mention of the benefits of certifications in foods that you buy, as these can ensure that not only have they been made with quality ingredients, they have care for the planet too.

One example is organic; while sugar is still going to be used in organic snack products (so the advice around being aware of ingredient labels remains the same), but generally, the ingredients that are allowed to be used in a certified organic product will be of higher quality and with far less additives.

They will also have been made with the planet in mind, grown and produced in ways that are kinder to our planet and to animals. Look out for a certified organic logo on products you choose.

### TRY THIS

Panda Soft Liquorice  
Creamy Vegan Chocolate

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Ricola Lemon Mint  
Sugar Free  
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# NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



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supplement regime. The easy to swallow, vegan capsules are odour free and suitable from age 12. Two capsules provide 180mg Allisure (Allicin) Powder, 150mg Vitamin C and 10mg Zinc. Part of the AllicinMax™ range, the brand leader in stabilised allicin supplements, you will find the range in your local independent health food store. [www.allicin.co.uk](http://www.allicin.co.uk)



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[www.just-t.org](http://www.just-t.org)

## Panda Soft Liquorice Coated in Creamy Choc

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

Available in health food stores





# THE POWER PROTEIN

**The most abundant protein in the body, we must not underestimate the critical importance of getting enough collagen.**

**T**here are so many nutrients we need for good health, whether it's vitamin D for our joint and mind health, vitamin B for a healthy nervous system, or key minerals such as zinc and selenium that are required for immunity. But another critical component of a healthy you is collagen, known to be the most abundant protein in the human body.

The word 'collagen' comes from the Greek for 'glue', and there is good reason for this; it is found in the bones, muscles, skin and tendons and acts as the building blocks in the body, provides the structure and flexibility to connective tissues and to keep our joints moving, and strength and elasticity to the skin.

Too little collagen means we can experience joint pain, stiffness and other arthritic symptoms, lack of skin suppleness and elasticity, as well as sagging skin. In addition, you can experience digestive issues, and wounds can heal more slowly. It is also necessary for the bones, so especially important for woman post-menopause.

## TRY THIS

NaturesPlus  
Collagen Peptides

Terranova Nutrition  
Vollagen Complex

Vitasil Silicium

Planet Paleo  
Vegan Collagen  
Factors

## Do you need a supplement?

We can source collagen from a great many foods, as already highlighted and while it's worth consuming plenty of these foods, for many people, and especially as we get older, a supplement is to be recommended.

There are different forms of collagens, and it's important to know the type you need. Endogenous is natural collagen synthesised in the body, and then there is exogenous, which would be a synthetic form, such as what is in a supplement. And we should remember that there are a range of different types, with type I-IV being most common, and type I being the most dominant in the human body.

You will find many different collagen supplements in your health food store, some of them in powder form that can be added to drinks, and many of these are likely to come from animal sources, such as bovine. There are other options, such as marine collagen, which contains type I and type II.

Always make sure your supplement doesn't contain fillers and other additives.

## The science

Collagen is made from amino acids that we get in foods containing protein; the body will break down these proteins to form the amino acids. Therefore, you need to ensure you are consuming protein-rich foods, such as meat, poultry, eggs, pulses, nuts and dairy products, while bone broths are also rich in collagen.

We should also remember that we need plenty of vitamin C as this aids in the manufacture of collagen.

While the body can make collagen, as we get older, we make it less, and this is why it can show in our joints and in our skin when we age as natural levels fall. The reason for this is fibroblasts, which are the cells that secrete collagen proteins, becoming less active. This can be further exacerbated by alcohol consumption, smoking, a diet high in processed foods and refined carbohydrates and being exposed to the sun's rays too much, which can stop your body making so much collagen.



# GOOD GUT GUIDE

**There are many reasons our digestion can be under par, but there are some simple solutions for addressing it, as our expert guide to a healthy gut explains.**

**W**hen you consider everything from periods of stress and ill health, along with medication, right through to eating too much sugar and processed food are factors that can affect the health of our gut, it's easy to see why so many people are struggling with digestive problems.

One of the most important things to remember here is the gut is truly a window to our health – by way of example, some 70 per cent of our immune system can be found there, so if this isn't functioning, neither will your defence mechanism, leaving you susceptible to illness. And that's not all; low energy, poor cognitive function, and unhealthy skin are all signs our guts might not be operating as well as they could be.

Catherine Gorman, Nutritionist at Good Health Naturally, explained: "Digestive problems certainly seem to be on the increase. More and more people are complaining about conditions like irritable bowel syndrome, leaky gut, diarrhoea, gas, constipation, indigestion, acid reflux, bloating and food intolerances.

"There are all kinds of reasons why they're increasing. The typical Western diet, which is high in

carbohydrates, refined sugar, unhealthy fats and low in fibre and nutrients, can wreak havoc on our guts, causing inflammation and a poor environment for our gut bacteria. Stress is another contributor, it causes imbalances to the nervous system, which can lead to functional digestive problems like, stomach ulcers, diarrhoea, gas and IBS. Poor digestive health tends to be more prevalent in older people, so the fact we are living longer is definitely a factor."

Alice Bradshaw, Head of Nutrition Education and Information at Terranova, went on: "Digestive health problems appear to be on the rise, with an increasing number of people either being diagnosed with a gastrointestinal disorder or suffering with symptoms of indigestion, reflux, bloating and so on.

"According to recent figures, it is estimated that around 10-20 per cent of people in the UK have IBS, while many more may live with symptoms of the condition without a formal diagnosis. The reasons for GI disturbances are multifactorial and include diet, lifestyle factors, and stress, as well as physiological and anatomical anomalies within the digestive system. Bacterial species, quantities and location of the bacteria within the gut also influence digestive health."

## MODERN LIVING

So, what is it about our modern way of life, especially our diets, that can be detrimental to the gut?

