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## DISTRIBUTION

Distributed by Frontline Ltd, Stuart House, St John's St, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5DD. Tel: +44 (0) 1733555161  
www.frontlinedistribution.co.uk Export Distribution (excluding AU & NZ) - Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT. Tel: +44 (0) 20 7429 4000. www.seymour.co.uk  
EU Representative Office - DC Thomson & Co Ltd, c/o Findmypast Ireland, Irishtown, Athlone, Co. Westmeath, N37 XP52

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# Editor's Letter

HOLLY TREACY

Spring is here and it feels so good. We're clearing out our wardrobes, researching our next summer getaway and fresh salads are back on the menu! But the seasons roll by as quickly as they arrive, so we're savouring all that April has to bring and celebrating the little pleasures to enjoy this month. From a really good stretch in the morning, to a great cup of freshly ground coffee – head over to page 36 to discover the surprising wellbeing benefits of these little luxuries. And that's the beauty of living a balanced lifestyle, being healthy is fully enjoying those moments of indulgence (hello, vegan white chocolate and raspberry blondies, on page 40). In fact, we're champions of workout routines that don't lead to burn out or guilt for daring to have a rest day – flick to page 70 for eight ways to make your fitness routine more sustainable for your lifestyle. And balance is something that is absolutely key to our fierce and fabulous cover star, Fleur East: "If there's a pudding on the menu, I'm going to have it. No one should ever deprive themselves," she tells us on page 16. What impresses me most though, is that by the time Fleur hit her late teens, she was already questioning why her insecurities were concerning her and instead, focused on what her body was capable of. If I could go back in time, I wish I could gift this knowledge and mindset to my younger self, and I'm so pleased that women like Fleur are inspiring the next generation to tap into their confidence and inner power. And fitness can be such an incredible outlet for your emotions. Fleur tells us about how it helped her through grief, but it can also be a healthy way to channel big feelings like anger, too. Head over to page 65 to find out why this could be your version of therapy. Wishing you all a happy and healthy month ahead, with the odd treat thrown in!



Holly

## Editor's picks...



"For a little lift to your mood and to transport you to faraway lands, try this new Cologne Intense from Jo Malone."  
£106 50ml, [jomalone.co.uk](http://jomalone.co.uk)



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£11.95, [betteryou.com](http://betteryou.com)



"Improve energy and boost immunity with this perfect pick-me-up supplement to support every day living."  
£25, [wildnutrition.com](http://wildnutrition.com)

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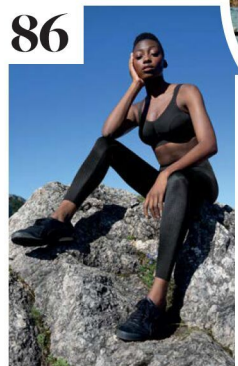
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COVER: Fleur East

CREDIT: Dare2b

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE: 6th April

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# THE HEALTHY HOTLIST

Each month, *H&W* quizzes the experts to uncover a wellness trend that's got us curious...

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

### DOES VEGAN COLLAGEN ACTUALLY WORK?

If you want to reduce the appearance of wrinkles and achieve an overall youthful complexion, safe-guarding the collagen in your skin needs to be your top priority. As you age, you begin to produce less collagen, so taking a daily supplement could help top up your levels – but here's the catch. A lot of the products out there are sourced from the bones, tendons and skins of cattle, pigs or fish, which means vegetarians or vegans miss out. Luckily, the collagen market is expanding at a rapid pace, with several brands offering alternatives to help plug the gap, but are they as effective as the animal versions? "While collagen is something that exists in animals (pigs, fish, cattle and humans are filled with the stuff), all animals need plant-based nutrients to build collagen in the first place," explains Sonia Bainbridge, a natural beauty expert, co-founder of Raw Beauty Lab ([rawbeautylab.com](http://rawbeautylab.com)) and co-creator of Vegan Collagen.

Instead, a lot of vegan and vegetarian products are made from fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, which could mean they're minimally processed by using the wholefood matrix. Vegan collagen also scores brownie points in the environmental factor too: "Vegan collagen is a great ethical alternative and doesn't contribute to the carbon footprint in the way that animal products do," says leading aesthetics nurse and independent prescriber, Nina Prisk ([update-aesthetics.co.uk](http://update-aesthetics.co.uk)). "While there are a lot of vegan collagen supplements entering the market, it's important to be aware of the fact that some of them are collagen-building rather than actually containing collagen. Vegan collagen can also be expensive and, because it's a relatively new concept, there aren't a great deal of studies that prove how effective it is." So, there's still more research to be done, but it's safe to say that vegans and vegetarians needn't miss out for a collagen boost.



## CRAZY FOR COLLAGEN

Keen to branch out? To help narrow the search, senior content writer Daniella shares her three tried-and-tested vegan collagen products that came out on top



**Bio-Structure Vegan Beauty Collagen Support Liquid, £24.99 for a 14-day supply, [hollandandbarrett.com](http://hollandandbarrett.com)**

"After a couple of weeks, I definitely noticed a positive change in my skin – it feels smoother and looks more supple and plump. The added vitamin C also gets a thumbs up from me, contributing to my skin's hydration, as well as the subtle orange flavour that doesn't taste sugary. This is a must for a firmer, glowing complexion."



**Gold Collagen Vegan, £74.01 for a 30-day programme, [gold-collagen.com](http://gold-collagen.com)**

"Hard-working rice peptides (along with 25 other nutritionist-picked ingredients) helps to increase collagen formation and offers similar properties to its animal-based equivalent, marine collagen peptides. Targeting your hair, skin and nails, this formula goes deeper than smoothing fine lines and wrinkles, so I'll be deploying this as a daily health and beauty ally."



**SkinElixir Collagen Builder, £48 for 30 stick packs, [arbonne.com](http://arbonne.com)**

"Probably my favourite flavour of the three – açaí – this collagen contains ingredients that we haven't heard from yet, including sea buckthorn powder, pine bark extract and hyaluronic acid to protect skin cells from oxidative stress (one of the major contributors to ageing). From a holistic standpoint, this supplement ticks all the boxes for healthy skin and all-round wellbeing too."

## THIS MONTH AT *H&W*, WE'RE LOVING...

### BTS at H&W HQ

That's a wrap for season three of the *Walk to Wellbeing* podcast! Editor Holly, senior content creator Laura and senior content writer Daniella have had a blast recording over the last few months, following some really inspiring guests on their walks up and down the country. Giovanna Fletcher, Mark Wright, Mylene Klass and Leanne Pero are just some of the guests you'll be walking with, so pull on your trainers and get out there! If you want to go back and listen to the latest season – and others – all episodes are still available wherever you get your podcasts.



### Skilling in style

Senior content writer Daniella is hitting the slopes soon, so affordable skivewear is a must. This synthetic down jacket from Columbia has a waterproof shell, and the removable faux fur trim marries functionality and style perfectly. Its Omni-Heat technology means you can stay warm outside for longer, while the subtle, multiple pockets can keep valuables safe and dry. A pair of black salopettes should make for a chic après-ski ensemble. £150.50, [columbiasportswear.co.uk](http://columbiasportswear.co.uk)



### Power 'fro Fleur

Cover star Fleur East looks super fierce in her recent Instagram post (@fleurcast) captioned 'Big hair don't care!' – and we love to see it. Head to page 16 to find out why fitness is fundamental to the *Strictly* star and her biggest inspiration.



# What is CANCER ghosting?

A cancer diagnosis can feel isolating even if you have support from friends and family, but unfortunately, some people find their circle grows smaller during this time. We spoke to the experts about the increasing phenomena

WORDS | *Stacey Carter*

**A** cancer diagnosis can be difficult to come to terms with, not just for the person receiving the news, but for their friends and family as well. While we'd like to think that our loved ones would rally around us during this time, research shows that this isn't always the case. In a survey carried out by War On Cancer, a social networking app for cancer survivors ([waroncancer.com](http://waroncancer.com)) 65 percent of respondents said that friends or relatives had disappeared or cut contact after their diagnosis. Experts have termed this phenomenon as 'cancer ghosting' – something that can be incredibly hurtful and isolating for the person impacted by cancer. But, according to the experts, the reason that people drift away is more nuanced than you might think.

## EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

If you're already familiar with the concept of 'ghosting' – when someone removes themselves from your life by cutting you out or by disappearing altogether – then you'll know that it can be a painful experience for those on the receiving end of being 'ghosted'. "Cancer ghosting can crop up for a variety of reasons," says Dr Marianne Trent, clinical psychologist and author of *The Grief Collective*. "But commonly it happens for reasons such as:

- Assuming there are other closer people better placed to support that person.
- Not wanting to upset or remind them of their diagnosis.
- Struggling to manage fears or anxieties.

- Ruminating on previous loss or health events of loved ones.
- Not knowing what to say or do, so choosing to do nothing out of fear.

Often, the person being ghosted will have no idea why their friend or family member has removed themselves from their life. But, as Dr Trent explains, learning about a cancer diagnosis can cause a variety of difficult emotions to bubble up, some of which that person might have never had to have to deal with before. "When a loved one receives a cancer diagnosis, many of our reactions feature some of the key stages also seen in grief, such as shock, disbelief, bargaining, depression and acceptance," says Dr Trent.

"However, sometimes it can be so hard to assimilate this news, especially if it stirs up past trauma, that they mentally put up barriers." For some, finding out that a friend or a family member has cancer can cause them to reflect on their own life and mortality. "A cancer diagnosis might also cause people to rank their perceived level of importance to that person, and, if they feel like they have other people to support them, they choose to step back to give the person space to focus on their health."

## FOR FURTHER SUPPORT

If you or someone close to you has been affected by cancer, or if you have any questions, you can call the Cancer Research UK nurses confidentially on freephone 0808 800 4040, Monday to Friday, 9 am-5pm. You can also visit their Cancer Chat online support forum.





## HOW TO SUPPORT A LOVED ONE WITH A CANCER DIAGNOSIS

**Struggling to know what to say? Specialist cancer information nurse Caroline Geraghty has a few tips on how to navigate that first conversation after a diagnosis.**

### Listen

"When you first hear about a cancer diagnosis, then it can be tempting to jump in and have your say, but actually, just listening and being a soundboard can really help someone – especially during the initial stages. In addition to this, some people might not want to talk about the ins and outs of their treatment or diagnosis. You'd need to respect this and make sure that you don't add pressure to them."

### Don't offer things that you can't do

"Support comes in all different forms, but don't promise things you can't do. Know your limits. Don't say you can help your friend or family member to get to an appointment if you know you are busy with other commitments. Knowing what you can and can't do will help manage that person's expectations."

### Remember that everyone's experience is unique

"Just because you know someone who has also had cancer doesn't mean you know everything about what that person is going through. Cancer affects everyone individually, so try not to use phrases such as 'I know what this feels like' or make assumptions about how people are thinking."

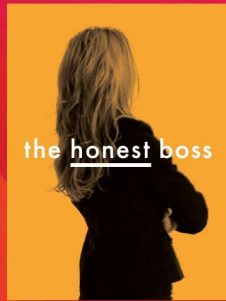
### Avoid looking online

"While it's tempting to go online to find more about specific cancers and treatment options, it's best to avoid doing this, as the internet is awash with incorrect information and this can only cause further upset and frustration."

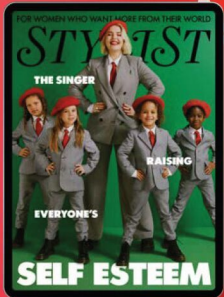
## FINDING THE RIGHT WORDS

It's easy to feel tongue-tied when someone tells you about a cancer diagnosis, but it's important not to overthink what you want to say. "Having open communication is key," says Dr Trent. "Ask them what they need or want. Explain that you're not an expert in this, but you want to be there for them and to talk or not talk, do or not do, whatever their preference is." Remaining silent over fear of 'putting your foot in it' will only make that person feel like a burden or that you can't offer any support. "Reactions to a cancer diagnosis often differ, but some people can feel scared about saying the

wrong thing or convince themselves that they can't offer a sufficient level of support to that person," says Caroline Geraghty, specialist cancer information nurse at Cancer Research UK (cancerresearchuk.org). Sometimes you're not always going to get it right, but don't let the fear of saying something wrong prevent you from saying anything at all. "Being prepared to just listen, even to conversations which might feel darker or gloomy rather than hope-filled, can be really important," says Dr Trent. "You might just be there at the right time when they need someone, so regular check-ins can also be key." **HeW**



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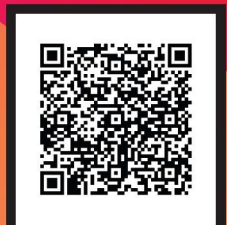
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SCAN ME

# LIVE WELL

Whether you're after a healthy mind, bank balance or relationships, we've got all your wellbeing needs covered this month

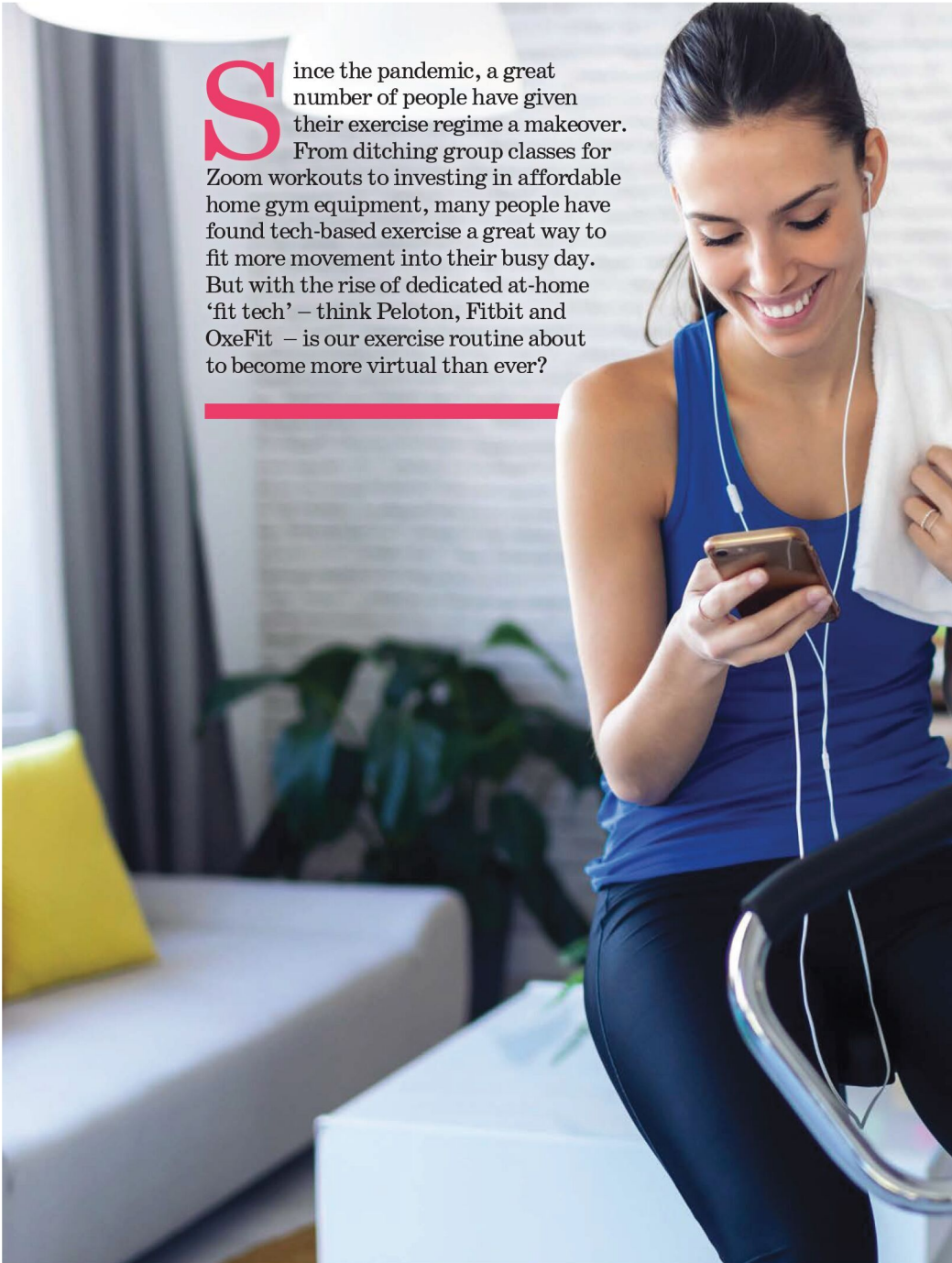
## THE FUTURE OF FITNESS

AR and VR are here and online fitness is going nowhere – but will virtual fitness ever fully replace group classes or 1-1 training sessions? The experts have their say... [➤](#)



**S**ince the pandemic, a great number of people have given their exercise regime a makeover. From ditching group classes for Zoom workouts to investing in affordable home gym equipment, many people have found tech-based exercise a great way to fit more movement into their busy day. But with the rise of dedicated at-home ‘fit tech’ – think Peloton, Fitbit and OxeFit – is our exercise routine about to become more virtual than ever?

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“AI AND VR CAN OFFER  
A FUN ALTERNATIVE TO  
POUNING THE  
PAVEMENTS OR SWEATING  
ON A CROSS TRAINER”

## THE TECH REVOLUTION

The virtual fitness market size is set to reach \$59,231 million by 2027 and with online videos, live streams, and mobile fitness apps growing increasingly popular, it doesn't show any sign of waning any time soon. “As innovations in technology and the virtual world accelerate ever faster, we will soon see virtual gyms where people will be able to put on a headset or glasses and be transported into a class with a trainer or other ‘members’,” says PT Rav Gill (knockout-performance.com). Studies also show that inactive people are less likely to exercise if their workout isn't fun – something that virtual fitness is aiming to remedy. “Bringing an element of entertainment and gaming to a workout is now becoming more popular, with people able to have a workout fighting or running away from zombies through to racing a friend virtually on the rowing machine. This trend will continue as technology progresses.” For those who struggle to motivate themselves to workout, AI and VR can offer a fun alternative to pounding the pavements or sweating on a cross trainer, but some PTs and performance coaches worry that while these tech developments can offer great accessibility, the compromise will be on whether workouts and specific movements will be conducted safely and accurately.

## REAL-WORLD FITNESS

“For me, nothing can ever compete with in-person sessions,” says PT Josh Davies (aimeevictorialong.co.uk). “I often get asked why I don't solely move online with my training and the reason is that I love the rapport you're able to build with clients when you train them in person. Nothing can match this. Not only this, but by training in person I'm able to keep a thorough eye on technique, performance levels and ultimately the safety of my clients. Some things you can't pick up on camera and the client can suffer because of this.” Some trainers highlight the impact that tech can have on our overall health as a reason why AI and VR might not be the right solution for everyone. “Exercise is also a time where you can switch off from screens, in a world where we already spend so much time glued to our phones, tablets, laptops and TVs,” adds CrossFit coach and PT Lucy Campbell (@lucycampbell5). “Adding technology into your fitness routine on top of all of that means you could be going from screen to screen without any break, and if you're doing a workout at night, any blue light present could impact your sleep.”

## VIRTUAL GAINS

Another obstacle that the virtual fitness world faces is space – app-based exercise programmes and workouts over Zoom can be done in the comfort of your living room, but when we factor in equipment, space can become an issue. “The size of equipment required for a fully immersive experience might prove to be tricky,” says Rav. “For example, VR equipment like Oculus Quest or Sony Virtual PS are still quite bulky when worn on the head and being able to do a HIIT class which would include push-ups and burpees wouldn’t be hugely practical if you have a small space to workout in. But, as what happened with computers in the last two decades, the tech will most likely become smaller, lighter and more practical.” Another way in which AI and VR might elevate our fitness game is by giving us more power over our nutrition. “In my opinion, the biggest game changer that technology can bring to the world of health and fitness is when food tracking gets super accurate,” says Nick Mitchell, founder and global CEO of personal training company Ultimate Performance, (ultimateperformance.com). “If you can take a picture of the food on your plate, and then accurately track the calories and macronutrients on your plate, then it would eliminate the barriers to tracking your food. The impact would be profound.” We might be a long way off from photos analysing our food choices, but are we set to see any real shift in the way we work out any time soon? “I don’t think there’ll become a time when personal training will become redundant, but I do think there will become a time when some of the things that personal trainers currently do will become redundant because technology will replace it, such as food tracking” says Nick. “However, it would not replace the key thing that a good trainer will do with someone, which is having a partner with them on their diet and their exercise journey, someone to help them keep accountable both on and off the gym floor, and show them that you are walking hand-in-hand with them on their fitness journey. That is the most important thing and it shouldn’t be underrated.” **HeW**

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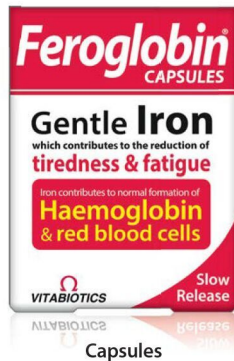
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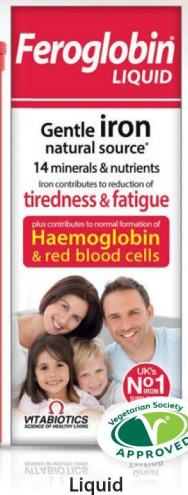
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celeb  
interview

# The Fleur factor

When outside critique has the potential to threaten trademark characteristics, for singer and *Strictly* finalist Fleur East, her authenticity knows no bounds. Here, she shares a new meaning of success, why fitness is fundamental and how she always finds the balance

WORDS | *Daniella Gray*

**L**ess than five minutes into chatting with Fleur East I'm already taking notes – and I don't just mean for the write-up of this interview. On stage during *that* Destiny's Child megamix popping, locking and strutting her stuff on *Strictly*, you'd think confidence comes easily to the Hits Radio host, but as I learn, there's more to the story: "We've all got our insecurities and there've been things in the past that bothered me. I was always like, I've got really thick thighs and short legs and I don't have any boobs... all these little things used to concern me. Then I got to the age of about 19 and I just thought, why am I concerning myself with all these things that I can't change and aren't actually important? I started to focus on what my body was capable of; I set myself free and that's where my confidence came from."









## CENTRE STAGE

Dressed in a white Moschino crop top, low-rise leggings and high-top trainers at her live audition for the 2014 series of *The X Factor*, the then 26-year-old told the judges that on stage is where she's comfortable – and it was abundantly clear she was able to connect with a crowd. With her Michael Jackson-esque choreography, she took that main character energy to the *Strictly* dancefloor that, on the surface, seemed to backfire. After receiving feedback from the judges that she needed to rein in her power, she had the opportunity to take stock of what she later described as “tough criticism” but do it in her own way. “Yeah, it was interesting... I didn't realise it was an issue,” she reflects. “As a singer, my default is to go out there and give 110 percent you know, sing to the top of your ability, and then suddenly I was told it was too much and needed to control it. So, I took the feedback and deconstructed it. I thought, I don't want to lose the power I have, but maybe I can harness and finesse it because I felt like there was a danger of me coming back and being someone completely different. I learned that my power is at the centre of everything I do and it makes me who I am. It gives me my drive and motivation, so it was important to me to keep that and it was a really valuable lesson.”

## BALANCING ACT

That dogged determination and grit is part of Fleur's genetic make-up, for which she has her mother to thank. “I just look at her in awe and think, how do you smile and laugh when you've been through so much? That's definitely rubbed off on me. I have a cheery disposition, shall we say, and I just smile and laugh through the pain, rather than dwell and let it sit on me. My mum is that inspiration for me.” And it's no doubt Fleur's been through some painful times in her life. After losing her Dad at the start of lockdown in April 2020, fitness, understandably, took a back seat. “I stopped working out for a few weeks and felt sluggish, and I really wasn't used to feeling like that, so I started exercising again and suddenly I had all this energy and creativity. It helped me through my grief as well and that's when I realised more than ever that fitness was an essential part of my daily life.” A regime that's combination of HIIT and weight training (Fleur also has a level three personal trainer qualification under her belt) is on pause at the moment while she's touring with the 2022 *Strictly* contestants. “It's full on. Dancing is a different kind of training and HIIT has helped my stamina. We're doing double shows at the moment and that takes it out of you, so there has to be a balance. I'm parking the gym sessions for now and as soon as tour's over, I'll be straight back in.”

“THERE WAS A  
DANGER OF ME  
COMING BACK AND  
BEING SOMEONE  
COMPLETELY  
DIFFERENT”



Image: Dare2b

## MAKE MY SOUL

Back at home, a gruelling 4am alarm to host her breakfast radio show means that training in the mornings is no longer an option, but has found a routine reversal beneficial to other facets in her life, such as sleep and energy.

And as for diet? Balance is, once again, key: "In general, I'm eating a lot of protein like chicken and fish, as well as soups but if there's a nice pudding on the menu, I'm going to have it. No one should ever deprive themselves. I'll always say to my friends if they ask for weight-loss advice that it's more of lifestyle change and then you can treat yourself every now and again and not feel bad about it because you're working out and being healthy on a regular basis."

I'm realising more and more that Fleur is someone who's not about safeguarding those nuggets of information to a richer life and is in fact, happy to share them in order to deepen a connection. With new music on the horizon, she tells me that it's coming from a place of experience, rather than guesswork like it has been in the past. "When I was younger, I always used to write songs from someone else's perspective; it was never personal. But then I left Syco [Simon Cowell's record label with whom she released her debut single *Sax*], and doing things independently, I started to write from a real place. I think it gives my music so much more soul."

## NEW LIFE

Happiness and success also look a bit different to the singer-songwriter than they did when she was starting out. Number one singles and a

bulging bank balance are no longer the hot pursuit, and rather, maintaining an outlet to express herself. "When I was younger, I was like, I just need to get signed and then everything will be great. But the moment I got signed was when the hard work really started. At that point, I had to remind myself of why I

entered the industry in the first place and that was because I loved to sing and I loved music, and that's what I've come back to now. It's not about getting that major label deal or a number one single, those things are a bonus, but the fact I get to wake up and do something I love every day that doesn't feel like work, is success to me."

Fleur has also been working behind the scenes and channelling her creativity in a recent collaboration with sports brand Dare2b, where inclusivity, vibrancy and practicality shine bright in the form of workout apparel. "I used to think, it's just clothes, what's the big deal? But when you're working out, you want to wear something you feel confident in because if you're feeling insecure, you're already in the wrong mindset. I wanted the collection to be loud and colourful as well. I love the Legitimate Leggings in Moonlight Denim because I can do a workout in them and then meet a mate for a drink afterwards. Whenever I'm struggling to get motivated, there's nothing like wearing a fresh activewear set to just slay in – they go hand in hand." Slay on, Fleur. **HLW**

**Fleur East's collection with Dare2b will be available at [dare2b.com](http://dare2b.com) from 21st March.**

## QUICK-FIRE QUESTIONS

### What's one recent little win that you're happy with?

"That I was able to pick up my two large suitcases that I've brought on tour with me up a huge flight of stairs into the hotel without any assistance."

### A song that really gets you in the mood to work out?

"At the moment, I'm just playing my new song *Count The Ways* on repeat."

### I can't live without my...

"Lakers snapback cap! It's such a great thing to wear when you can't be bothered to do your hair."

# aeos

For skin in extra need of TLC, intensely hydrate and regenerate with AEOS ultra-rich creams designed for very dry, prematurely ageing, environmentally sensitised or eczema-prone skin



AEOS' three Ultimate Regeneration Face Creams are formulated with higher percentages of our lovingly harvested biodynamic spelt oil that is extracted using supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> extraction to maintain the full properties of the oil.

Extremely rich in natural Vitamin E and essential fatty acids, our spelt oil boasts excellent antioxidant, moisturising and regenerative properties. As a result it may be particularly beneficial for prematurely ageing, very dry skin or when the skin is subject to harsh environments or extreme changes in temperature. Spelt oil has also been reported to help those with skin conditions such as eczema.

Transform your skin with AEOS

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# Tastes Like Sugar



# This month WE PRESCRIBE...

Just a few of the little things that are bringing us joy

## Bloat-free treats

If you love the joyful buzz that chocolate brings, but don't love the bloat from the dairy content, we're about to rock your world. York-based chocolatier Choc Affair's products are dairy-free, palm-oil-free, sustainably produced and delicious. Every bean they use has been responsibly and sustainably produced, with a little extra paid for every kilo to help reforest the cocoa-growing regions of Colombia. Their chocolate buttons come in five classic flavours; Milk, Dark, Caramel, Oat Milk and Oat White, which are Vegan Society approved. Each pouch weighs 180g and is priced at £3.95. Yum! [Choc-affair.com](http://Choc-affair.com)



*Happy  
chocs*

## Multi-tasking candles

If you love lighting a scented candle as part of your self-care routine, or simply for the ambiance, you'll be pleased to hear that Pilates From Within have taken the scented candle to a whole new level, with a multi-tasking range that has an intention for each. Choose from Inspire, Empower or Nurture and let the special blend of pure essential oils do their thing. Pure joy! £18.95. [pilatesfromwithin.com](http://pilatesfromwithin.com)

*Zen for  
your home*



## Gut-boosting gummies

Did you know that 90 percent of the body's serotonin (our feel-good hormone) is produced in the gut? With that in mind, it makes sense to be kind to our guts. We love Gut Gummies from Myvitamins, a delicious daily direct-line to a healthier digestive tract, and by proxy, more feel-good chemicals. It's a win-win. £29.99 for 60-days-worth of gummies, [myvitamins.com](http://myvitamins.com)



*Happy on  
the inside*

## Mood-Boosting spritz

Our sense of smell can be so evocative, transporting us back in time, or lifting our mood, making us feel energised, or chilled. Edeniste uses active essences that have been tested physiologically and proven to boost emotional wellbeing, working with the reward pathway in the brain. So, if you're having a bad day, you can spritz on your happy scent for a bit of a lift. Try the scent called: Happiness, £68, [edeniste.com](http://edeniste.com)

*Mood-  
boosting scent*



## Tangle-free tresses

Our hair is a key part of our outfit and can tie it all together, and if there's one thing that makes us feel incredible and confident, it's when we have polished smooth and silky hair. We love Taoh oil for its gorgeous natural ingredients (argan oil, macadamia oil and kukui oil) as well as the baby-powder-like scent, but most of all we love how tangle-free it leaves our tresses, £20, [taoh.co.uk](http://taoh.co.uk)



*Super  
shiny  
locks*



# Your New Favourite Mug.



Beautiful, functional and designed to last, the Rise Mug is built with certified 90% post-consumer recycled 18/8 stainless steel and award-winning Climate Lock™ vacuum insulation for caffeinating indoors or out.

[kleankanteen.co.uk](http://kleankanteen.co.uk)







# *Finding your* **FOCUS**

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As our tech gets smarter, our brains struggle to keep up. However, experts believe that resisting distraction is more than just sheer willpower and laying the foundations for a healthy mind is key

WORDS | *Stacey Carter*

**H**ands up if you're guilty of having to re-read the same page of a book over and over again or find yourself drifting off during film night with your partner? New research shows that our attention spans are shrinking – a recent study by Microsoft concluded that the human attention span has dropped to eight seconds – shrinking nearly 25 percent in just a few years. To put it into perspective, that's four seconds less than the 12-second attention span that was recorded 12 years ago, and one second less than that of a goldfish. Gulp. While it's easy to blame our reliance on tech for our inability to focus, experts believe that there are other reasons why our attention spans are dwindling rapidly...