Jenny Carson, Senior Nutritionist at Viridian Nutrition, advised: "Several reasons contribute to the large volume of digestive ill health in the UK, which include:

- **Lack of fibre** – diets that rely heavily on processed meals such as ready meals, pre-packaged pizza, and pasta with a sauce do not deliver much fibre unless additional vegetables or salad are added. Fibre binds to toxins and adds bulk to the stool. It supports motility so that food passes through the gastrointestinal tract in a timely manner.
- **Stress** – stress evokes the flight or fight response that inhibits normal digestion and so bloating, abdominal discomfort and irritable bowel-like symptoms may occur.
- **Processed foods** – high in salt, sugar and heat damaged fats, these foods provide poor nutrition and often deliver toxins such as trans-fats, additives and processing aids, which may disrupt digestive balance.
- **Improper use of NSAIDs** – it is well known that non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) are poor for gut health, in fact, the directions are to take with food, which is often ignored. Long-term use can increase the risk of ulceration and thinning of the gastrointestinal wall.
- **Exercise** – regular exercise is important to tone the musculature that

surrounds the intestines. This muscle drives motility and the passage of food through the body.

- **Dysbiosis** – the term used when the resident bacteria known as the microbiome becomes imbalanced, whereby pathogenic colonies increase and beneficial colonies decrease."

Catherine added: "Modern life is often fast paced, burning the candle at both ends, with little time for rest and relaxation. We are now exposed to so many chemicals, pollutants, pesticides, and other hazardous substances which may be contributing to digestive diseases. Traces are found in our food, water and even the air we breathe. The digestive tract is among the first points of contact with these substances. Harmful pesticides in food are known to disrupt the gastrointestinal environment, contributing to conditions like leaky gut and poor gut bacteria."

Isabelle Nunn, Head Nutritionist at Kinetic, which has the Garden of Life and Nature's Answer brands, also pointed out: "The fast pace of life, rising cost in living and energy bills means individuals often work longer hours to make ends meet and lack the time or motivation to cook and therefore choose convenience over health. This can mean fast-food, ready-made meals and sauces. Sugary deserts and regular alcohol intake daily can often be seen as a gateway to a tough day or appeals as one's comfort to finish the day."





## THE ESSENTIALS

There are some key supplements you may want to consider, depending on your digestive symptoms. These include:

- **Activated charcoal:** Catherine explained: "Activated charcoal has a long history as a safe way of removing toxins from the digestive tract. Toxins can accumulate in the gut from food, alcohol, mould, fungus, and can trigger inflammation and damage the microbiome."
- **Digestive enzymes:** Alice suggested: "Since many gut-related symptoms and disorders are associated with digestive enzyme deficiencies or imbalances, supplements are often essential in dealing with such problems. Any number of food components can trigger symptoms, so the best results are likely achieved with broad-spectrum products providing a wide variety of enzymes."
- **Butyrate:** "This is a short-chain fatty acid generated naturally by bacteria in the colon. If levels are depleted for any reason like a decrease in the number of these bacteria or a drop in the amount of butyrate containing food in the diet, supplementation may help. Low levels have been associated with all kinds of digestive problems, including IBS, gas, bloating and inflammatory conditions," Catherine advised.
- **Betaine HCl:** Jenny advised: "In cases of hypochlorhydria, low stomach acid, betaine HCl and bitter herbs can be useful. They should be taken approximately 30 minutes prior to the meal so that they can trigger the gastric secretions in preparation for digestion."
- **Peppermint oil:** Jenny explained: "Stomach cramps and IBS symptoms can be relieved with peppermint oil. Studies show that peppermint oil exerts an anti-spasmodic effect to the small intestine when taken prior to food."
- **Glutamine:** This amino acid feeds the cells that line the digestive tract. Its use is purported to promote gut integrity.
- **Botanicals:** "Digestive botanicals such as fennel seed, ginger rhizome, cardamom pod and gentian root have a considerable role to play in battling gut reactions. For example, gentian and ginger stimulate the release of protein-digesting compounds in the stomach, while fennel, ginger and cardamom relax the intestinal muscles, which may help relieve abdominal spasms and cramps and may also help release trapped wind," Alice advised.

### Try this

- Terranova Nutrition Digestive Enzyme Complex
- Bio-Kult Boosted
- Silicea Gastro Intestinal Gel Direct
- Good Health Naturally PrescriptBiotics
- Thompson's Slippery Elm Food

## ADD PROBIOTICS

When it comes to digestive essentials, probiotics are high on the list.

"Probiotics which provide both *Lactobacilli* and *Bifidobacteria* can significantly benefit the environment of both the small and large intestine. Among other properties, probiotics enhance digestive processes and make the intestines inhospitable for disease-causing organisms," Alice suggested.

Catherine added: "We have trillions of bacteria in our digestive system, known as our gut microbiota. Some are helpful, others are not. The good bacteria help break down food, aid the absorption of nutrients, and even strengthen immunity. But they can become depleted by illness, antibiotic use, stress, or even too much alcohol. So, it is important to replenish, when necessary, with a

probiotic supplement."

Linda O'Byrne, Nutritionist at Solaray, went on: "The key to good overall health is good digestion and probiotics are an excellent way to support digestive health. Pick one that contains plenty of strains of good bacteria to help fight off bugs, break down our food properly and make sure we absorb all the important nutrients we need."

"When people select probiotics, they should look for the 'cleanest,' most natural products that don't include allergy ingredients or anything that might irritate the stomach. Strength should also be another consideration; does it have an effective number of strains of friendly bacteria and plenty of microorganisms? They should look for products containing tens of billions of microorganisms, rather than millions."

## GUT-FRIENDLY EATING

The good news is you can support healthy digestion with some easy changes to your diet, working to achieve better balance and less in the way of processed food.

"The foods that cause GI discomfort will vary from person to person, depending on their symptoms and underlying causes. Generally speaking, foods that irritate the GI tract or are hard to digest include refined and packaged foods, foods with additives and other artificial ingredients, caffeine, alcohol, grains and highly processed carbohydrates," Alice explained.

"When digestive health is compromised, fibre and certain fermentable carbohydrates (known as FODMAPs) can cause discomfort along with symptoms such as bloating and excess gas. Whole nuts, seeds and raw fruit and vegetables can also be difficult for those with poor digestive health. Generally speaking, warm, soft and cooked foods should be favoured by those with poor digestion. Simple meals with few ingredients work best for most people."