### A STATE OF MIND

Our lives are full of distractions, from the ping of a WhatsApp message to a familiar advertising jingle on the radio, it can sometimes feel like everyone is fighting for our attention. However, some experts believe that technology isn't the only cause of our diminishing concentration levels. "Our increased reliance on

technology may have also played a part in the destruction of our attention spans, but the last couple of years have also had an understated impact on our brains," says Dr Maurice Duffy, an internationally renowned mindset expert and guru ([mauriceduffy.com](http://mauriceduffy.com)). "The inability to form plans and create routines has also left many people often feeling overwhelmed by the simplest of situations, which is a natural coping mechanism

as the body goes into survival mode. The long-term implications of this can cause heightened stress levels and an inability to focus." Signs that you might have a short attention span aren't just limited to thoughts and focus. They can include the inability to direct attention to a relevant object, thought or feeling, frequently reliving events from the past or being distracted by the future, an inability to deflect or ignore distractions, irrelevant thoughts and inability to refocus

"SOMEONE WHO HAS DIFFICULTY MAINTAINING FOCUS WILL OFTEN HAVE A THINKING STYLE THAT IS CONSTANTLY SEEKING STIMULATION"



on the relevant cues when distracted. "Someone who has difficulty maintaining focus will often have a thinking style that is constantly seeking stimulation," says Dr Duffy. "In the long term, your concentration may decrease if you forget things easily, as when thoughts and issues intrude in your mind, demanding attention, it prevents effective concentration."

## ZEROING IN

Of course, it's not possible for us to have laser-sharp focus every hour of every day, just as it's not possible for our body to keep being physically active 24/7. However, there are ways that we can balance our periods of distraction with focus. "Learning how to improve concentration is not something you can achieve overnight," says Dr Duffy. "Our ability to focus every judgement must be based on the task and how much attention we apply to it will vary depending on what the task demand is and how stimulating it is. Just picture a football fanatic watching a close game of football – they can be glued to it for 90-plus minutes. But if you're struggling to meet commitments, constantly side-tracked by the unimportant or not moving toward your aspirations, it's time to get help so that you can focus on what matters most to you," says Dr Duffy. **HEW**

72%

OF PEOPLE SWITCH  
OFF WHEN TALKING  
TO A FRIEND

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## HOW TO SAFEGUARD YOUR BRAIN

While spending less time glued to your phone is a surefire way to improve your attention span, there are other tips at your disposal to regain laser-sharp focus.

### EAT RIGHT

What we eat has a huge impact on our mood, energy levels and even our level of concentration. In fact, a study in the journal *Neurology* demonstrated that people who ate two daily servings of vegetables exhibited the mental focus of someone five years younger than them. Another study from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio also found that people with red blood cells containing higher concentrations of omega-3 fatty acids were found to have better brain structure and cognitive function in middle age.

### MOVE MORE

We know that exercise is great for our mind, but did you know that it can also improve focus? Research from the University of British Columbia has shown that regular aerobic exercise, the kind that gets your heart and your sweat glands pumping, appears to boost the size of the hippocampus, the brain area involved in verbal memory and learning. Studies also show that young people with higher levels of fitness show superior concentration, when compared with children who weren't as fit.

### BE COMPASSIONATE

It's easy to become frustrated if you're finding it hard to zone in on a specific task. However, by berating yourself, you're only going to become more anxious and more overwhelmed. Instead, try a spot of mindfulness by acknowledging your shift in attention, the same way you'd recognise a bird or a football crossing your line of vision. There are no repercussions or implications for this distraction – it's simply your brain keeping tabs on what's going on around you.

### REFRAME YOUR WORKING STYLE

"To help athletes stay focused on the present moment and let go of results, we use intervention methods to help them regain concentration when their brain is off-task," says Dr Duffy. "First, recognise when you're off-task and take action, so track your lack of attention. Second, reframe your working style into small chunks of time, with rest periods in between, which can help with focus. Reducing multitasking is key here."

### PRACTISE INTENSE LISTENING

Deep, intense listening isn't something that comes naturally to a lot of us these days. Intensive listening means analysing what you hear. You probably will have done this at school, or when you start a new job. It involves listening for details and guessing meaning from context. You can practise it by listening to audiobooks or podcasts in short three to five-minute clips and summarising what you've learnt in your head or by putting pen to paper.



Andrea McLean

# “You learn that it is possible to stop”

Our columnist this month talks how to avoid burnout and make the world a better place

**L**ike a toddler being told it's bedtime, whilst I know that stopping is good for me, I have a thousand things that I need to do, each one is vital, and has to be taken care of! Unlike a toddler, I run my own business and have a family to support so the sense of impending doom if I don't do what needs to be done is a strong one. It means every spinning plate will come crashing down, and who knows what kind of disaster that will bring on us all? Having fully experienced burnout, and felt on the brink of it numerous times, I know what happens if every plate comes crashing down.

Nothing changes, and everything changes. The world carries on spinning in its orbit. In your world, the vacuum you have left is somehow filled. Those who love you, or even simply like you, find a way to chip in and help. You learn that it is possible to stop. And when you are ready to start again, you do so with this knowledge, which relieves the pressure, if only by a tiny bit.

Unlike a Hollywood movie you don't always 'come back stronger', ready to conquer the world. Actually, you realise that the whole idea of 'conquering the world' is a ludicrous one, because the world that matters most is happening inside your own home. Are you OK? Are you and your partner OK? Are your kids OK? Are your parents OK? This dynamic exists in billions of homes around the globe, and we tend to treat them as micro-versions of the world at large. But it's the other way around.

## FEEL YOUR FEELINGS

The world is a reflection of how we think, feel and behave at home. Every one of us takes our thoughts and behaviours outside, and wonder why everyone else is so angry, upset, stressed and self-obsessed. We feel this energy and tension and wish everyone else would just calm down and be less reactive. It's like washing in dirty water and wondering why you can never get clean. Looking after ourselves by noticing when we are feeling this way and taking a

moment to reflect on what we can do to address it isn't a sign of weakness – it's simply an emotional flex that we aren't used to seeing.

It's why the world reacted with such shock at the boldness of Jacinda Ardern recently stepping down from her role as Prime Minister of New Zealand, citing burnout as the main reason, saying she simply didn't have enough in the tank to continue. That she is human.

In her statement, she talked about the intense demands of her role, the impact that it had on her family, and how she realised that she needed to prioritise her own wellbeing. Her resignation was reported as: 'A powerful reminder of how even the most accomplished and successful women can struggle with burnout', and the importance of taking care of ourselves. I see it differently. Surely the attitude that even successful women struggle with burnout implies that they should be immune to it? That being smart and capable somehow means it won't happen to you. It infers that if you burnout you are somehow not successful, or aren't smart enough to stop it. Which is absurd, because burnout can happen to anyone, at any time.

## SET NON-NEGOTIABLES

So, what can you do to avoid burnout? Prioritise self-care activities: Self-care activities are so important for our mental and physical wellbeing, and they can help us recharge and reduce stress levels. It doesn't have to be anything fancy – it could be as simple as taking a relaxing bath or doing a face mask, or getting in a good workout or meditation session. Just make sure that you set aside time for self-care each day, and treat it like a non-negotiable part of your routine.

Set boundaries: One of the biggest challenges of working for yourself or having a demanding job is maintaining a work-life balance. That's why it's essential to set clear boundaries between work and personal time, and stick to them. Turn off your work phone and email notifications outside of work hours, and make sure that you're giving yourself adequate time for relaxation and rest.

## THIS GIRL IS ON FIRE

I help midlife women feel great about themselves again – so they can do whatever they want. After two decades working in live television as a national broadcaster, I pivoted to follow my passion for helping women in midlife, through my business This Girl Is On Fire. What started four years ago as a passion project and a free blog is now a global platform dedicated to helping midlife women feel great about themselves again.

I understand that for women in midlife, finding what you need to help you feel good right now depends on your current challenges and what you're ready to commit to. Maybe a quick guide will do to start with, or a book (I've written four). Or you want to take a deeper dive and immerse yourself in a course, or commit to 90 days of group coaching with other women who want to feel great. You may simply want to start by joining a community of women on the same journey as you who want to support each other. I offer all these things globally through online courses, podcasts and live events. My private This Girl Is On Fire community can be accessed on our exclusive app, available on the App Store and Google Play. Or to find out more visit [andreamclean.com](http://andreamclean.com)






**Get plenty of restful sleep:** Sleep is so crucial for our physical and mental health, and it's also one of the first things to go when we're feeling overwhelmed. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep each night, and try to establish a relaxing bedtime routine that will help you unwind and get some quality rest. And don't forget to limit your screen time before bed! I've started reading books again rather than scrolling on my phone and it's made a huge difference.

**Connect with others:** Building strong relationships with friends and family is essential for our overall wellbeing, and it can help us feel supported and reduce stress levels. So, make time for social activities, whether it's a girls' night in, going for a walk with a friend, or trying a new activity together. And if you're feeling particularly overwhelmed, consider joining a support group where you can connect with other women who understand the challenges you're facing.

**Take breaks:** Regular breaks throughout the day can help you recharge and avoid burnout. Easier said than done when there is always 'one more thing to do', and this is the part I find most difficult to stick to – but it works! Step away from your desk, take a short walk, stretch, or do a quick mindfulness exercise to refresh your mind.

Stop, reset or step away. "Jacinda says no to burnout" claimed one headline. Sounds like a good idea to me. **H&W**

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 @andreamclean1  
 [officialandreamclean.com](http://officialandreamclean.com)

# well being

HELPING YOU ACHIEVE A HEALTHY, HAPPY MIND



H&W

## WELLBEING TIP OF THE MONTH

*Visualise your good habits*

Making good habits stick is hard, but one easy way you can help your brain form new positive behaviours is by visualising them. "The brain ultimately cannot perform what it cannot see," says leading psychotherapist Jordan Vyas-Lee (koverninds.com). "But you can also try scripting to help you bring a new reality to life. This gives the brain a roadmap to work from and it's clear from anecdotes and evidence that the best sports stars can see their moves briefly before performing them. Without this powerful visual aid, the brain can't initiate what it needs to. These techniques are a brilliant way of providing a compass point to self-determine the direction that your brain can move you in."



## GUT MEMORY

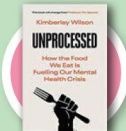
Did you know that improving your gut health can actually help your memory? "Thanks to our growing understanding of the gut microbiome, there's now considerable evidence of a connection between our gut and our brain, and that the state of our microbiome plays an important role in our mental and cognitive health," says Dr Miriam Ferrer, PhD and head of new product development

at FutureYou Cambridge. "Our research suggests that many people have felt diminished brain power over the past two years. To help deal with that, we can improve both brain and gut health simultaneously by having a healthy diet that's low in processed foods, and by exercising regularly. And we can also support them with science-backed nutritional supplements."



*See*

With spring well and truly in swing, make sure you soak up some of the sights and sounds of the season. From daffodils and snowdrops to frolicking lambs, [nationaltrust.org.uk](http://nationaltrust.org.uk) has a list of seasonal-inspired walks near you.



*Read*

Many of us want to eat healthily, but a lot of us don't know where to start. To help you understand where to begin, Kimberley Wilson's new book, *Unprocessed: How the Food We Eat Is Fuelling Our Mental Health Crisis* (Ebury £22), is out on February 22nd. In this book, psychologist Kimberley Wilson reveals the role of food and nutrients in both brain development and mental health.



*Do*

If you find that having a desk job impacts your daily step count, then join On Your Feet Britain, a campaign to encourage Brits to get up and get moving this April. From standing up during phone calls to using the stairs more and arranging standing or walking meetings, there are loads of easy ways that you can get involved. For details, see [onyourfeetday.com](http://onyourfeetday.com).

## CHECK IN WITH YOUR GRANDPARENTS

Loneliness is a real issue in the UK, especially for older people. Recent research from Oak Tree Mobility ([oaktreemobility.co.uk](http://oaktreemobility.co.uk)) reveals that half a million older people go at least five or six days a week without seeing or speaking to anyone at all, while 3.9 million say the TV is their main company during the week. If you have older people in your life, it's a good idea to keep an eye on them so that you can spot any indicators of loneliness when it strikes. Telltale signs that someone might be suffering from loneliness include social isolation due to the loss of loved ones, reduced mobility, and stress, which older adults may experience due to financial concerns and caregiving responsibilities, or other challenges.

# FRESH START

Out with the old and in with the new.  
Shop these spring beauty wonders

## 1 AWAKE ORGANICS

Awake Organics has launched an adorable range of natural skin, hair and body care products in miniature sizes, making the award-winning, sustainable brand more accessible than ever. Don't be fooled by the small bottles, though. Most of the range is waterless and concentrated, so the tiny products contain as many applications as the shelf-bought competition. With over 1,500 five-star reviews, you'll love their locally made, organic, plastic-free selection. Get 15 percent off when you bundle three or more items at [awakeorganics.co.uk](http://awakeorganics.co.uk)



2



## 2 7TH HEAVEN FACE MASKS

Summer skin is made in the spring, so, now's the time to deeply cleanse and prepare your skin to bloom all summer! The Pamper Hamper from 7th Heaven has all the essential beauty treats you need. 7th Heaven products are cruelty-free and full of natural ingredients, so you can indulge in much-needed 'me-time'. Now £8 with 25 percent off at Argos or discover the full range at [my7thheaven.com](http://my7thheaven.com)

3

### BIOGLAN BEAUTY COLLAGEN

The Bioglan Beauty Collagen range harnesses the power of marine collagen with a blend of carefully selected vitamins and minerals, like Biotin and Selenium, to help support healthier hair, firmer skin and stronger nails. With four different formats (Powder, Tablets, Gummies and Effervescent), there is something to suit every lifestyle. Available online at Boots, Amazon and Look Fantastic or in store at Superdrug, Holland & Barret and Asda.

“SPRING CLEAN  
YOUR BATHROOM  
CABINET AND  
ADD A BURST  
OF JOY TO YOUR  
DAILY ROUTINE  
WITH THESE  
FRESH FINDS”

4

### FFØR RE:MOVE YELLOW

Intensely hydrating and highly illuminating, this silverising range by FFØR is made to remove yellow and brassy tones from grey, silver and bleached blonde hair. Blended with enriching, organic lemongrass, lavender and cedarwood, the vegan formulations protect and lock in colour to maintain brightness without compromising the integrity of the hair. Shampoo £20, conditioner £22. [fforhair.com](http://fforhair.com)

3

4





5

**BELLE REGALI NATURALE  
BURNER & WAX MELTS**

Scent your favourite space with this unique porcelain wax burner and aromatherapy wax melts from Belle Regali naturale. Available in two stylish colours, off white and pale sage green, and a choice of six aromatic wax blends.  
[belle-regali-naturale.com](http://belle-regali-naturale.com)

6

**ARRAN NATURALS  
BODY CARE RANGE**

Experience the scents of luxurious lemon and patchouli to help centre your mind and body. The fresh, citrus, fragrance of the MINDFUL formulation is packed with Scottish botanicals and essential oils to help you focus your awareness on the present moment. [arran.com](http://arran.com)

Research shows a 40% improvement in mood after being exposed to pleasant scents. Try burning a wax melt while you get ready for a joyful pick-me-up!

7

**DELILAH MAKE-UP RANGE**

delilah is a British, vegan and cruelty-free make-up brand. In Bloom is a hydrating liquid blush that glides effortlessly onto the skin, giving cheeks an instant lift. The innovative hydrating formula, with botanicals for added skin benefits, has been designed to create seamless, wearable colour for a glowing healthy complexion. [delilahcosmetics.com](http://delilahcosmetics.com)





## Support your inner strength

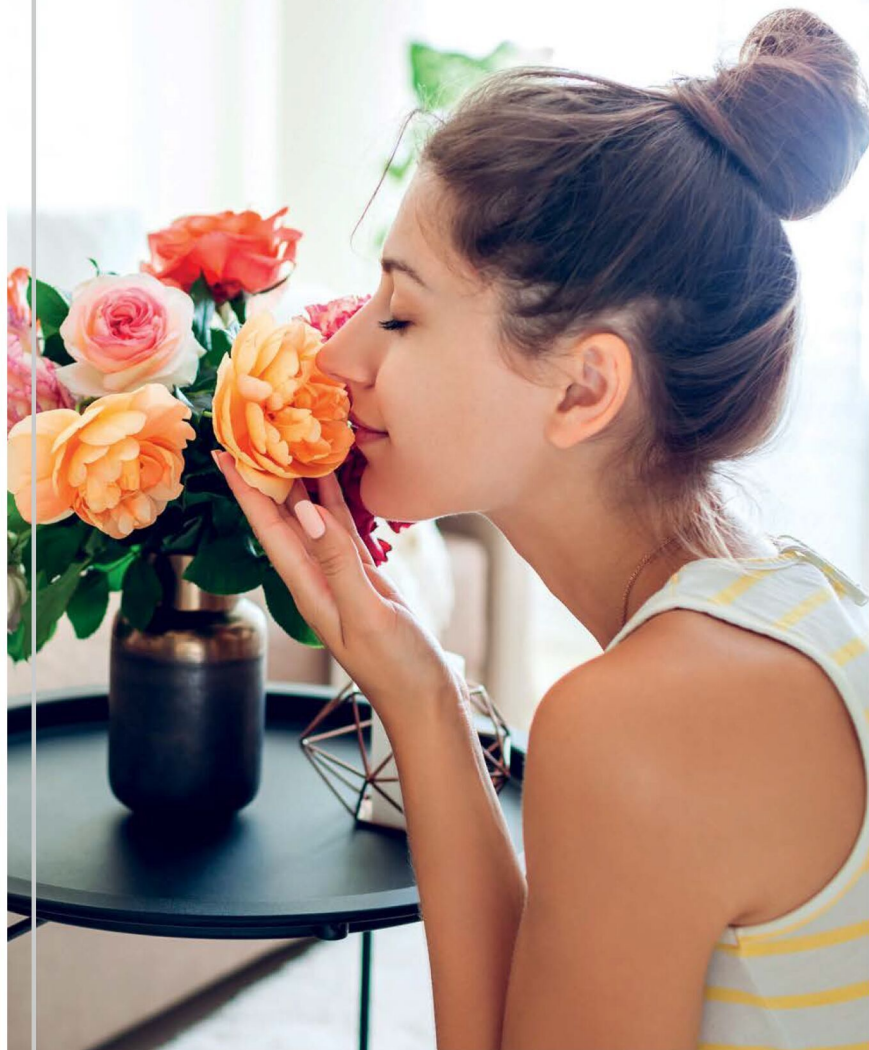
Blending together the finest ingredients, plant actives, and essential oils, GAIA Skincare products are full of intention and integrity. Led by the brand philosophy; Your Wellness, Naturally.



[GAIASKINCARE.COM](http://GAIASKINCARE.COM)

#YourWellnessNaturally

How often do you stop to smell the roses? Life is so busy and often we're so preoccupied with ticking things off the never-ending to-do list that we don't pay enough attention to all the good things that are already right in front of us. With this in mind, we're celebrating life's little pleasures this month. Expect the next few pages to fill you with easy, purse-friendly ideas on how to fill up your cup. From indulgent, yet healthy recipes on page 38, to lifestyle tweaks to level up your everyday treats on page 41, hopefully you'll feel like you're flourishing along with the flowers this month.



# LIFE'S *little* PLEASURES

# Pleasures

You might think that indulgence can't go hand-in-hand with a healthy lifestyle, but you'd be wrong! There are many simple luxuries that have surprising benefits – so go on, treat yourself...

WORDS | *Claire Munnings*

## *Watch your favourite rom-com*

Relaxing with the TV on can feel like the ultimate guilty pleasure, right? Especially when there's a pile of ironing calling your name. But research has shown that doing things that make us laugh (like watching a funny programme or reading a book that makes us chuckle) is a brilliant way to combat stress. Not only does our body relax, but we flood our system with feel-good endorphins, and give our lungs a good workout, too.

Scientists have also discovered that watching nostalgic movies we've already seen repeatedly (hello, *Bridget Jones' Diary*) can give us comfort in times of anxiety. So here's your excuse to pick up the remote and get comfy on the sofa tonight!

## *Go back to bed for an afternoon nap*

Taking yourself off for a little doze halfway through the day may feel like a luxury, but there are health benefits to shutting your eyes for a few moments. "Napping can be very useful and can even improve the quality of your sleep by helping to remove some of the over-stimulation and agitation of the day before you get into bed at night," explains Dr Nerina Ramlakhan, a sleep expert, physiologist and wellbeing coach (drnerina.com). "Napping offers various benefits including reduced fatigue, increased focus and alertness, improved mood and performance and better memory," she adds. We like the sound of that!

## *Get your bake on*

Love the feeling of crafting something from scratch in the kitchen, carefully weighing out ingredients and watching your creations come to life in the oven? Well, baking is one of life's little pleasures that is most certainly good for your mental health. One recent study found that those who engage in creative projects

such as cooking and baking are happier in their day-to-day lives, and psychologists often talk about how the achievement of baking can raise self-esteem and confidence. And of course, you can't beat the feel-good factor of being able to enjoy your own masterpieces. Sourdough never tasted so good!



## *Spend some time doing nothing*

When was the last time you simply did nothing? If you're madly trying to rack your brains to pinpoint a date, you're not alone. And while it might seem like a luxury, experts say that diarising time for exactly this is key for our mental health. "Doing nothing in our productivity-obsessed culture can often make us feel inadequate or guilty for resting," says Dr Nerina. "However in order to be our best self, taking time

for yourself to 'do nothing' can actually benefit us in all aspects of our life. That is because once we detach and rest we can better tap into our memory, creativity and even boost our problem-solving skills. Scheduling time each day for this can make us more efficient, encourage calm and help us escape the overwhelming chaos of daily life while providing us with a pleasurable sensation of slowing down."

## *Indulge in a glass of red wine*

While we all know that consuming alcohol in large quantities isn't good for our bodies, there is evidence to suggest that sipping a glass or two of red wine might have some advantages. Research

tells us that this particular type of drink might be good for gut health, and scientists have also noted that red wine contains antioxidants called polyphenols, which reduce inflammation in the body. Cheers!

## *Savour a mouthful of dark chocolate*

Surely one of life's finest pleasures is indulging in a square or two of deliciously smooth chocolate? And although some of the mass-market options available aren't necessarily the healthiest things to snack on, it turns out that if you choose dark chocolate you could be on to a winner. In fact, research has found that dark chocolate has a dense nutrient content and contains high levels of minerals such as magnesium. Plus, the fact it's rich in antioxidant plant compounds means it may improve vascular health and even reduce your risk of heart disease. Yes, really! The key to making your indulgence count is to opt for natural and organic brands and bars which showcase more than 70 percent cocoa solids. "If you can't pronounce the ingredients on the back of your chocolate wrapper, your gastrointestinal system undoubtedly won't digest them," says nutritionist Hannah Richards, the founder of The Gut Clinic in London (thegutclinic.net). She recommends trying Bare Bones Chocolate (bareboneschocolate.co.uk), which sells cocoa nibs as well as vegan and dark options.

## *Drink a really good cup of coffee*

Is there anything better than sitting down with a hot cup of freshly ground coffee? Well, it's good news for caffeine-lovers, because this simple indulgence has been proven to have a multitude of health benefits. In fact, there's evidence to suggest that not only can coffee help support our brain function and boost metabolism, but it could even help you live longer by lowering the risk of death from several different health conditions such as heart disease. There is a cap to how much you should enjoy on a daily basis (most experts agree around three or four as a maximum), but this news should make your next coffee break even sweeter.

## *Stretch for five minutes when you wake up*

When you're in a rush in the morning, doing anything other than the breakfast-shower-dress routine can feel like a trivial indulgence, but bear with us. Experts say that pressing pause on your schedule and taking some time out to stretch first thing can have far-reaching benefits. "I find the best time to do stretches is while I'm still in my pyjamas, and depending how I'm feeling, I'll either do a couple of slow sun salutations to wake my body up, or if I'm feeling really lazy, some cat-cow spine stretches and a child's pose," says yoga teacher Sarah Highfield (yogagise.com). "Not only are these stretches beneficial for your body physically, but they will also help you to feel more connected to yourself and appreciate the body you are in."

## CHOCOLATE PANCAKE STACK

These only require seven ingredients for both the pancakes and the sauce. Add some strawberries on top for the best stack ever!

MAKES 5 PANCAKES

### For the pancakes

- 125g porridge oats
- 3 ripe bananas
- 35g cacao powder
- 250ml almond milk
- 2 tbsp pure maple syrup
- 120g cashew butter
- 2 tbsp coconut oil, for frying

### For the sauce

- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 60ml almond milk
- 2 tbsp cacao powder
- 2 tbsp cashew butter
- 2 tbsp pure maple syrup

1 For the pancakes, whizz the oats in a blender for about a minute until they become a flour.

2 Add in all the other pancake ingredients except the coconut oil and whizz again until you have a thick batter.

3 For the sauce, melt the coconut oil in a saucepan on a medium heat, then stir in the other ingredients until you have a thick sauce.

4 Pop a tablespoon of coconut oil in a frying pan on a medium heat and, once melted, dollop large spoonfuls of the mixture into the pan. Leave the pancakes to cook for a couple of minutes (2-3 minutes each side is usually enough), then flip over with a spatula to cook the other side too. Continue until you've used all the batter, adding in more coconut oil if you need.

5 Stack up the pancakes on a plate and pour the sauce on top. Serve straight away, adding any berries on top if you fancy.

# Chocolate HEAVEN

Easy dairy-free, gluten-free, refined sugar-free and guilt-free chocolate treats with maximum flavour by health coach and food blogger Emma Hollingsworth





### MY SECRET CHOCOLATEY GRANOLA ☺

#### MAKES 1 BIG JAR

3 tbsp coconut oil • 6 tbsp pure maple syrup • 120g peanut butter (use a seed butter or tahini to make nut-free)  
• 4 tbsp cacao powder • Pinch of Himalayan salt • 300g Jumbo oats

#### Optional extras:

Chopped Medjool dates • Cacao nibs  
• Coconut flakes • Chocolate chips

1 Preheat your oven to 180C/350F/ Gas 4.

2 Pop the coconut oil in a saucepan, place on a low heat and stir until totally melted. Add in the maple syrup, peanut butter, cacao powder and salt and stir well, then remove from the heat and stir in the oats. Once this is all mixed together, spoon the granola onto a lined baking tray.

3 Put into the preheated oven and then bake for about 15 minutes, then take out of the oven and stir before baking for a further five minutes.

4 Once the granola has cooled, you can then add in any extra ingredients and store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to three weeks



## WHITE CHOCOLATE AND RASPBERRY BLONDIES ©

These blondies are gooey in the middle and golden on top, with white chocolate chunks and raspberries making them next-level delicious.

**MAKES A 20CM SQUARE TRAY-FULL**

170g ground almonds • 40g buckwheat flour • 160g peanut butter • 125ml almond milk • 220g pure maple syrup • 1 tsp vanilla extract • 2 tbsp coconut oil • 70g white chocolate chunks (see below or use any vegan white chocolate broken into chunks) • 60g raspberries (fresh or frozen)

**For the white chocolate chunks**  
 • 75g cacao butter • 2 tbsp pure maple syrup • 1 tbsp peanut butter  
 • ½ tsp vanilla extract

- 1 Preheat your oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.
- 2 Make the white chocolate in advance by melting the cacao butter in a bowl over a saucepan half-full of water on a low heat, making sure the bowl is not touching the water, then remove from the heat and stir in the other ingredients until well combined. Pour the mixture into bar-shaped moulds or an ice-cube tray and place in the fridge to set.
- 3 Pop the ground almonds and buckwheat flour in a bowl and mix well.
- 4 In a separate bowl, carefully stir together the peanut butter, almond milk, maple syrup and vanilla, then cream in the coconut oil (melt it a little bit if it's very hard). Pour this

mixture into the dry ingredients and mix well. Finally, chop the chocolate into chunks and stir these in, along with the raspberries.

- 5 Next, spoon the mixture into a 20cm square baking tin or mould, then bake for 25 minutes. Allow to cool before cutting into delicious squares!



**For more, read this**

Edited extract from *Vegan Chocolate Treats* by Emma Hollingsworth (£18.99, Kyle Books) Photography: Jen Rich.





*And*  
**Relax!**

Your ultimate pamper  
guide to elevate everyday  
self-care habits

LIFE'S *little* PLEASURES

**H**ands up who has all the best intentions for self-care activities, but there just never seems to be enough time for them? You're not alone. The good news is we can fit in pockets of 'me time' into our everyday routines by upgrading the simple things for a bit of at home pampering that doesn't take up hours or cost the earth. Try some of these DIY tweaks and tips to help you look and feel relaxed and rejuvenated.



## Bathtime BLISS

Self-care isn't all about bubble baths and face masks... but it's a good place to start. And who doesn't feel happier and more relaxed after a good soak in the tub? Set the scene and level up your bathing time by setting the scene with some bathroom upgrades, including this black bamboo bath tray (£10), resin lotion dispenser (£7), terracotta Egyptian cotton towel (from £1.20), and bamboo bath brush (£5) all from [Dunelm.com](http://Dunelm.com). Play your favourite music or feel-good podcast, light a candle (one of our current favourites is Gaia Skincare Calming Candle (£25,

[gaiaskincare.com](http://gaiaskincare.com)). Then swirl in your favourite bath oil, bubbles or salts – we love Belle Regali Rose & Patchouli Bath Salts (£16.50, [belle-regali-naturelle.com](http://belle-regali-naturelle.com)), submerge your bod and feel the tension melt away. And, especially if you're feeling a bit sore and stiff, Elemis Aching Muscle Super Soak (£44, [uk.elemis.com](http://uk.elemis.com)) is just the thing.



## Sweet SCENT-SATIONS

Indulge your senses with uplifting aromas, whether you're out and about or chilling at home. "You can create a tranquil setting in your home by lighting candles; aroma has an instant effect," says Noella Gabrielle, Elemis co-founder. And don't underestimate the power of spritzing on a good perfume to give yourself a lift. Treat yourself to an optimistic, sunny scent for spring, like Miller & Harris Cœur de Jardin (£125 for 100ml, [millerharris.com](http://millerharris.com)), a joyful fragrance combining notes of peach, tuberose and jasmine.

And STORIES Parfums N°01 Eau de Parfum (£150 for 100ml, [storiesparfums.com](http://storiesparfums.com)) is also like a smile in a bottle.



## DIY Facial

We all know that if we want to keep skin looking its best then we need to remove make-up before bedtime. Rather than see this as a chore, why not use this time to de-stress? "It's important to set aside some time in the day to let go, whenever works best for you," says Elemis co-founder and global president Noella Gabrielle (uk.elemis.com). "We live in such a fast-paced world so it's essential to stop and take a few deep breathes and let your body relax."

Bath-time offers the ideal opportunity to give your complexion some TLC. You can get excellent results at home with a few key products and a bit of know-how. Here Noella tells us how to give the perfect DIY facial:



**1** "Begin by massaging your cleanser onto dry skin, we love Pro-Collagen Cleansing Balm (from £12) to effectively remove make-up, dirt and grime. Cleanse again, either with the same first cleanser or a treatment facial wash. Remove these with a warm mitt or cloth and then follow with a toner.

**2** Next apply a pea-sized amount of moisturiser (try Pro-Collagen Rose Marine Cream, £94) to lock in moisture. Or apply a skin nourishing facial oil, like Skin Bliss Capsules (£72), inhale the aroma and massage into skin.

**3** Complete your routine by laying an eye mask under the eye area – Pro-Collagen Hydra-Gel Eye Masks (£54) work wonders – for a few minutes while you relax. Remove and dab any excess product around the eye area using your fingertips and a raindrop movement from the eyebrow to the cheekbones.

**4** Follow these steps whenever you feel you need it – but once a week will really help."

### TOP TIP

when performing your at-home facial, be sure to work not only over the face, but the neck and décolleté too.



## Body BUFFERS

Your limbs might've been hibernating under cosy sweaters and leggings all winter, but remember to look after the skin on your body too. Slough away roughness with OSKIA Skincare Renaissance Body Scrub (£49, [oskiaskin care.com](http://oskiaskin care.com)), a dual-action emulsifying scrub, rich in health-boosting vitamin, minerals, enzymes and omegas to leave your skin feeling soft and radiant. The scent alone is enough to make you feel like you're at a spa. Weleda Birch Body Scrub (£10.95, [weleda.co.uk](http://weleda.co.uk)) is another superb skin smoother.