And Catherine suggested: "Processed foods, sugary drinks, ready meals and snacks should definitely be removed or certainly aim to cut back. They have little nutritional value, and are often high in sugar and saturated fats, which are notorious for causing inflammation and altering the gut microbiome. A growing number of studies are reporting some of the commonly used additives are having detrimental effects on the gut lining and our good bacteria. It has been suggested they could be linked to the development or worsening of intestinal diseases."

She also pointed to fibre as a key focus: "There are two forms: soluble, which is found in oat bran, barley, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils and attracts water and becomes a gel, making stools softer and easier to pass; and insoluble, found in wheat bran, vegetables and whole grains, it adds bulk to the stool, helping it move faster through the intestines. A fibre-rich diet reduces the risk of ulcers, reflux, haemorrhoids, and diverticulitis."

Jenny added: "The gut needs fibre – vegetables, pulses, salad items and fruit. Getting a couple of portions of fibrous foods at each meal will help with digestive health. This can be as simple as adding mixed berries to breakfast, a side salad to lunch and veggies and pulses with evening meal. Fermented foods are rich in beneficial microbes and include, yogurt, sauerkraut, kimchi and natto. Bone broth is rich in glutamine and collagen, which is nourishing for cells that line the gastrointestinal tract."

"Rich in the trace elements zinc and selenium, a great source of protein and importantly omega 3 essential fatty acids, oily fish and algae are essential for digestive health. Not only does it contribute to an anti-inflammatory effect, but it also nourishes the cells that line the tract and promote beneficial bacteria adherence in the large intestine."

Isabelle went on: "Additives such as emulsifiers, trans fats, salts and sugars and sweeteners are all inflammatory, disturbing our natural flora of bacteria, and affecting the lining of our gut. In general, if one could avoid sugars and sweeteners, that could make a huge difference. When needing a bit of sweetness, it is always best to go for natural sugars derived from fruits or vegetables, which also have a source of fibre."



# NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



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# Ask the experts

## ACT ON INFLAMMATION, HOLISTICALLY...

by Ester Liao Silva

### What are the most common reasons for inflammation and what signs can mean that we have inflammation?

Inflammation is the body's immune system response to infection or injury. Inflammation is mainly divided into acute and chronic inflammation depending on various inflammatory processes and cellular mechanisms.

The most common causes of acute inflammation are external injuries like scrapes and burns, pathogens such as bacteria and viruses, and chemicals or radiation. Chronic inflammation is often caused by untreated acute inflammation, exposure to toxins and autoimmune disorders.

Inflammation has been characterised by five cardinal signs, redness (rubor), swelling (tumour), heat (calor), pain (dolor) and loss of function (function laesa). Recent studies have clarified that inflammation is a major factor for the progression of various chronic disorders/diseases, including obesity, arthritis, diabetes, and inflammatory bowel disease.

### What are the most pro-inflammatory foods that we should avoid? And what foods would you suggest for helping to ease inflammation?

We recommend avoiding or limiting foods that are pro-inflammatory, such as saturated fatty acids (especially trans saturated fatty acids), for example, fried foods, pastries, cakes, and most margarines, refined carbohydrates such as white bread, white rice, pasta and many breakfast cereals, processed meats

and red meats, and sugar or sweetened beverages.

Following specific dietary patterns which emphasise anti-inflammatory foods can help prevent and reduce inflammation. Anti-inflammatory foods include vegetables such as spinach, squash, peppers, and collard greens, fruits, whole grains such as quinoa, whole-grain bread, oatmeal, and wheat berries, and omega 3 fatty acids, such as nuts and seeds, oily fish, and avocados.

### What supplements are important for easing inflammation?

Studies suggest that omega 3 supplementation can reduce inflammation, even among healthy young adults. Fish oil is an excellent source of the omega 3 fatty acids, docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), which are involved in the production of compounds that reduce inflammation.

Curcumin, the most biologically active component of the turmeric root (*Curcuma longa*), has been demonstrated to be an anti-inflammatory agent by suppressing inflammatory signalling and inhibiting the compounds that cause inflammation.

Garlic supplementation can also be helpful in restoring immune cell counts and in turn, lessening inflammation. Similarly, ginger has been shown to modulate inflammation and quercetin reduced the expression of inflammatory cytokines.

Lastly, we highly recommend considering palmitoylethanolamide (PEA), which has been extensively documented as an anti-inflammatory by modulating multiple inflammatory mediators.

## Q What are antioxidants and what would you recommend are the best?

### Firouzeh Ahari advised:

Antioxidants are substances that can prevent or slow damage to cells caused by free radicals, which are unstable molecules that the body produces as a reaction to environmental and other pressures.

The sources of antioxidants can be natural or artificial. Certain plant-based foods are thought to be rich in antioxidants. Plant-based antioxidants are a kind of phytonutrient, or plant-based nutrient.

The body produces some antioxidants, known as endogenous antioxidants, while antioxidants that come from outside the body are called exogenous.

Free radicals are waste substances produced by cells as the body processes food and reacts to the environment. If the body cannot process and remove free radicals efficiently, oxidative stress can result. This can harm cells and body function. Free radicals are also known as reactive oxygen species (ROS). Factors that increase the production of free radicals in the body can be internal, such as inflammation, or external, for example, pollution, UV exposure, and cigarette smoke. Oxidative stress has been linked to heart disease, cancer, arthritis, stroke, respiratory diseases, immune deficiency, and other inflammatory conditions.

Antioxidants are said to help neutralise free radicals in our bodies, and this is thought to boost overall health. Colourful fruits and vegetables can offer a range of antioxidants.

Examples of antioxidant supplements are vitamins A, C and E, beta-carotene, manganese, silicon, and selenium.

## About the experts



**ESTER LLAO SILVA** is Nutrition Advice Specialist at supplement company, Lamberts. Ester graduated from the University of Greenwich in 2019 with a BSc (Hons) in Human Nutrition. As an Associate Registered Nutritionist with the AfN, she loves helping people understand the importance of nutrition.



**Dr ROGER HENDERSON** is one of the UK's most respected and trusted media medics. In his position as both senior partner in a busy general practice and regular broadcaster and writer in every area of health, he brings over 30 years of medical experience. He is an expert at the Olbas brand.