## Good HAIR DAYS

Get that 'just stepped out of a salon' feeling every day with the right at home TLC. First thing's first: get your beauty sleep and wake up to glossy, less tangly tresses by investing in a luxe silk pillowcase, which is said to reduce hair breakage by up to 70 percent. Check out the range at [thesilkglow.com](http://thesilkglow.com) (£49.99) where you'll find 100 percent pure mulberry silk pillow cases that are hypoallergenic and antibacterial, plus they won't soak up your face serums and oils. For a salon worthy blow-dry at home without needing a tutorial, look no further than the Revlon One Step Volumiser Plus (from £45, [Argos](http://Argos)). It'll dry your strands while giving volume and lift, mimicking the hairdressers blow-dry technique. Hello big, bouncy locks.



LIFE'S little PLEASURES

Amanda Byram

# Balancing Act

Our wonderful columnist explains how we can all get a little more balance in our lives

🐦 @amandabyram 📷 @amandabyram 💻 amandabyram.com

**I**n the western world we have become accustomed to living to work rather than working to live. And it can begin as soon as we wake up. The alarm clock goes off and we find ourselves thrust into an all-too familiar panic of trains, tubes or traffic, meaning that by the time we reach the office, we have already been exposed to stress or commuter confrontation.

It often doesn't improve once we're at our desk, as the inevitable strong coffee then precedes a day of deadlines, office politics, desk hunching, screen staring and meaningless meetings before we hurtle back into the rush hour to fight our way home. Even then, there's no escape as we are constantly reachable via email, text or WhatsApp work groups making it hard to disconnect from work issues and work-related anxieties.

Eventually, we land on the couch with a glass of red, all the while wishing that Friday would just hurry up and get here! Of course, the real shame of falling victim to this pattern is that so much of it is avoidable and with a little conscious tinkering in the way we think about work and approach our daily routine, we can learn to love our work life.

Firstly, if you want the most out of your professional life, it is up to you to go into work with purpose and a plan. In other words, you have to know why you are turning up, where you want to go and how to get there. It sounds simple yet ask the majority of your colleagues where they see themselves in one, five or 10 years and the answer will often be "I don't know." So, if you want a raise or a promotion or to be CEO of the whole company, you need to plan your route and then go after it with your goal in mind. Along the way, document your good work and take credit when the time comes. After all, if no one knows that you are smashing it, how can you ever expect to be rewarded? By doing well, keeping score and speaking up, you'll quickly ascend the ladder resulting in professional satisfaction and

everything that goes with it. And, don't engage in office politics. We spend roughly 40-50 hours a week with our colleagues. For many, that's more than we spend with our loved ones which makes navigating these relationships vital for our mental health and levels of happiness. As with any relationship, the first step towards more positive interactions is to recognise how we behave and whether we are working towards improving a situation or inadvertently making it worse through reacting badly.

So, if a tense situation arises remember we are all the hero of our own story, often assuming we are always right or defending ourselves even in times we know we are wrong. That's just our ego playing up. The best way to deal with the ego is to keep it silent long enough to listen and hear what is going on around us. Furthermore, when you get irate, aggressive, or argumentative close your eyes, take a breath and recognise the trigger that's making you have the bad reaction. Now, put a 'space' between you and the 'trigger' by blowing up an imaginary balloon. With each breath the balloon's expansion will push the trigger a little further away giving you enough mental space to deal with the issue with patience and maturity.

And when the dust settles, if you were at fault, then always apologise. Apologise either for your actions, or apologise for the other person's perception of your actions and move on. This pause and acknowledgment is a huge step towards taming the ego and working more cooperatively. On the other hand, when the other person is at fault, accept that no one is perfect and try to help them through it. From time to time, you'll come across toxic characters who either thrive on drama or get off on making others feel bad. If that is the case, don't play their game. Instead, speak up and utilise HR support networks to resolve situations as quickly as possible.

Next, let's talk about how we talk





“Plan your leisure with as much urgency as you plan your work... move from boxsets to bucket lists”

about work because that will affect how we think and ultimately feel about our J.O.B. It is so easy to let the language we use slide towards the negative and even words we use all the time are silently sabotaging our mental health. For example, the word “busy” is not something you’d regard as negative yet when you say “I am so busy this week” or “I’m too busy for anything else in my life” it mutates into a very constrictive word that limits your options and suffocate you like an ever-tightening necktie.

Instead, tell yourself and others you are being “productive” or say “I have a very productive week ahead”. You’ll instantaneously feel good about what lies before you.

On the subject of productivity, why not use your commute time productively rather than answering emails, idly scrolling social media or silently sitting there waiting for the journey to end. Instead, learn a language, listen to a self-improvement podcast, work on your business plan, read a novel or better still write a novel! This is your time, so use it wisely and allow yourself to embrace this time rather than lament it.

The alternative to productivity is rest, and remember that over the course of the day, it is important to take time out, especially if you have to sit down all day and use a computer screen. Research has shown that small amounts of exercise during the day far outweigh the benefits of an hour-long gym session. So, even take the exit stairwell like you’re braving Everest, or pop out for some fresh air and do some deep breathing along the way. Always try to incorporate some stretches whenever you can – muscles can get bunched up and knotty when we sit in the same position for too long, and ultimately this can lead to bad backs, hips and joint issues. However you choose to break up your day, remember that you always need to incorporate time for yourself.

As important as it is to give your body a break, remember to also give your mind some time off during the day. Experts believe that we have an average of 70,000 thoughts a day, that’s an average of 2,900 an hour, that’s 48 thoughts a minute... A MINUTE! That’s a lot of thoughts to process, making it important to learn how to bring your chatty mind to a standstill and give yourself a break from the mind gossip. The simplest way to meditate is to sit quietly and focus on your breathing. If thoughts come rushing in, imagine them as weeds, and just pluck them out and discard them, then simply return to the breath. I know how hard it can be, because often when we sit in silence,

we start to think of so many things. If that is tough then leave your phone at your desk and just go for a walk. Work will be there when you get back and, even if it is 15 minutes, you’ll be grateful for the time away.

Go to bed earlier and wake up naturally. Your alarm clock should be your backstop and if you are waking up with a noisy jolt every morning, you are probably going to bed too late and/or not getting enough restorative sleep. So, get to bed an hour earlier than you normally do and see how you feel the next day. Still tired? Then go to bed two hours earlier the next night and keep tweaking it until you wake up naturally 15 minutes before your alarm goes off. The mornings will feel so much brighter within a few weeks if you treat sleep with the importance it deserves.

Lastly, plan your leisure with as much urgency as you plan your work. As Cindy Lauper once said, “When the working day is done, oh girls, they want to have fun.” So wise. So true. Yet sometimes, weekends can come and our evenings are spent just vegging out. Great from time to time, but if we don’t use our leisure time carefully then essentially, we are just clock watching until we must go back to work. There should be things we all do in our daily lives that we do purely for the joy of it. Not because they lead somewhere or because they tick a box, but because we all need to allow our inner child to come out to play from time to time. The difficulty arises from the fact that as adults, there is always something to do on the to-do list, so the best way to ensure playtime exists is to organise it in advance. Try setting some experiential leisure goals which will lead to long-lasting memories, from simple trips to the theatre to finally taking that dream holiday you’ve been talking about for years and never got around to. Doing so will have a positive effect on your work life as you’ll be more appreciative and probably be good for your love life, friendships, and family relationships as you move from box sets to bucket lists and beyond. **HW**

## For more, read this THE SWITCH



For more tips on how to use NLP and switch your everyday language for better mental health, check out Amanda’s book *The Switch*, available to order now on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or signed copies from her website, [amandaryan.com](http://amandaryan.com)



# MAKE GOOD FOOD GREAT!

Find us in the Table Sauces & Condiments aisle

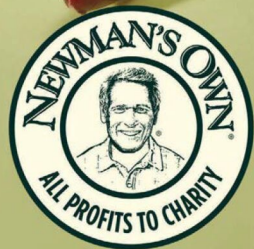
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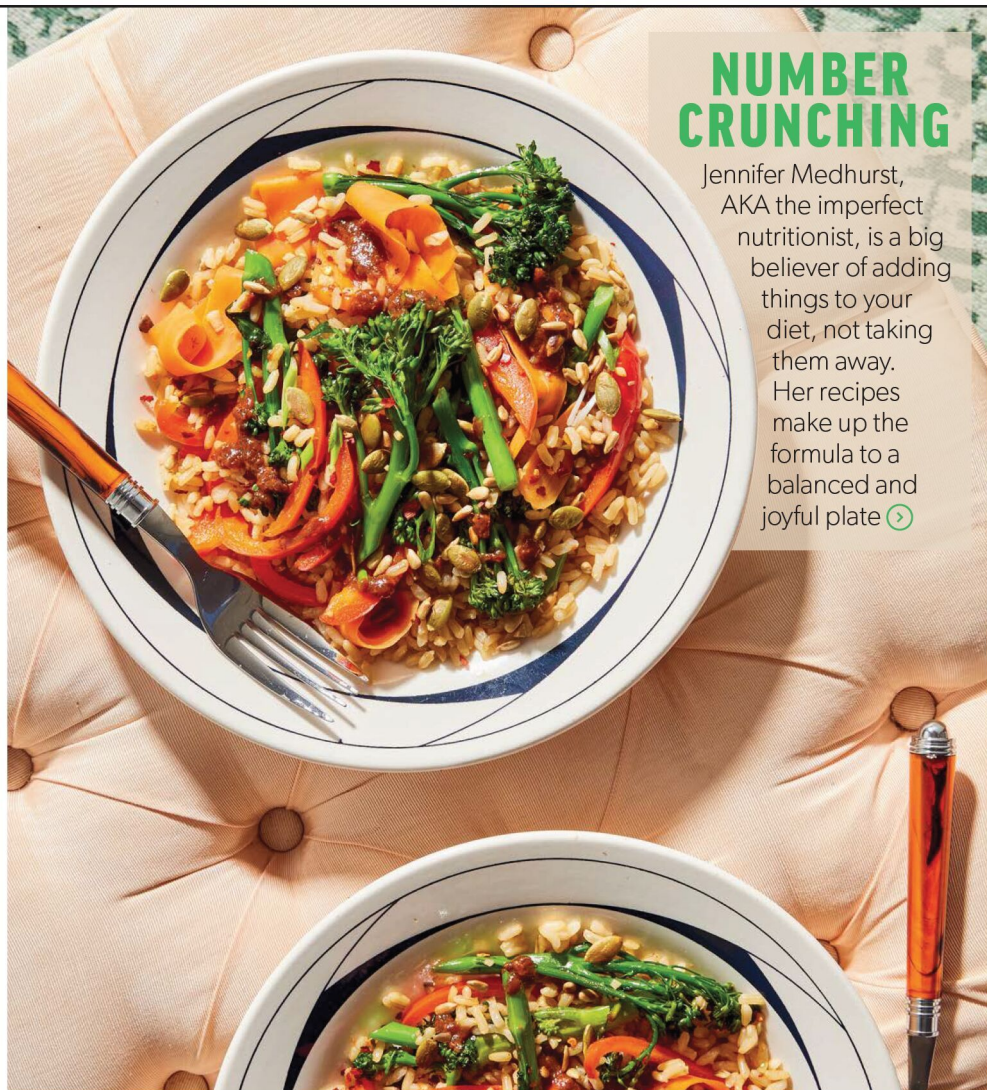


# EAT WELL

From delicious healthy recipes to the best nutritional advice, we guide you through what should – and shouldn't – be on your plate this month

## NUMBER CRUNCHING

Jennifer Medhurst, AKA the imperfect nutritionist, is a big believer of adding things to your diet, not taking them away. Her recipes make up the formula to a balanced and joyful plate [➤](#)





## White bean stew with cabbage and onions

Ready in: 45 minutes

SERVES: 3

GF DF VG

- 4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve (optional)
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 2 x 400g cans cannellini beans (or any white beans, such as haricot or butter beans), drained and rinsed
- 950ml vegetable or chicken broth (or 950ml water plus 2 tablespoons bouillon)
- 200g mushrooms, sliced into bite-sized pieces
- ½ head of cabbage, coarsely chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup/100g dill, coarsely chopped
- Yoghurt, to serve (optional)
- Salt and pepper

1 Heat the extra virgin olive oil in a medium pan over a medium-high heat. Add the onion and season with salt and pepper. Cook for 8-10 minutes, without stirring too much, until it is just turning brown. You don't want caramelized onion or burnt onion, but right in the middle, so just adjust the heat and frequency of stirring as needed.

2 Using a slotted spoon, transfer half of the onion to a small bowl and set aside (these are for topping).

3 Add the beans to the pan and, using a wooden spoon, spatula or potato masher, crush about half of the beans into the pan. You want to have some of the beans crushed and some still whole.

4 Then add the broth and simmer for 15-20 minutes until you reach your desired consistency. Add the mushrooms, cabbage and vinegar and simmer, with a lid on, about 15 minutes until the cabbage and mushrooms are tender, and all the flavours have come together. Season with salt, pepper, and more vinegar if you like.

5 Remove from the heat and stir in half the dill. Divide among bowls and top with more dill, the reserved onions and more pepper. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and stir in some yoghurt if you like.

## Miso, ginger, carrot and brown rice stir-fry

- 120g brown rice
- Extra virgin olive oil, for frying
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small head of broccoli, chopped and broken into bite-sized florets (don't forget to slice the stalk into bite-sized pieces too)
- 2 medium carrots, skin on and cut into ribbons or semicircles
- 1 red pepper, diced into bite-sized pieces

### Dressing:

- 3 tbsp brown rice miso paste
- 2 tsp maple syrup
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of 2 limes
- 1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp brown rice vinegar

### Topping:

- Fresh coriander, chopped
- Fresh chilli, diced or chilli flakes
- Fresh lime juice
- 2 spring onions, sliced
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds

Ready in: 10 minutes

SERVES: 2

GF DF VG

1 Cook the rice according to the packet instructions, making sure to rinse it with cold water first. Once cooked, set aside.

2 Meanwhile, make the dressing by mixing all the ingredients together in a small bowl.

3 Next, place a wok or large frying pan over a medium-high heat and add some extra virgin olive oil in. Add the garlic, broccoli, carrots and red pepper and cook for a few minutes so the vegetables are soft but still have bite.

4 Stir the rice through the vegetables and cover with the dressing, making sure everything is evenly coated.

5 Spoon into bowl and top with fresh coriander, chilli, lime juice, spring onions and sesame seeds.

**TIP:** Rinse the rice before cooking. Place in a pan, cover with cold water to 1cm (½in) above the top of the rice. Cook according to the packet instructions. There should not be any water to drain off the rice.





# Cajun cod with black bean salsa

Ready in: 10 minutes

SERVES: 2

- 2 cod filets • Juice of ½ lime
- 1 tsp honey • 2 tsp Cajun spice mix • Salt and pepper

## Salsa:

- 400g can black beans, drained and rinsed • 1 banana shallot, diced • 6 cherry tomatoes, diced • 2 tsp freshly chopped coriander • 1 avocado, chopped • Juice of 1 lime • 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil • 1 red chilli, finely chopped

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/ Gas 6.

2 Mix the Cajun spice, lime juice and honey together in a bowl and coat the cod filets. Season and roast for 8-10 minutes.

3 Meanwhile, mix the salsa ingredients together and set aside.

4 Serve the Cajun cod and salsa with a roasted sweet potato and steamed broccoli.



# Dark chocolate bark

Ready in: 30 minutes

SERVES: 12



- 2 x 100g bars of 70% dark chocolate
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Seeds, such as flaxseeds, chia seeds, hemp seeds or sunflower seeds
- Mixed nuts
- Dried mulberries
- Puffed rice
- Dried coconut flakes

1 Melt the dark chocolate in the microwave in 30-second bursts, stirring after each one. The chocolate is done when it's about 90 percent melted, keep stirring and the residual heat should melt the remaining pieces.

2 Stir in the extra virgin olive oil.

3 Pour the mixture onto a lined baking tray. Using a silicone or rubber spatula, spread the chocolate evenly over the centre area of the baking tray – aim for a thickness of about 5mm (it won't reach the edges).

4 Sprinkle the seeds, mixed nuts, dried mulberries, puffed rice and coconut flakes evenly over the chocolate.

5 Place the tray on a flat surface in the fridge to harden for about 30 minutes (until firmly set), then remove and break into pieces. Enjoy.

For more, read this



**The Imperfect Nutritionist**  
**7 Principles of Healthy Eating** by Jennifer Medhurst. (£25, Kyle Books). Photography: Nick Hopper.