**INGRID JAMIESON** is Marketing Manager at natural beauty and wellbeing company, Pravera, which has the lavera, ORGANii and Benecos ranges in its portfolio.



**FIROUZE 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.



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# Ask the experts

## BREATHE EASY...

by Dr Roger Henderson

**Why are plant oils beneficial to our health, and which areas are they particularly useful for?**

Essential oils are concentrated plant extracts that retain the natural smell or taste (the 'essence') of their source and have been used for centuries to help ease the symptoms of minor medical problems by being inhaled or applied to the skin.

There are over 90 commonly used essential oils associated with certain health claims, with popular types including eucalyptus, peppermint, clove and juniper berry. Users often feel that using these can reduce symptoms associated with a number of ailments, including relieving congestion associated with colds and allergies, as well as helping to reduce headaches and aid digestion.

**What are the best plant oils to choose for the cold season?**

Plant oils have many medicinal properties. For example, eucalyptus oil is known for its antiviral and antimicrobial properties and

because of this, it is sometimes inhaled to help treat or prevent a common cold, or on a cool compress to help treat a fever. Menthol (found in peppermint oil) can also be used as a natural decongestant and to help soothe a sore throat. Juniper berry essential oil also appears to have some antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effect and so can be helpful in reducing the impact of a cold.

**What should we look for in terms of quality when choosing a plant oil?**

When choosing a quality essential plant oil,

look for a tightly sealed dark glass bottle – light and heat can damage essential oils, and they also don't mix well with plastic so should be kept in glass. The label should also say it is 100 per cent pure essential oil. If it only says 'essence of oil', that isn't a pure essential oil but more usually a premixed blend of essential oils in a base of carrier oil. Avoid oils in plastic bottles, labels with vague or little information, and anything called 'fragrance oil'.

If you are taking prescription medicines, always discuss this with your doctor before using essential oils.

to dead skin cell build-up, dehydrated skin due to the central heating being on and more sensitive skin.

The best way to care for your skin in autumn/winter is to pamper it with natural and organic products which use plant-based ingredients to nourish and protect the skin. Cleansing correctly with a natural and organic cleansing milk or cleansing gel, which doesn't include SLS or parabens, is ideal. Exfoliating is a must as it removes the build-up of dead skin cells, getting rid of flaky skin, replenishing the skin and improving the look and feel of your complexion.

Introducing an oil into your beauty routine during the autumn will help to not only nourish skin but will also help improve moisture retention. To maintain your summer glow into the colder months, vitamin C will help to brighten and boost the skin and stimulate

collagen production so the skin can better retain moisture, and help to protect it from external aggressors.

In the autumn/winter months, you're likely to feel even more dryness, especially around areas where your skin is delicate such as the eyes and lips. So, it's a good idea to add extra moisture to the skin in preparation for the big freeze. Apply a rich moisturiser morning and night to boost skin nourishment and hydration, while using an eye cream and a lip balm will help to improve the moisture levels in the eye and lip areas. Applying a lip balm throughout the day is ideal. Using all these natural and organic products on the skin will help to increase skin radiance and promote a healthy glow.

Look for products that contain aloe vera, jojoba oil, shea butter, cocoa butter as these all promote nourished, healthy skin.

## Q What are the most important skincare products for the autumn and what kind of routine would you recommend?

**Ingrid Jamieson suggested:** Just as we switch up our wardrobe every few months, it's important to do the same for your beauty routine. Our skincare needs during the autumn/winter months are very different from the summer. In the autumn/winter, we turn on the central heating, causing dry air, and the weather is blustery, windy and cold. All these environmental influences can cause havoc with our skin. Drying the skin, it can become sore, itchy, irritated and more sensitive. Breakouts may occur more often and your skin might look duller than usual. The changing climate can lead



# “Switching to a plant-based diet cleared up all my health issues”

**Mays Al-Ali explains why training with the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) had a huge impact on her health and lifestyle.**



*Mays Al-Ali*

I suffered from serious gut problems, skin issues and mood disorders, which resulted from a poor diet and an unhealthy lifestyle. Changing my diet made a massive difference to my health.

I worked as an advertising producer for 18 years, but I became unhappy and dissatisfied with my very stressful corporate career. I was teaching yoga on the side for many years, but it wasn't enough, and I knew it was my calling to be in service, not to work in such a stressful environment that negatively impacted my health.

During my yoga teacher training in India eight years ago, I was introduced to a month of raw vegan food and to the concept of conscious clean eating, which changed my life. Before that, I ate a standard western diet, drank alcohol and had lots of late nights living the typical London party lifestyle. As a result, I suffered from some serious gut health, skin and mood issues. Eating a natural, plant-based diet while doing my yoga training for a month increased my energy levels and I felt amazing. So, I naturally transitioned to a plant-based diet, and I also dabbled in raw veganism too. Slowly, all my health issues cleared up and I also developed a keen interest in health and nutrition. I started studying and researching myself and then contemplated doing a course.

A friend recommended the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) and told me the Naturopathic

Nutrition course was excellent. I was looking at it for many years before I signed up – I was travelling a lot back in those days, so it was a big commitment to stay in London for three years.

But eventually I enrolled on the course, and I've never looked back. What I loved about the CNM course was the naturopathic element to it. I'm a big believer in the healing powers of nature and having looked at other courses, none of them had this important holistic element. The lecturers were amazing and so inspiring. What I learnt really changed my life for the better and changed me as a person.

I signed up for the course initially for my own interests; I never thought I would quit my advertising job and become a nutritionist. However, by the start of the third year, I knew there was no turning back and that I'd found my calling. I then left my job in advertising and launched my clinic as soon as I qualified.

I can honestly say I've never been happier. Being able to help people every day and change their lives for the better is so rewarding and brings me so much joy on a daily basis.

I have a clinic in East London, but I mostly work virtually now. I also host webinars and group weight loss programmes and run an NHS-funded weight loss programme in Tower Hamlets. A lot of my clients come to me with burn-out, stress, insomnia and anxiety often linking to gut problems, so I help them overcome these

issues, as well as helping with weight loss and plant-based nutrition. I also teach yoga and meditation and host transformational wellness retreats around the world and virtually. I love helping people transform their lives and feel great inside and out. I work holistically and look at the overall mind, body, soul connection, their diet, lifestyle, connection to others, spiritual connection and purpose.

## Interested in studying?

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# Hello sunshine

**Vitamin D, better known as the sunshine vitamin, is critical for our health in many ways. Ahead of the colder months, now is the time to check if you're getting enough.**

**I**t's known that many Brits can be lacking in adequate levels of vitamin D. Such is the concern that UK health authorities now recommend we supplement with vitamin D during autumn and winter, although for many of us, we could benefit from all-year round.

But why is it so important to supplement, when for many other nutrients, we are advised we should be able to get enough through a balanced diet?

Helen Ford, Head of Nutrition at Glenville Nutrition Clinic, commented: "It is important to have sufficient levels of vitamin D because research has shown this versatile nutrient plays a key role in keeping in us in good health, both mentally and physically. For example, it has been found to be vital for bone health and osteoporosis, play a major role in breast and bowel cancer prevention, be important for immune function and particularly helpful in winter when there is more 'flu around, help with other conditions as diverse as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, joint pains and arthritis, dementia, autoimmune diseases, fertility, autism, and allergies and help with seasonal affective disorder."

And how common is it that people are lacking?

"Over one billion people worldwide are estimated to be deficient in vitamin D. Approximately 20 per cent

of the UK have a vitamin D deficiency and 60 per cent of the population are considered as having insufficient levels of. As such, it is considered to be a global health issue," advised Kerry-Lee Revitt, Nutrition Advisor at Viridian Nutrition.

"Since the Covid-19 pandemic, individuals who used to work from home 46.6 per cent of the week in 2019 have increased this to 86 per cent of their working week in 2022. This increase in remote working has meant many people are not leaving the house from 9am-5pm, and some would say lockdown culture has created a generation of agoraphobes. Being kept indoors for lengthy periods could be depriving us of the sunshine vitamin we all so desperately need."

Isabelle Nunn, Head Nutritionist at Kinetic, which has the Nature's Answer and Garden of Life brands, added: "Deficiency in vitamin D is probably higher than it used to be due to our modern way of living. This could be due to the increase in individuals going vegan and vegetarian and not necessarily supplementing. The rise in obesity could also affect our vitamin D status. Research has shown that those with a BMI index of 30 or greater will often have low blood levels of vitamin D."

## Vitamin functions

Vitamin D is a complex nutrient, involved in many areas of our health.

Linda O'Byrne, Nutritionist at Solaray, explained: "Vitamin D is crucial to general health, as it supports the absorption of calcium and phosphorus into the body. This promotes strong, healthy bones and skeletal growth, as well as supporting the healthy function of white blood cells that are essential for fighting harmful bacteria or viruses."

Catherine Gorman, Nutritional Therapist and Health Coach at Good Health Naturally, went on: "Since the discovery of vitamin D in the early 20th century, it's been linked to skeletal and dental health. It is one of the crucial nutrients which help to prevent rickets in children and softening of the bones and osteoporosis in adults. This is because it plays a key role in calcium absorption and helps maintain adequate levels of calcium and phosphorus in the blood, both are necessary for healthy bone mineralisation.

"In recent years, scientists have discovered vitamin D receptors in tissues throughout the body, including the brain, heart, skin, eyes, ovary, prostate gland, breast. This suggests its effects could be wide ranging; we know it plays a role in immunity, helps reduce inflammation and is involved in glucose metabolism. Deficiency has been linked to cardiovascular conditions, including high blood pressure and neurological diseases like Alzheimer's disease."

Kerry-Lee added: "Each year, an estimated 1.5m individuals suffer a fracture due to bone disease. Experts believe the lack of exposure to sun and reduced time spent outdoors are causative factors. But it's

never too late; a recent study in Japan claims that osteoporosis can be reversed with sunlight exposure. Over 12 months, 129 elderly, hospitalised women were exposed to regular sunlight, while another 129 stayed indoors. The results were impressive. The sunlight group increased bone mass by 3.1 per cent and in the non-sunlight group, it decreased by 3.3 per cent."

Isabelle went on: "Vitamin D is required for the regulation of the immune system. Often, when we are deficient, we may experience either reduced immune system capacity or even autoimmunity, a term used to describe the system of immune responses of an organism against its own healthy cells, tissues and other body normal constituents. Any illness that results from this type of immune response is termed an autoimmune disease. Examples include coeliac disease or diabetes mellitus, type 1."

And remember there are certain people who can be at risk of deficiency.

"Those most at risk of a deficiency in the UK are those who do not go out much in the daytime, those who do not expose their skin to the sunlight and women who constantly wear make-up or cosmetics with in-built sun protection factors and may not realise they are in the beauty products. The tone of our skin affects vitamin D production, so the darker our skin, the less vitamin D production and covering up large areas of skin for religious reasons will also reduce vitamin D production," Helen explained.



## THE SUNSHINE VITAMIN

But why is vitamin D often referred to as the sunshine vitamin? And how can we obtain enough?

Helen explained: "There's good reason why vitamin D is called the sunshine vitamin because when the sun's rays hit the skin, processes inside the tissues start making vitamin D. You do not need to get a tan or burn to get vitamin D from the sun. The body will make all the vitamin D it needs for a day in about half the time it takes the skin to burn. It is estimated that we need about 30 minutes exposure to the sun to produce enough vitamin D."

Kerry-Lee added: "Food sources of vitamin D are limited, oily fish, beef liver, cheese and egg yolks contain lesser amounts. If you are vegetarian, the only plant-based source is mushrooms, however, these provide the D2 form, which is less absorbed. Fortunately, our ingenious bodies have found a way of making its own vitamin D, using sunlight. When our skin is exposed to UVB rays, it converts a cholesterol like substance present throughout the skin into a pre-vitamin D form. A protein then binds to the newly created vitamin D3 and transports it via the bloodstream to the liver and kidneys, where it is converted into a form of D3 that your body can use."

## Vitamin D partners

We also need other nutrients to support the work of vitamin D.

"Inflammation can lead not only to osteoporosis, but also cardiovascular disease. Interestingly, vitamin K works in unison with vitamin D to reduce inflammation. Reducing inflammation is beneficial to immune function and heart health. Prevention is key and vitamin D3 and K2 work together in a unique way to soften your arteries and actually prevent cardiovascular disease," Kerry-Lee explained.