# digest this

THE LATEST FOOD NEWS FOR YOU

WHAT'S TRENDING THIS MONTH...

## Snacks without compromise

*Crisps are a fail-safe snacking option, but there are some packets that fall short on healthy ingredients and taste. The brand causing a stir? CHIKA'S. Its new trio of Popped Rice Crisps – Smoky Barbecue, Salt & Vinegar and Sweet Chilli – are bursting with bold, natural flavours and packed full of goodness. Plus, each serving comes in under 100 calories, so you can keep track as you snack. From 79p, [chikas.co.uk](http://chikas.co.uk)*



DID YOU KNOW?

# 21.8m

is the number of Brits who aren't drinking enough water. Not only does being properly hydrated quench your thirst, it also flushes out toxins from your body, while supporting your metabolism which, in turn, helps you to stay satiated in between meals. Bottoms up.

[Aqua-pura.com](http://Aqua-pura.com)



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[instagram.com/  
healthwellbeinguk](https://instagram.com/healthwellbeinguk)

## GOODNESS FROM GARLIC

Crushed, diced or whole – if that's your thing – the first steps to any recipe wouldn't be complete without throwing in super herb, garlic. Want to kick your curry up a notch on the healthy scale? Nutritionist Jane McClenaghan ([vital-nutrition.co.uk](http://vital-nutrition.co.uk)) recommends crushing your garlic and leaving it for 10 minutes before cooking. Why? Well, this'll help you get the biggest hit of active ingredients from the pungent superfood. "When garlic is crushed, chopped or minced and left for 10 minutes, enzymes react with oxygen to create maximum alliin content, that's otherwise destroyed by heat. It's alliin that gives garlic its reputation as a superfood." Call it a light bulb moment.

IF YOU HAVE  
**10**  
MINUTES

## ON-THE-GO OATS

IF YOU HAVE  
**5**  
MINUTES

If Instagram is anything to go by, overnight oats are taking over as the breakfast recipe for those who are time-poor.

A quick scroll and you won't be short of a decent recipe either, and you can easily adapt it according to what you like/have got lying around. Basically, soak your oats in water or milk of your choice overnight, then add any combination of fruit, nuts, nut butter, seeds and yoghurt. Et voila. A healthy, chilled breakfast in five minutes.

## MANAGE YOUR MENOPAUSE

When you're trying to salvage some control over your diet – or weight in particular – when going through the menopause, hormones don't exactly make it easy, so it's no surprise that "Menopause weight loss" has had a 250 percent increase in Google searches year on year. Luckily, there's hope. As with any lifestyle change, it's important to find something you can stick to, so a diet that doesn't make you feel good probably isn't going to get you the results you want. Experts at Bodyline Medical Wellness Group say that the first step to making better food choices starts with upping your intake of fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, legumes (chickpeas and lentils, for example), as well as healthy fats like olive oil and avocados. It's basic but will do the job to ease symptoms.

# 3 WAYS WITH CHICKPEAS

Not just the bedrock for a creamy hummus,  
these pulses have so much potential



## CHICKPEA 'TUNA' SANDWICH

SERVES: 2

READY IN: 10 MINUTES

V VG DF

• 1 x 400g can Biona Organic Chickpeas, drained and rinsed • 2 tsp lemon juice • 3-4 tbsp vegan mayonnaise • 5-6 gherkins, finely chopped • 1 nori sheet, crushed (optional) • 1 stick celery, finely chopped • ½ small red onion, finely chopped • ¼ tsp garlic powder • Salt and pepper to taste

### To serve:

- 4 slices of your favourite bread, thickly cut
- Leafy greens of choice • Sliced tomatoes

1 Mash the chickpeas in a medium bowl.

2 Add all the other ingredients and mix well.

3 Assemble the sandwich, add a thick layer of chickpea tuna, followed by your additional fillings of choice. Serve and enjoy!

[Biona.co.uk](http://Biona.co.uk)

## ISLE OF WIGHT TOMATOES, CHORIZO AND CHICKPEA STEW

SERVES: 4

READY IN: 20 MINUTES

GF

• 150g mini chorizo cooking sausages, cut into chunks • 1 tbsp olive oil • 1 red onion, sliced • 1 red pointed pepper, chopped • 2 tsp harissa paste • 400g tin chickpeas, drained • 20 Isle of Wight cherry vine tomatoes, halved • 300ml chicken stock • A small bunch flat-leaf parsley, chopped • Crusty bread, to serve



## KALE AND CHICKPEA DHANSAK

SERVES: 4

TAKES: 30 MINUTES

V VG DF GF

• 1 tbsp vegetable oil • 1 red onion, sliced • 350g potatoes, diced • 1 aubergine, diced • 1 tbsp medium curry powder • 400g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed • 200g red split lentils • 800ml vegetable stock • 250g bag kale, thick stalks removed • Plain vegan yoghurt alternative, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan and fry the onion for 3 minutes, add the potatoes and aubergine and fry for a further 2-3 minutes. Stir in the curry powder then stir in the chickpeas and lentils. Add the stock, bring to the boil and cook, covered for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

2 Add the kale and cook for a further 5 minutes. Season to taste and serve with a little yoghurt alternative.

[discovergreatveg.co.uk](http://discovergreatveg.co.uk)



1 Fry the chorizo in the olive oil in a large non-stick pan until browned all over and cooked through.

2 Scoop out the chorizo then add the onion and pepper, and cook until softened and coloured a little. Add the chorizo back to the pan with the harissa and stir for 3-4 minutes. Add chickpeas, tomatoes and stock, and cook for 10 minutes.

3 Stir in the parsley then spoon into bowls and serve with chunks of bread.

[thetomatostall.co.uk](http://thetomatostall.co.uk)

# Trust the process

The world of fermented foods is causing a stir – read on to find out what all the buzz is about

WORDS | *Chantelle Pattemore*

**I**n recent years, greater emphasis has been put on gut health and how it influences overall wellbeing. In fact, the gut microbiome is now associated with everything from immunity to mental health, and has even been dubbed ‘the second brain’. Needless to say, it’s vital to keep your gut happy, and one of the best ways to achieve this is by incorporating fermented foods into your everyday diet. But what does this involve and how do we get started? Take it away, experts...

## BODY-BOOSTING BACTERIA

Before we dive into the role of fermented foods, we need to understand the digestive system a bit better. “The digestive tract is home to a rich population of bacteria, known as the gut microbiome. These

bacteria interact with the immune cells and nerves that line the gut,” explains registered nutritional therapist Victoria Bell ([victoriabellnutrition.com](http://victoriabellnutrition.com)). “The gut microbiome directly affects whether the right nutrients get to every part of your body, impacting whole-body health.”

At a basic level, the bacteria in the microbiome can be split into two groups: good and bad. When bad bacteria reign supreme, the microbiome is knocked off-kilter – and this is when health concerns can start to arise. “Certain types of bacteria and fungi in the gut trigger inflammatory or immune responses, often keeping the immune system busy so it’s not as ready to deal with other challenges, such as viruses, allergens or stress,” notes Victoria.

As the old saying goes, variety is the spice of life

and “a diverse microbiome is a healthy microbiome,” states Dr Caitlin Hall, chief dietitian and head of clinical research at Myota ([myotahealth.com](http://myotahealth.com)). “The more types of microbes you have in your gut, the more short-chain fatty acids – anti-inflammatory molecules – will be produced.”

## GOOD GUT EATS

That sounds good, but where do fermented ingredients come into the picture? “Eating



“Think of eating fermented foods as a long-term part of health maintenance”

fermented foods can help increase the number of good bacteria in your gut," says clinical nutritionist Nishtha Patel (thegutexpert.com). "When food starts to ferment, the bacteria produce vitamins and metabolites. These bacteria help break down food, aid digestion and keep bad bacteria in check."

And that's not all: Victoria reveals that the bacteria in fermented foods may also act as positive 'messengers' for good bacteria already in your digestive system. "As transient bacteria pass through the gut, they may communicate or interact with other bacteria, signalling protective behaviours by the bacteria in the microbiome and reducing inflammatory proteins," she says. "Research studies continue to explore how fermented foods positively influence gut bacteria."

The concept of fermented foods might be fairly new to you, but it's far from a modern innovation. It's believed that humans began fermenting food over 8,000 years ago\*, primarily to ensure ingredients lasted for longer.

However, over time, experts began finding links between eating fermented ingredients and improved health. Modern-day research\*\* indicates that consuming this type of food may aid in reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and anxiety, and assist in weight loss. Fermented foods have also been linked to lower levels of inflammation in the body – high levels of which can contribute to the development of concerns such as cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

## FERMENTED FOODS TO LOVE

Incorporating fermented ingredients into your diet is much simpler than you likely realise. "It's becoming increasingly easy to find fermented foods in cafes, supermarkets, and convenience stores," notes Caitlin.

Some of the best ingredients to add to your shopping list are pickles (in salt, not vinegar), sauerkraut, plain yoghurt, miso paste (refrigerated), kombucha drinks, kefir, kimchi, dry curd or fermented cottage

cheese, fermented vegetables, tempeh (choose gluten-free) and sourdough bread.

While the prospect of regularly chowing down on sourdough-based pizza might sound appealing, Nishtha suggests "rotating the foods to get diversity in the gut." In addition to eating fermented foods, Caitlin reveals it's important to "consume specific fibres called prebiotics." Prebiotics are known as food for probiotics, a form of good bacteria. You can find these fibres "in leeks, onion, asparagus and chicory root," she adds.

Furthermore, while fermented foods may be somewhat of a dietary powerhouse, their effects will be limited if the rest of your diet doesn't look so great. "Decrease your intake of alcohol, processed, high-fat and high-sugar foods," Caitlin recommends, as these have been linked to disrupting the gut microbiome and encouraging the growth of harmful bacteria. Once you've got these aspects in check, it shouldn't be long before positive effects start to show. "You should start noticing improved energy levels and fewer digestive issues after a couple of weeks," she adds.

## TAKE THINGS SLOWLY

Rather than going immediately all-in, little and often is the best approach, especially if you haven't really incorporated them into your diet before. "The body needs time to adjust," Caitlin says. Some of the most common side effects from eating fermented foods (particularly in larger quantities) include: "bloating and discomfort, as well as possible diarrhoea," reveals Nishtha.

## SWAP SHOP

Try these ingredient swaps in your favourite meals to incorporate fermented foods into your diet. "Just one serving per day is all you need," says Nishtha.

- Avocado on white toast → avocado on sourdough toast
- Sweetened fruit yoghurt → plain yoghurt with fresh berries
- Chicken stir-fry → tempeh stir-fry
- Can of Coca Cola → can of kombucha
- Jacket potato with grated cheese → jacket potato with fermented cottage cheese
- Tacos and slaw → tacos and kimchi

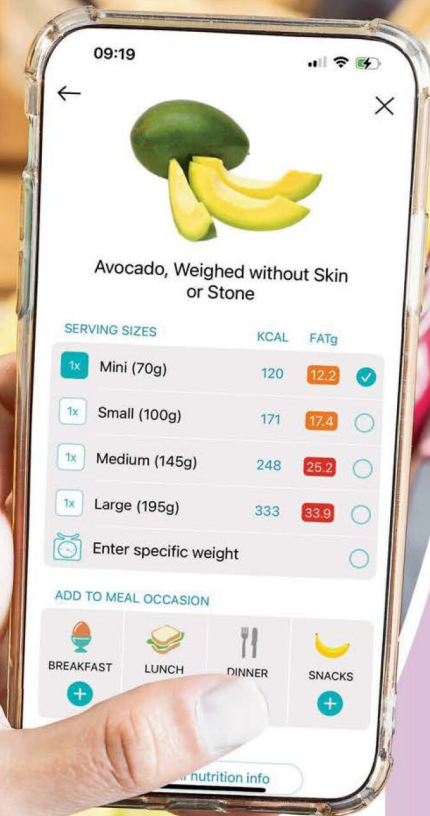
"Fermented foods are also rich in compounds called amines, which can increase or decrease blood flow and then trigger a headache or migraine."

It's important to note that these types of ingredients aren't suitable for certain individuals, Nishtha adds, including pregnant women, children under the age of one or the immunocompromised. Ultimately, there's plenty of emerging evidence to support the role of fermented foods in improved gut health. However, to fully experience their benefits, they'll need to make a regular appearance on your plate. As with many things related to wellbeing, "consistency and persistence are important," states Caitlin.

"Think of eating fermented foods as a long-term part of health maintenance rather than a short-term fix." **H@W**



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*“I’ve never had to deprive myself like some other diets”*





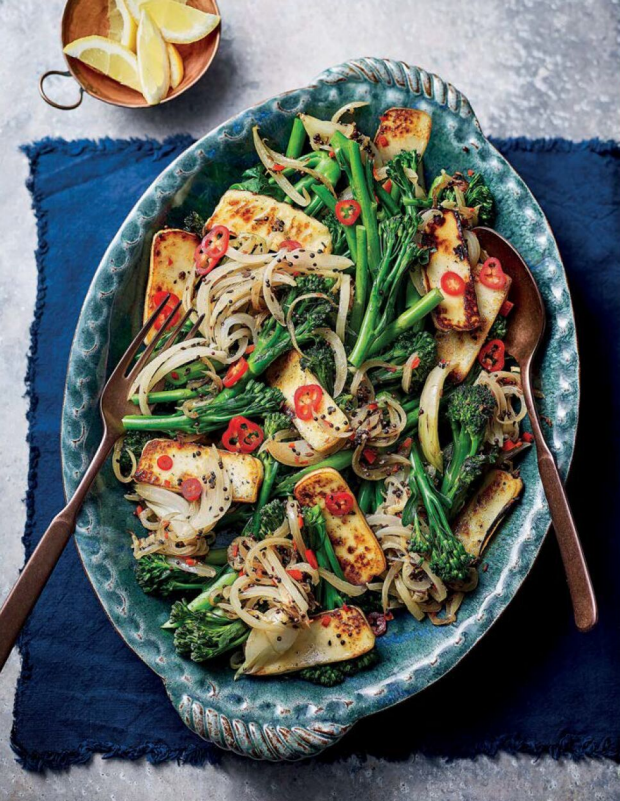
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WORLD



# Seasons meetings

Catering for a crowd? These dishes are perfect for a spring feast to share with friends



## SIZZLING PANEER WITH BROCCOLI

Ready in 30 minutes



SERVES: 4

- 500g long-stem broccoli, cut into shorter lengths
- Low-calorie cooking spray • 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- 1 tsp nigella seeds • 1 tsp cumin seeds • 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, grated • 3cm piece fresh root ginger, peeled and grated
- 1 red chilli, chopped, plus sliced chilli to serve
- 160g paneer cheese, cut into strips • Lemon wedges

**1** Blanch the broccoli in a saucepan of boiling water over a high heat for 1-2 minutes or until just tender, then drain and quickly plunge it into a bowl of iced water to stop it cooking any more. Drain and set aside.

**2** Spray a large non-stick frying pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium heat. Add all the seeds to the pan and stir-fry for 1-2 minutes until fragrant and lightly toasted, taking care not to burn them (as that will make them bitter). Add the onion and cook for 2-3 minutes or until slightly softened, then add the garlic, ginger and chilli, season lightly and cook for another two minutes.

**3** Tip the mixture into a bowl. Spray the frying pan with more low-calorie cooking spray and cook the paneer for about 5-6 minutes or until lightly browned, turning once. Transfer to a plate and keep warm. Return the onion mixture to the pan along with the broccoli and heat through, stirring from time to time.

**4** Tip it all on to a large serving platter or two smaller platters, add the paneer strips and serve with lemon wedges and extra chilli scattered over.

## RIGATONI WITH ARTICHOKE

Ready in 30 minutes



SERVES: 4

- Low-calorie cooking spray • 1 onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed • 1 yellow pepper, deseeded and sliced
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 1 tsp dried oregano • A pinch of sweetener
- 400g dried rigatoni or other pasta shapes
- 250g frozen peas
- 200g chard, stalks cut into batons and leaves shredded
- 400g can artichoke hearts in water, drained and quartered
- Mixed-leaf salad, to serve

**1** Spray a frying pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium heat. Stir-fry the onion, garlic and pepper for 2-3 minutes.