"Furthermore, taking vitamin D3 and K2 together promotes new bone growth as vitamin K makes sure the calcium in the blood gets directed into the bones where it needs to be. However, there is a caution with taking vitamin K as those individuals already on heart medications/blood thinners, vitamin K can be contraindicated due to its action on blood clotting, so always check with your healthcare professional for any interactions before supplementing."

Isabelle added: "Magnesium is an essential mineral, required for the utilisation of vitamin D in the body and also tends to be lacking in modern diets. The increased level of stress, sugar consumption and alcohol consumption decreases magnesium stores further in the body and inhibits the way in which our body uses vitamin D."

## KNOW THE SIGNS

These days, tests are easy to find to assess if you are lacking, but there are also some symptoms you may experience.

"Symptoms of deficiency include constipation, fatigue/persistent tiredness, muscle weakness, bone pain and changes in mood. Too little vitamin D may also lead to a susceptibility to infections and, when vitamin D is in short supply, less calcium is absorbed from food, so it's leached from bones, leaving a risk of bone fracture or osteoporosis, especially in menopausal women," Linda explained.

"If you have little sun exposure, or don't eat many vitamin D-rich foods, then you could be at risk of deficiency. However, those with Crohn's disease, coeliac and other gastrointestinal disorders may be at risk as they can affect your body's ability to absorb vitamin D. Older adults may be more at risk as kidneys are less able to convert vitamin D to its active form."

Kerry-Lee added: "Vitamin D deficiency can be difficult

to spot as one of the first signs is fatigue and tiredness, which most of us dismiss as over work or burning the candle at both ends. But vitamin D deficiency may underpin a host of energy depleting ailments, from depression to insomnia.

"As vitamin D is critical for bone health and muscle strength, back pain and muscle aches and pains could be a symptom of deficiency. Another sign could be if you are experiencing frequent colds and infections. Recent studies show deficiency has been linked to respiratory tract infections, bronchitis and pneumonia and increased risk of Covid 19."

Catherine added: "Insufficient levels have also been linked to poor cognitive health. Studies show people with extremely low blood levels of vitamin D were more than twice as likely as those with normal levels to develop Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia. It has also been associated with low mood and depression."

## Choosing a supplement

When adding a vitamin D supplement to your daily routine, there are certain things to consider.

"The amount required depends on our vitamin D status. Just like too little vitamin D in the body can be harmful, so can too much. Vitamin D being a fat-soluble vitamin gets stored in the body, and therefore excess can accumulate," Isabelle advised.

"If you can, ideally get a blood test by your doctor to assess current status and choose a supplement with the help of a nutritionist or doctor. If you cannot get a test, an ideal level to take for an adult is 1000-2000iu. Forms to choose include cholecalciferol vitamin D3, best combined in a base of fats

such as MCT oil or olive oil, which supports absorption in the body. Liquid vitamin D is also easily assimilated and absorbed by the body."

Catherine added: "Current Government recommendations advise during autumn and winter everyone should take a supplement containing 10mcg (400iu) a day to support general health and, in particular, bone and muscle health. But some scientists believe the amount should be higher."

And Kerry-Lee added: "Most commonly available vitamin D3 supplements are derived from lanolin in sheep's wool. For those who would prefer to avoid animal products, you can buy vegan vitamin D3 capsules and liquid supplements that is naturally derived from lichen, a plant-based algae."

Try this

- ★ BetterYou D4000 Vitamin D Oral Spray
- ★ Nutri Advanced Vitamin D3 Drops
- ★ Good Health Naturally Vitamin D3 & K2 Sublingual Spray
- ★ A.Vogel Immune Support
- ★ Lamberts Vitamin D3 2000iu



# NATURAL LIFESTYLE'S Top Picks



## Essential for supporting the body's natural immune system

BetterYou's new Immune Health Oral Spray delivers a scientifically formulated blend of vitamins A, C and D, zinc, and selenium directly to the bloodstream via the inner cheek, for optimal absorption. Providing smart nutritional support, the pill-free supplement contributes to the protection of cells from oxidative stress whilst reducing tiredness and fatigue, which can hinder the body's ability to defend against infection. Housed in 100% recyclable, planet-friendly packaging, the great-tasting natural orange and peach flavoured spray utilises naturally sourced ingredients and is certified vegetarian and palm oil derivative free.

RRP: £12.95

[www.betteryou.com](http://www.betteryou.com)



## Boost your immune system

Terranova's Beta Glucans, Astragalus & Vitamin C Complex is a complete resistance formula encompassing some of the most well-researched nutrients and botanicals for immune support. This new powerful formulation contains a high potency of yeast-derived beta glucans, plus the important beta glucan synergists resveratrol and vitamin C. Featuring a Magnifood blend of fresh freeze dried astragalus, olive leaf and elderberry with Matcha green tea and quercetin supported with the mineral zinc. 100% additive free, 100% vegan

[www.terranovahealth.com](http://www.terranovahealth.com)



## A.Vogel Immune Support Tablets

A.Vogel Immune Support tablets are a nutritional food supplement containing zinc, vitamin D and vitamin C, which contribute to the normal functioning of the immune system making it an ideal supplement for this time of year. Immune Support tablets are lactose and gluten free, suitable for vegetarians and vegans and a simple dosage of one a day makes it easy to add to your daily routine. Age from 12+

Available from health stores nationwide RRP: £12.95 (30 tabs)

[www.avogel.co.uk](http://www.avogel.co.uk)



## Relieve symptoms of colds and sniffles

Olbas has been helping relieve symptoms of colds and sniffles for generations and remains the nation's favourite decongestant oil<sup>1</sup>. With cough, cold and flu remedy sales set to rise 7.8% this year<sup>2</sup>, Olbas is proud to provide a range of winter remedies suitable for all the family.

Olbas Oil is a decongestant oil that is made with a combination of natural

and essential plant oils including eucalyptus, mint, clove, juniperberry and cajuput to effectively relieve congestion. Olbas Oil is suitable for adults and children aged three months and over.

For more information, or to stock Olbas, please contact Lanes Health on **01452 524012**.

<sup>1</sup> IRI Total Decongestants category, Volume sales, 52 weeks ending 9th July 2022. Total UK

<sup>2</sup> Mintel Insights | OTC Analgesics, Cough, Cold and Flu Remedies - UK - 2022





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# Your herbal heroes

Discover some of the best herbs to help support you during the approaching colder months.

**T**he world of herbs boasts many unique properties. Whether it's from the buds and blossoms or the stems and roots, these wonderful plants offer us a host of wide-ranging health benefits.

And, as we head towards the colder months, a time when more sniffles, sneezes and sore throats are doing the rounds, why not discover those herbs that can support your winter wellness?

## Choose cowslip

The botanical name, *primula veris*, indicates that cowslip (also known as primrose) is one of the first flowering plants to bloom in spring.

*Primula* is derived from the Latin word *primus*, or 'first'. *Veris* is also Latin and can be translated as spring. The plant's English name may be due to the fact that it was often found growing among manure in cow pastures.

## Sensational sage

The Latin name, *salvia officinalis*, is derived either from the Latin *salvus*, which means healthy, or *salvare*, meaning to heal. The name *officinalis* is derived from *officina*, which stands for the traditional storeroom in an apothecary where the herb was kept.

It also refers to the fact that the herb is officially used as a medicinal plant.

## Take thyme

The word 'thyme' is derived from the Greek 'thyo', which means 'sacrifice'. The ancient Greeks believed that the scent of thyme represented activity, valour and courage, and was effective at banishing evil spirits.

## Amazing elder

*Sambucus nigra* is the Latin name for elder and has clear etymological roots. *Nigra* means black and refers to the colour of the juice from the elderberry. Although *sambucus* does not have a single set definition, it can be interpreted as a reference to the *sambuca*, an ancient stringed instrument that may have been carved from elder wood.

## Make it mallow

The name is derived from the Greek word *malakós*, meaning 'soft' or 'mellow', and probably refers to the herb's relaxing qualities.

Mallow has enjoyed a prominent role in many cultures throughout history, with the Chinese and the Romans being just two examples. The Chinese were making cups of reddish mallow tea as far back as 5,000 years ago. Meanwhile, the Romans mixed mallow with oil, salt, honey and wine to make 'omnimbrium', an all-purpose remedy.

## Yes to yarrow

The Latin name, *achillea millefolium*, is derived from the Greek *achilleios*, which can be translated as 'herb of Achilles'.

The hero of the Trojan War, Achilles was trained in the art of healing wounds by the centaur, Chiron. *Millefolium* comes from the Greek 'myriophyllon', which means 'countless leaves'.

## A piece of peppermint

The botanical name of peppermint, *mentha x piperita*, looks almost mathematical. It points to the hybrid nature of the plant. Despite its ubiquity, the plant was only discovered in the 17th century, after which it started to be cultivated on a wide scale. *Piperita* refers to the plant's pungent, peppery taste.

## Reader offer

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, add ingredients such as natural menthol, lemon juice, echinacea and fair trade honey (to give your throat the extra care it needs) and turn them into soothing cough drops. *Natural Lifestyle* has one set to give away, filled with the Soothe & Clear bags (three 75g) range, which includes Honey Herb, Honey Lemon Echinacea and the Original. See opposite page to enter.





# NATURAL LIFESTYLE Giveaways

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



## FREE FROM FELLOWS STRAWBERRY MALLOWS

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with Free From Fellows to offer readers the chance of winning one of five bags of its Strawberry Mallows. The brand has extended its line-up of the nation's favourite sweets by adding three super fluffy vegan marshmallow lines. The delicious Strawberry and Vanilla Mallows are perfect for barbecuing with friends and family while the Mini Pink & White Vanilla Mallows are ideal for adding to home bakes and hot chocolates. Free From Fellows Mallows are free from the top 14 allergens, making them suitable for everyone, including vegans and vegetarians.

## GOOD HEALTH NATURALLY PUREC+

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with Good Health Naturally to offer readers the chance of winning one of three of its PureC+ Liposomal Vitamin C + Quercetin. Advanced liposome technology ensures faster and superior absorption than capsules, tablets and powders, achieving higher, longer-lasting dosing with no digestive upset. PureC+ Quercetin delivers powerful support for immune health, essential during the colder months. Pleasant tasting off the spoon or mixed into liquids for convenience and flexible dosing, it is also vegan.



## NUTRATEA BUNDLE

Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with NutraTea to offer readers the chance of winning one of five bundles comprising three of its unique herbal blends: NutraBone, NutraBoost, and NutraJoint. NutraTea specialises in herbal teas formulated by pharmacists and nutritionists to target specific health issues. Utilising 100 per cent active botanicals that have been sustainably sourced worldwide and with no filler ingredients, each tea bag can be reused up to three times throughout the day.



## EZ-DETECT TESTS

These medically approved simple at-home diagnostic tests can help you detect early signs of health problems, ensuring prompt diagnosis and treatment.

There's no need to send off your kits as results are instant. The Prostate Test uses

a finger prick blood sample to spot higher-than-normal levels of PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen), a sign of the disease that affects one in six men. The Colon Test can detect early warning signs of bowel disease by finding hidden blood in the stool. Simply throw one of the test pads supplied into your toilet after a bowel movement and wait two minutes for the pad to change colour, then just flush the pad away. Natural Lifestyle has 10 prizes to give away, with each of the 10 winners able to choose between either the Prostate Test or the Colon Test.

## TERRANOVA NUTRITION LIFE DRINK

Deeply nourishing and intensely synergistic, Terranova's multi-award-winning Life Drink powder was developed as a unique foundational nutritional product. Featuring balanced vegetable protein with fresh freeze-dried greens, berries and mushrooms, Life Drink provides a staggering array of naturally occurring phytonutrients, micronutrients, balanced protein, enzymes, beneficial bacteria, omega 3, 6, and 9 oils, fibre and much more. Life Drink is 100 per cent additive free, and 100 per cent vegan. Natural Lifestyle is offering readers the chance of winning one of five.



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

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# Quick and easy gluten-free

With three *Sunday Times* best-selling gluten free books under her belt, Becky Excell's latest addition, *Quick+Easy Gluten Free*, aims to ensure free from cooking is quicker and easier for everyone.