**2** Stir in the tomatoes, oregano and sweetener and bring to the boil. Partially cover, turn the heat to low and simmer for 8-10 minutes. Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the pack instructions, then drain.

**3** Add the peas and chard stalks to the sauce and return to the boil. Turn the heat to low and simmer gently for 3-4 minutes. Add the chard leaves and artichokes and season. When the chard leaves have wilted, add the sauce to the pasta and toss. Serve with the salad.



## PORK STEAKS WITH SWEET POTATOES & HERBY CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

Ready in 45 minutes

GF

SERVES: 4

- 3 large sweet potatoes, cut into wedges • 1 tsp paprika • Low-calorie cooking spray
- 400g thin-stemmed broccoli • Juice of 1 lemon • 4 lean pork steaks, all visible fat removed • 800g chard, stalks trimmed

For the chimichurri sauce:

- 25g fresh parsley • 25g fresh oregano • 25g fresh mint • ½ garlic clove
- 1 spring onion, trimmed • 2 tsp red wine vinegar

**1** Preheat your oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Toss the wedges with the paprika on a non-stick baking tray, spray with low-calorie cooking spray and bake in the oven for 20 minutes. Put the broccoli on a plate, pour over the lemon juice, season and add to the baking tray with the wedges. Bake for a further 15-20 minutes, or until the wedges are cooked and the broccoli is crisp and tender.

**2** Meanwhile, place a non-stick frying pan over a medium-high heat. Spray the steaks with a little low-calorie cooking spray, season, then fry for 3 minutes on each side until browned and cooked through. Transfer to a board or plate and leave to rest for five minutes, loosely covered with foil.

**3** Meanwhile, steam the chard for 4-5 minutes, until the stalks are just tender and the leaves are wilted. To make the chimichurri sauce, blitz all the ingredients with two tablespoons of water in a food processor until fairly smooth. Season to taste. Serve the steaks, drizzled with chimichurri, with the wedges, broccoli and chard.



## SPRING LAMB AND LEEK HOTPOT

Ready in 1 hour 30 minutes

GF

SERVES: 4

- Low-calorie cooking spray • 800g lamb leg steaks, all visible fat removed, cut into chunks • 1 garlic bulb, halved widthways
- 5 shallots, halved and peeled • 2 celery sticks, finely chopped
- 5 spring onions, trimmed and chopped into 4cm pieces • 2 bay leaves • 1 sprig of fresh rosemary • 500ml chicken stock
- 25g fresh parsley, finely chopped • 4 leeks • 800g spring greens, shredded

**1** Preheat your oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Spray a large, lidded, non-stick pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium-high heat. Add the lamb and fry for 1-2 minutes on each side until browned. Transfer to a plate and reduce the heat to medium-low. Add the garlic, shallots, celery, spring onions, bay leaves and rosemary and season well. Stir, then cover and leave to cook over a medium heat for five minutes, stirring occasionally.

**2** Return the lamb to the pan, pour in the stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for five minutes. Stir through the parsley, then transfer to a baking dish.

**3** Cut each leek into four pieces, then slice each piece in half lengthways, so you have 32 pieces in total. Top the lamb with the leeks, cut side down, and cover with foil. Bake for 1 hour, then remove the foil and bake for a further 15 minutes until the leeks are golden at the edges. When the hotpot has five minutes' cooking time left, boil the spring greens for 2-3 minutes, then drain.

**4** Divide the hotpot between four plates and serve with the spring greens.



## POT-ROASTED GARLIC CHICKEN

Ready in 2 hours

GF

DF

### SERVES 4

• 40 garlic cloves, unpeeled (around 3 bulbs of garlic) • 1 whole roasting chicken (about 1.5kg) • A small handful of fresh rosemary leaves, finely chopped • 1 tsp dried thyme leaves • 1 tsp dried sage leaves • 2 lemons • 3 carrots, peeled and cut into large chunks • 2 onions, quartered • 284ml chicken stock • A handful of fresh tarragon leaves, finely chopped

**1** Preheat your oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. Scatter the garlic over the base of a deep, heavy based casserole dish. Place the chicken on top, then sprinkle over the rosemary, thyme and sage and squeeze over the juice of one of the lemons.

**2** Tuck the carrots and onions around the chicken and put the other whole lemon in the cavity. Pour over the stock and season, cover and cook for 20 minutes. Reduce the temperature to 170C/325F/Gas 3 and continue to cook for one hour and 20 minutes, or until the chicken is tender and cooked through.

**3** Remove from the oven, sprinkle with the tarragon, re-cover and allow to rest for 15-20 minutes. Discard the chicken skin before carving and serve with the veg and garlic, popping the cloves out of their skins.



## PARSNIP FISH CAKES WITH CARROT SLAW

Ready in 1 hour 30 minutes

GF

### SERVES 4

• 750g parsnips, peeled and cut into small chunks • 500g skinless and boneless white fish fillet, cut into small chunks • A small pack fresh coriander, chopped • 4 large carrots, coarsely grated • 250g fat-free natural Greek yoghurt

**1** Preheat your oven to 200C/390F/Gas 6. Put the parsnips in a non-stick roasting tin, season lightly and spray with low-calorie cooking spray. Toss well and roast for 40 minutes or until golden brown and soft. Reduce the oven temperature to 150C/300F/Gas 2.

**2** Tip the parsnips into a food processor and leave to cool slightly. Blitz into a coarse mash, then add the fish, one-third of the coriander, the salt and some pepper. Pulse to coarsely chop everything and tip the mixture into a bowl.

**3** Divide into 12 even portions and shape into patties. Spray a large, non-stick frying pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium-low heat. Add half of the fish cakes and cook for five minutes on each side or until cooked through and golden brown. Keep them warm on a baking tray in the oven while you cook the rest.

**4** Meanwhile, put the carrots, yoghurt and remaining coriander in a large bowl. Mix well and season to taste. Arrange the fish cakes on a platter and serve with the carrot slaw.

## CURRIED CAULIFLOWER AND LENTIL SOUP

### Ready in 30 minutes

V	VG
DF	GF

### SERVES 4

- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- 4 medium carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 celery sticks, roughly chopped • 3 garlic cloves, crushed • 3cm piece fresh root ginger, peeled and grated • 1.5 litres vegetable stock, suitable for vegans, boiling • 1 large cauliflower, broken into small florets • 2 tbsp mild curry powder • 175g dried red split lentils • 100g plain unsweetened soya yoghurt with added calcium
- A pinch of cayenne pepper, to serve • A handful of chopped fresh mint and/or coriander, to serve

1 Put the onion, carrots, celery, garlic, ginger and four tablespoons of stock in a large non-stick saucepan over a medium heat. Cover and cook for five minutes. Stir in the cauliflower, curry powder, lentils, remaining stock and a pinch of salt.

2 Cover, bring back to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes or until the lentils and cauliflower are tender. Blitz the soup until smooth using a stick blender or food processor.

3 Check the seasoning and serve with a swirl of soya yoghurt and a sprinkling of cayenne pepper and the fresh herbs.

### For more info

All recipes taken from Slimming World's collection. Recipes are based on Slimming World's Food Optimising plan and the liberating concept of Free Food – food that is naturally lower in energy density (calories per gram) and most satiating, so you stay fuller for longer. To find out more about Slimming World and how to join, visit [slimmingworld.co.uk](http://slimmingworld.co.uk) or [slimmingworld.ie](http://slimmingworld.ie), or call 0344 897 8000 or 01 656 9696.

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# 7 ways TO GET YOUR 5-A-DAY

Here's how to eat more fruit and veg,  
with minimal effort...

**S**truggling to get your five-a-day? You're not alone, as just 28 percent of adults are eating the recommended five portions per day, and with only 18 percent of children aged five to 15 meeting the government's guideline\*, it's clearly time to take a closer look at what's on our plates. However, we know that trying to get your family to eat more healthily can be a challenge, especially when you're busy and don't have a lot of time to cook, or if you're dealing with particularly picky eaters. That's why we've rounded up some simple tips to help you increase your intake of healthy food – without the hassle. From easy breakfast ideas to healthy smoothies bursting with fruit, there is something for every family member to enjoy.

1

## START RIGHT

Breakfast doesn't have to mean a simple bowl of cornflakes or a piece of toast. There are lots of options for your morning meal that can help you ramp up your fruit and veg intake from the beginning of the day. Why not have an omelette that's packed with vegetables? The great thing about this dish is that you can throw in any veg you've got in your fridge, so it's an easy way to use up things that may have gone to waste otherwise – all you need to do is lightly cook the vegetables before you add them to the pan.

2

## BE PREPARED

Short on time in the mornings? No problem – you can prepare overnight oats the night before and wake up to a delicious, filling breakfast. Simply mix oats with milk, plus your favourite flavours (we love to add a spoonful of honey to ours) and put it in the fridge until morning. Our top tip is to add frozen fruit, such as strawberries and berries, to the mix – they'll defrost overnight, and they're something you can easily store in your freezer without worrying about the short best before dates that fresh fruit has.

3

## SHAKE IT UP

Want a quick and easy way to get some more fruit and veg into your day that your kids will love? Start making smoothies! Pre-made ones from supermarkets can be packed with sugar, so creating your own will be healthier – plus, you have the fun of playing around with different flavours to find your favourite combination. First, pick your base. This can be anything from water to almond milk, so try a few to see what works best for you. Then, choose which fruit and veg you'd like – some ideas include bananas, spinach, berries, mangoes, avocados and oranges. You can add Greek yoghurt or nut butter for some extra protein, and then something to sweeten it, such as vanilla essence or honey. Blitz it all up and it's ready to go!

\*According to NHS Digital



4

### SWITCH UP YOUR SNACKS

Swapping a bag of crisps for some crudité's, such as carrots, cucumbers and peppers with hummus is a simple way to pack in some more veg to your day. Prepare enough for a few days so that you can quickly grab them from the fridge when you feel hungry. If you're not a fan of hummus, you could cut up an apple and dip it in peanut butter for a protein hit. However, if a packet of crisps is what you or your kids are craving, you could make your own vegetable crisps by simply thinly slicing vegetables, such as sweet potatoes, parsnips and carrots, cook them in the oven and then season them – try sea salt, black pepper or chilli flakes. They're sure to satisfy even the pickiest of eaters!

5

### START SPIRALISING

You may have heard of courgetti – spiralised courgettes that take the place of pasta in meals and a great way to get another portion of veg into your day. However, this may not be substantial enough for you and your family, so you could try replacing half of the amount of spaghetti you would normally use with courgetti. Feeling inspired? There are similar things you can do with other vegetables – consider replacing noodles with butternut squash noodles (or boodles – you can buy these ready-made so you don't have to worry about the faff of cutting up a butternut squash), top salads with spiralised carrots and create healthier, kid-friendly curly fries with spiralised sweet potatoes.

6

### GET CREATIVE

If you're dealing with some really picky eaters, you can get creative (and sneaky) with hiding veg in meals, without sacrificing flavour. Add cauliflower to mashed potato, slice vegetables and include them in mac 'n' cheese, bulk out mince meat with chopped carrots in dishes such as chilli con carne and homemade burgers, mix veg into tomato-based pasta sauces and include things like tomato, spinach and avocado in toasted sandwiches. Sneak extra veg into soups, grate cauliflower as a substitute for rice, and use sliced courgettes or aubergine as a 'pizza' base.

7

### BE SOUPER

Homemade soup is nutritious and purse-friendly. Recipes like chicken noodle broth and minestrone are easily done in a slow cooker and great for midweek dinners. You can use up what's in your fridge, saving money and reducing food waste. Soup freezes well, too, so try batch cooking. Fussy eaters? Blend your broths into smooth soups and they won't know how much veg is in there. Tip: instead of sandwiches for packed lunches, add hot soup to a Thermos flask.



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# MOVE WELL

Whether it's a running sesh, a yoga class or simply playing with your kids – here's the latest news and views on how to move more this month



## COOL OFF

Newsflash: being angry isn't always a bad thing – you might just need a healthy outlet in which to release it. With that in mind, we asked four *H&W* readers how they let it go ➔

**T**he moment Carolyn Owlett can feel her chest tightening and thoughts spiralling out of control, that's her signal to move. As a diligent multitasker juggling various careers simultaneously while raising two children has meant that the 37-year-old was no stranger to an active lifestyle, but after a traumatic period in her early 20s, the anxiety was immense. "The urge to run away from it all – a break-up, several house moves and a stint of anti-depressants – was overwhelming," she recalls, of how her past life put her under so much strain. To find calm in the chaos, Carolyn, now founder of Super Super PR ([supersuperpr.com](http://supersuperpr.com)), started running which helps regulate her breathing when she's feeling stressed or angry. "Turning rage into an endorphin high helps me feel in control. Alone time, pounding the pavements and breaking a sweat to my 'F\*ck you' playlist is my own form of therapy."



## MIXED EMOTIONS

That endorphin high Carolyn speaks of doesn't just apply to runners. It's something that many other forms of exercise can trigger, thanks to a bubble bath of chemicals going on in your brain. "When you feel stressed or angry, exercise can be a great activity to help you feel better and release any negative emotions," comments Dean Zweck, product development manager at Total Fitness ([totalfitness.co.uk](http://totalfitness.co.uk)). It may sound counterintuitive, but exercise – especially high-intensity workouts, such as running or HIIT – causes stress on your body, so to fight back, endorphins are released in the pituitary gland as a first response. "Over time, and once the exercise has finished, the endorphins remain and you begin to experience feelings of happiness and elation," adds Dean.

## MAD MOVES

For 35-year-old Illana Gambrell, dancing is where she channels her anger – and encourages other people to do the same. After falling in love with the sport as a child she followed her passion to becoming a professional dancer, and after years in the industry, sadly suffered abuse from some choreographers, teachers and peers. "I had to turn my back on the toxicity and make it my mission to find the joy in dance

again," she tells *H&W*. To reignite the release she once found in exercise, Illana created DanceBox ([dance-box.co.uk](http://dance-box.co.uk)), a safe space where people can unleash their innermost emotions in a way that serves them and help let them go. "Attendees are encouraged to learn a routine and dance it in any way that they feel, be it screaming, crying, stamping or roaring at the top of their lungs to release trauma and frustration, while everyone else in the room celebrates them to be the most confident and powerful version of themselves."

## CUT AND RUN

Okay, so what is it about pairing angry emotions with a workout that makes it so effective? "When you're in the midst of angry feelings, you're in a heightened state of stress and your 'fight or flight' system is activated," Dean explains. Adrenaline and cortisol (the stress hormone) take centre stage and that, Dean says, is when we're prepped to exercise at our highest level. Looking to score a PB or just free yourself of built-up emotion? "Running while angry is a great way to feel better, removing yourself from the stressful situation and by taking your anger out on your run, you may find you run further and faster than normal," notes Dean.

But remember that overexerting yourself will take it out of you, so you might need longer to recover. "Also, being so focused on your anger and internalising it into a run may mean you're unaware of your

surroundings, so be sure to be mindful of other people around you, along with hazards such as cars." A 'rage run' can be beneficial as long as it's safe, so running on a treadmill at the gym might be a more sensible choice because it's in a contained space, he adds.

## LEANING INTO RESISTANCE

While high-intensity modes of exercise work for some to dissolve pent up anger, for 20-year-old Lisa Livingstone studying to be a primary school teacher, strength training in the gym is her way of balancing her mood. Weight-loss was the initial goal for throwing herself into resistance training – and with it came a stronger body and feelings of empowerment. Lisa signed up to a programme at Real World Results ([realworldresults.co.uk](http://realworldresults.co.uk)), where she took control of her wellness by embracing exercise and healthy eating.

"Lifting weights is a great emotional release for me," Lisa explains. She'd never tried resistance training before and it's now an integral part of her physical and mental wellbeing: "It's my go-to if I wake up feeling down or self-conscious knowing that a workout will always boost my mood and make me feel more centred. I'm still studying, which can often feel quite stressful and overwhelming, but exercise always seems to help take my mind off things that are making me feel anxious or angry. Lifting heavier than most men in the gym helps me to feel like I can conquer anything."