## No bake chocolate cream pie Serves 12

Gimme a buttery biscuit base, gimme a chocolate ganache, gimme whipped cream. What have you got? You've got my no-bake chocolate cream pie. The layers in this dessert combine to create something really special – both in terms of flavour and texture – that I guarantee nobody will think it was easy to make. Pretend it wasn't, pretend you worked hard on it all day, make them feel special, when really you just spent 20 minutes on it and had the rest of the day to yourself... nobody needs to know that bit!

**Prep: 20 minutes**  
**Chill: 3 hours**

### Ingredients:

#### For the base:

- 350g (12oz) gluten-free digestive biscuits
- 2tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 150g (½ cup) butter, melted

#### For the filling:

- 300ml (1¼ cups) double (heavy) cream
- 300g (10½oz) chocolate (I use half dark/bittersweet and half milk), broken into pieces
- 55g (4tbsp) butter

### To finish:

- 200ml (¾ cup plus 1½ tbsp) double (heavy) cream
- 1tbsp icing (confectioners') sugar
- Chocolate, for grating

### Method:

- Crush the biscuits into fine crumbs in a food processor (or place in a zip-lock bag and bash with a rolling pin), then mix in the cocoa powder until thoroughly combined.
- Add to a large bowl and pour in your melted butter. Mix well. Press into the base and sides of a 23cm (9in) loose-bottomed fluted tart tin (pan) and chill in the freezer for 20 minutes, or a little longer in the fridge.

- For the filling, heat the cream in a saucepan until just boiling. Remove from the heat and add the chocolate and butter. Stir continuously until it's all melted, combined and creamy. Pour over the chilled base and place back in the fridge until set.

- Finish by whipping the cream to soft peaks. Fold in the icing sugar and spoon it on top of the chocolate layer. Sprinkle some grated chocolate on top to finish.

**Tip:** You can also add a teaspoon of orange extract or mint extract to the filling mixture. The cream layer is optional – if freezing, only add the cream layer once defrosted.





## Chilli cheese muffins Makes 6

**These super-moist, cheesy, mildly spicy muffins have totally transformed my opinion of the humble muffin. It's a handy, portable, all-in-one lunch that's delicious hot or cold and 99.9 per cent of the time is far more appealing than any of the gluten-free options I come across when in search of a quick and easy lunch on-the-go.**

**Prep and cook: 25 minutes**

### Ingredients:

- 130g (1 cup) gluten-free plain (all-purpose) flour
- 2tsp gluten-free baking powder
- ¼ tsp xanthan gum
- ½ tsp salt or celery salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 medium egg
- 130ml (½ cup plus 2tsp) milk
- 2tbsp olive oil

- ½ red (bell) pepper, diced
- 100g (3½ oz) drained canned sweetcorn
- 100g (3½ oz) extra-mature
- Cheddar, grated
- 1tsp minced chilli paste
- Handful of spring onion (scallion) greens, finely chopped

### Method:

- Preheat your oven to 200°C fan/220°C/425°F and line a cupcake tray with six tulip muffin cases.
- Add the flour, baking powder, xanthan gum, salt and pepper to a large mixing bowl and briefly mix until combined.
- Crack the egg into a jug (pitcher), add the milk and olive oil and beat with a fork until smooth.
- Pour the wet mixture into the dry ingredients and whisk to a smooth batter. Add the red pepper, sweetcorn, grated cheese (reserving a small handful for the tops) chilli paste and spring onion greens. Mix in

until evenly dispersed.

- Spoon around two tablespoons of the mixture into each muffin case, dividing it evenly. Sprinkle the reserved grated cheese evenly over the tops and bake for 15-18 minutes until the cheese on top is golden.
- Transfer to a wire rack to cool to room temperature or just warm. If you try to remove them from their tulip cases while still hot, you'll lose a lot of your muffin as it'll get stuck to the case!

**Tip:** I wouldn't recommend using the pre-grated cheese you can buy in supermarkets for this recipe, as it's usually pre-coated in starch, which will dry out the muffin mixture. If you're egg-free or vegan, a flax egg is a great substitute for eggs when making biscuits, cookies, muffins and pancakes. Simply combine 1tbsp ground flaxseed with 3tbsp of water in a small bowl. Allow to rest in the fridge for 15 minutes before using in place of one egg. Double or triple the quantities depending on how many eggs you're replacing.



# Date and walnut loaf

Serves 8

The inspiration for this recipe? You guys requested it so many times that I had no choice! And I'm so glad you did because this humble classic quickly became one of my favourite bakes, with a wonderful fruity, almost caramel-like flavour packed into every slice. **Serving suggestion:** add a good slathering of butter to a slice and enjoy with a hot cuppa.

**Prep:** 15 minutes

**Cook:** 30 minutes

## Ingredients:

- 250g (9oz) pitted dates, chopped
- 150ml (⅔ cup) boiling water
- 90g (⅓ cup plus 1tbsp) butter
- 1tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
- 100g (½ cup) light brown sugar
- 85g (3oz) walnuts, chopped, plus an extra 15g (½ oz), chopped, for on top
- 2 medium eggs, beaten
- 225g (1¾ cups) gluten-free self-raising (self-rising) flour
- ¼ tsp xanthan gum
- ½ tsp gluten-free baking powder

## Method:

- Preheat your oven to 150°C fan/170°C/340°F. Line a 900g (2lb) loaf tin (pan) with non-stick baking parchment.
- Place the chopped dates, boiling water, butter, bicarb and sugar in a large bowl and mix together so the butter melts. Leave for about 15 minutes so that the mixture cools down a little.
- Add the chopped walnuts and beaten eggs and mix again before adding the flour, xanthan gum and baking powder, mixing to combine.
- Pour the mixture into the prepared tin, sprinkle with extra chopped walnuts and bake for about 60-65 minutes, covering loosely with foil if it starts to brown a little too much during cooking.
- Allow to cool in the tin for a while before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. Slice and enjoy as it is or spread with a little butter.



**Quick + Easy Gluten Free** by Becky Excell (Quadrille, £20).  
**Photography:** Hannah Hughes.





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