"TURNING RAGE INTO  
AN ENDORPHIN  
HIGH HELPS ME FEEL  
IN CONTROL"

## AGAINST THE CLOCK

Kate Allan has reaped similar rewards from trial cycling (cyclingtimetrials.org.uk – the national governing body for cycling time trials). Using it as a means to complement her triathlon training, the 38-year-old was hooked and “loved the all-out nature of competition.”

A year later when her first son was born, she naturally found time scarcer than ever and needed to streamline her routine. “Training for three sports just wasn’t practical, so I decided to turn my attention purely to trial competition,” she says. Fast forward to 2023 – Kate now has two children and works full time at her sports PR consultancy – and cycling plays an even bigger part of her busy life.

“Cycling offers a tremendous outlet – it has enabled me to maintain my sporting identity and is a great means of channelling any anger or frustration that might be brewing,” she says. “I tend to do my bike sets midway through the working day, as it allows me to burn off any stresses or challenges from the morning, and enter the afternoon fresher and more focused. It’s a vital part of my daily routine and although a definite time commitment in a busy day, it’s allowed me to really push forward in my career and become happiest, most present mother I can possibly be.”

It just shows that exercise can be there for us through all emotions, whether joy and happiness or anger and frustration, and letting off steam looks different for everyone. Just know that anger shouldn’t be seen as a problem – it’s more like information and exercise gives you the tools to let it out in any way you choose. **HOW**

## RUN FOR IT

Amanda Place, personal trainer and founder of Sculptrition (sculptrition.com) shares her advice for a safe rage run

• As you run, repeat a positive affirmation in your head to help you process your anger. Some affirmations I’ve recommended to my clients to use include, “What I feel is normal”, “I am strong” and “I honour all parts of myself”. This’ll help you recognise that anger is acceptable and can be processed effectively. Figure out what kind of phrase, if any, helps you process your anger on a rage run.

• Balance out your rage run by backing off on other training days. Plan to rest the following day by doing a recovery run, brisk walk or taking the day off completely from exercise.

• Still process your feelings after. Running is just one tool for coping with stress and anger, but it’s not necessarily a complete solution. If you need more than running to get through this situation, reach out for help through joining a support group (virtually or in-person), using mental health apps or simply calling up a friend.

# your fitness

TIPS AND TRICKS TO KEEP YOU ACTIVE



## IF YOU DO ONE THING THIS MONTH...

... snack on almonds to help you recover from exercise quicker. A new study published in *Frontiers in Nutrition* involved 64 adults who ate 56g of almonds every day for four weeks and performed 90 minutes of exercise to induce muscle damage (essentially to grow and repair). Compared to eating a high-carbohydrate option, like a cereal bar, the results found that a handful of almonds reduced post-exercise soreness and inflammation that can often come with a session in the gym, as well as increased leg and lower back strength and provided an improvement in mood. Post-workout snack? Consider it cracked.

## MASTER THE MOVE

Vanessa Michielon, movement specialist and founder of the Transformative Movement method ([vanessamichielon.com](http://vanessamichielon.com)), says:

### CAT/COW

On your hands and knees, breathe in and allow your chest to soften towards the ground, as your head and tail lift to create an arch in your spine. As you exhale, gently hug your abdominals in and curl your back, allowing your upper back to round upwards and your head and tail to lower and move towards each other.



### BRIDGE ROLLS

Lie on your back, knees bent, feet hip-distance apart. Breathe in to prepare; as you exhale, lift your tailbone, lower back, middle back and lower part of your chest off the ground, while maintaining your shoulder blades firmly with the floor. As you breathe in again, uncurl your spine sequentially and release one vertebra at the time on your mat.



## H&W QA &

### ASK THE EXPERTS

**Q:** *Can I do HIIT workouts with an injury?*

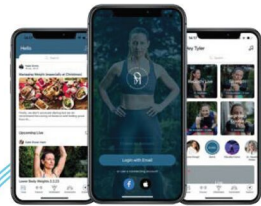
**James Crew, personal trainer at Fitness First ([fitnessfirst.co.uk](http://fitnessfirst.co.uk)), says:**

"If you're injured, it can be hard to figure out what types of exercises you can do to avoid making it worse. Depending on the level of injury, workouts can be adapted. With HIIT workouts a lower-body injury – particularly a knee or ankle one – can make it harder to reach the level of intensity that's required to push the anaerobic threshold. If you've injured your upper body, such as pulled a ligament, you can still do lower-body HIIT effectively. If you're hurt, take the intensity down. Keep it low-impact and swap squat jumps, for example, with bodyweight speed squats instead."

## £4bn

Is the amount Brits waste on unused exercise wear, equipment and gym memberships. In light of the cost-of-living crisis and rising inflation, 59 percent of those surveyed say they are rethinking how much they spend on their physical wellbeing in 2023.

[Sweetco.in](http://Sweetco.in)



## Tech talk

Movement and exercise can really help keep those pesky menopause symptoms at bay, but knowing what works for you can sometimes feel like a stab in the dark. Need some coaching? Built with five pillars in mind – movement, nutrition, community, mindfulness and support – the Own Your Menopause app offers live and on-demand workouts for women going through the menopause. Founder Kate Rowe-Ham has designed the app with the tools and support they need to thrive during this stage of their life. The app aims to help women train efficiently and effectively with the time constraints they often face. From £16.99 a month, [owningyourmenopause.com](http://owningyourmenopause.com)

UNWELLNESS:

# Has fitness *gone too far?*

It's never been easier to follow the latest trend that promises results in the gym (read: no days off), but how do you know what's helpful and what's hype? *H&W* investigates...

WORDS | *Lucy Gornall*

**W**hen you think of fitness, what's the first image that pops into your head? A set of Instagram-worthy six-pack abs? Your favourite fitness influencer showing off their glute pump? Maybe it's battling through daily HIIT workouts in your living room or pounding a treadmill every day to torch calories and stay lean. The fitness world has gone bonkers with a whole host of #trends which promise to spot-reduce fat or rapidly achieve a specific goal. The problem is, most of these have no scientific backing. Plus, pretty much anyone can become a fitness guru on social media, dishing out potentially harmful advice.

Beth Robinson is a personal trainer, online coach and a former *SAS Who Dares Wins* contestant. She says that when it comes to social media, "people believe what gets views and what's sexy over what actually works." Take the 75 Hard Challenge, created by motivational speaker Andy Frisella and made famous on short-video platform TikTok. The aim is to follow a set of rules for 75 days. Rules include drinking 4.5 litres of water, completing two 45-minute workouts and sticking to a diet. Fail to comply, and it's back to day one you go. Is this really a life you want to lead?

So, how can you find a sustainable workout routine that works for you? One that doesn't leave you burnt out and feeling guilty for daring to take a day off? Here's how...



## 2

**LISTEN TO  
YOUR BODY**

"It's usually our minds that say 'no' to exercise, not our body. However, we should be monitoring our levels of soreness, physical and mental exhaustion and whether we're ill or feeling drained," Beth recommends.

We can exercise and train with a certain amount of muscle soreness, but if it gets to a point when training makes us feel significantly worse, then we probably should have rested. Generally, one to two rest days a week should be enough, but it depends on your level of fitness.

## 1

**ENJOY  
REST DAYS**

"The 'no days off' is completely ineffective for fitness gains and it can lead to injury and burnout," says Beth. "Rest is essential for muscle recovery and growth – muscle fibres need time to repair and your cardiovascular system needs time to adapt." Beth trains five days a week and has two rest days. "However, if I feel really drained and sore, it's a sign I need to take more days off. Around twice a year, I'll reach a point where I need a whole week off."

**FIND OTHER  
WAYS TO  
DECOMPRESS**

For many, exercise is me time, when we switch off and focus on ourselves. But finding other ways to relax is important so as not to overburden your body.

"Going for a walk in nature, a spa day, having a long bath, reading or stretching in the time you would be training could help you get some 'me time' without further burning out," explains Beth.

## 3

# 4

## QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

"More isn't always better; quality matters," says Beth. "I used to train six days a week but with five days a week I can train harder during those sessions and see more progress." Don't be afraid to lessen the number of workouts you do if it means you'll reap greater benefits.

# 7

## MAKE EXERCISE FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE

If you work 10-hours-a-day in a stressful job on top of everything else that life throws at you, then squeezing in a daily workout might just tip you over the edge from stressed to exhausted.

"Everyone needs to work out what is sustainable for them," says Beth. This might be four days a week: two high-intensity sessions and two less intense sessions such as Pilates or yoga. To remain active in the long term, and allow your body and mind to recover properly, you have to factor in everything else going on in life.

### Boost your body confidence

It won't happen overnight, but baby steps can lead to big shifts in how you see your body

#### • Shift the focus from looks

Train for health, fitness and strength. "Focusing more on what our bodies can do makes it easier to feel body confident. We aren't ornaments, we're so much more than what our bodies look like," says Beth.

# 5

## SET REALISTIC GOALS

"Lots of people make the mistake of making outcome-based goals. They can be completely unreasonable and make you feel bad when you don't meet them," says Beth. Instead, try setting progress-focused goals.

"Take each training day as it comes; you'll feel less overworked because you're not trying to achieve something unattainable. Focus on doing your best session by session and you'll probably end up with a great outcome anyway. Focusing on the process can be more effective for consistency and less likely to burn you out."

# 8

## ENJOY WHAT YOU DO

Do you really want to do a Stairmaster workout or is it just TikTok telling you to?

"Make sure the exercise you're doing is enjoyable most of the time so you can continue for life. It shouldn't feel like a punishment," Beth tells us. You could even recruit a friend to help make working out more fun.

# 6

## FUEL YOUR WORKOUTS PROPERLY

Today's fitness culture is riddled with fad diets and the demonisation of foods. This can lead to a complicated relationship with food, but the basics of good nutrition haven't changed in years, despite what social media might tell you. "We need a healthy balanced diet ideally with five or more portions of fruit and veg a day, protein, carbs and fats," explains Beth. And treats can be enjoyed too. If you're exercising intensely, have some high-GI carbs an hour or so before and about 30 minutes after training to replenish your glycogen stores, which is what your muscles use for energy. Examples include potatoes, white rice and pasta. Protein is also important – enjoy one to two grams per kilo of body weight per day from sources like meat, fish, tofu, beans and pulses.

"TO REMAIN ACTIVE IN THE LONG TERM, AND ALLOW YOUR BODY AND MIND TO RECOVER PROPERLY, YOU HAVE TO FACTOR IN EVERYTHING ELSE GOING ON IN LIFE"



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# SKECHERS®

THE UNO



# LET'S GET WALKING

Join us in our campaign #walktowellbeing and take control of your health one step at a time

We're always singing the praises of a stroll in the fresh air for its mood boosting effects – and it seems most would agree. In fact, 75 percent of Brits say that they are walking outdoors more since Covid-19 as it helps with physical and mental health, according to research by GO Outdoors ([gooutdoors.co.uk](https://www.gooutdoors.co.uk)) and mental health charity Mind. This research follows the success of the campaign #HatsOnForMind – which encouraged us Brits to don Mind branded hats, and step outside during winter to ease mental health challenges. The limited-edition hats were designed by a panel of brand ambassadors, which included the likes of TV presenters Julia Bradbury and Helen Skelton. Now it's spring, it's even nicer to enjoy a stroll in the great outdoors – even just a 10 minute walk can transform your mood.





# Get started with WALKING

Need some extra motivation to walk your way to a fitter, healthier you? Read on...

WORDS | *Victoria Stokes*

**Chances are you know that walking is good for you. You've heard all about its heart-healthy benefits, how it improves your mood and the wonders it can work for your figure. But that doesn't mean it's always easy to lace up your trainers and get out and about.**

Whether it's a stubborn case of lazy-itis, a demanding schedule, or a sedentary office job that makes it difficult for you to get your steps in, here's the good news: creating a regular walking routine can be done with some effort and a little mindset work. So, when it comes to building a sustainable and enjoyable walking routine, how can you find your get up and go?

First thing's first: suss out what's stopping you in the first place. "I'm

so busy!" you might cry. "I don't have the right gear!" you protest.

"We may tell ourselves that we're too busy, too tired, or too distracted to exercise. We can procrastinate and promise ourselves tomorrow will be different but the real reason we don't get out walking is simple: we don't commit ourselves to exercise," says Dr Maurice Duffy, an internationally renowned mindset expert and guru ([mauriceduffy.com](http://mauriceduffy.com)).

Maurice says our emotions, thoughts and feelings drive our behaviour in one of two directions: positive or negative. And it's pretty much impossible to remain motivated if you're constantly telling yourself you're tired and lazy or reminding yourself that you've tried and failed before. Negative self-talk equals negative results.



"THE FEELING  
OF ENERGY,  
INVIGORATION  
AND STRESS  
RELIEF CAN BE  
A REWARD IN  
ITSELF."

Another exercise buzzkill? Our need for instant gratification. "Another reason we are not motivated to exercise is that we view the 'whole exercise thing' as too difficult and we cannot see any immediate consequences of not exercising," Maurice points out.

"What happens if we don't exercise?" he asks. "Usually, nothing. At least, not right away so the negative consequences aren't immediate and there is no immediate imperative to exercise."

## Get going

So that's the barriers sussed. Now that you know what's been holding you back, how can you go all in and tap into that motivated mindset that will get you out the front door? Great news: you don't have to go to great lengths (literally!) to get started.

The vital first step is figuring out your 'why'. Why do you want to start walking? Maurice says motivation can be divided into two categories: external motivation and intrinsic motivation. External motivation covers all the goals that typically come to mind when you think of exercise, like weight loss, for example.

"When you have this kind of motivation, you're not necessarily exercising because you like it. You're doing it because it's going to give you what you want at some point in the future," Maurice explains.

Intrinsic motivation, however, is the kind of motivation that comes from within. It covers stuff like wanting to relieve stress and exercising because it makes you feel good. It's okay to have external motivators, but it's intrinsic motivators that will keep you going when you don't see any outward signs of success. Or, as Maurice puts it, "External motivators can be fleeting, but when you have those internal motivators, you tend to sustain the exercise effort for longer."

Mindset aside, there's loads of practical stuff you can do to make your new walking habit stick as well. Maurice recommends getting up 30 minutes earlier in the morning. You can use this time to exercise or to tick off tasks that'll free up time for walking later in your day.

Actually scheduling a time in the day for walking, and ensuring you have everything you need to do so (for example, keeping a pair of comfy shoes under your office desk) can be useful too. A top tip from Maurice is to plan physical activity for the times of the day when you feel your most energetic. Another way to ensure you pound the

pavements, even on the days you really don't want to, is to use exercise as a reward. The feeling of energy, invigoration and stress relief can be a reward in itself, or you can motivate yourself with something a little more tangible, like a coffee at the end of a 5km walk.

## Keep going

Worried you'll simply forget to go out walking or that it will become less and less of a priority as your to-do list lengthens? Maurice advises setting your environment up for success. He says that might mean laying your exercise gear out the night before, setting push notifications that remind you to move, or leaving empowering post-it notes on your mirror. Seeing the words 'You can do it!' first thing might be enough to get you out the door.

Of course, it's often said that the first step is the hardest, but keeping going can be tough too. Once you have started the habit of walking, what can you do to keep it going?

Aside from the obvious stuff like setting new challenges (longer walks or steeper inclines, perhaps?), tracking your progress and inviting friends to join you, Maurice says reconnecting with your why is vital. Even when you've set the clearest of intentions at the start of your journey, it can be easy to forget exactly why you're making the effort.

"Your workouts need to have value, and you need them to mean something to you now," Maurice points out. "Regularly ask yourself: what value does walking offer me outside of my fitness goals?". Maybe it clears your head, offers you a sense of achievement, or gives you more energy. Write a list and refer back to it when your motivation takes a dip.

If you're finding it especially tough, reconsider your expectations. Maurice says it's tempting to set big goals and to try and achieve them in a short period of time, but it can be frustrating and demotivating. Your best bet for long-term success is setting realistic targets and taking a step-by-step approach to achieving them.

Finally, get in the habit of seeing walking as a non-negotiable. Ultimately, Maurice says you need to ask yourself what discomfort you are willing to endure. "Some days will be easier than others, some days you will dread going out for a walk, but you need to embrace the fact that there will be some sacrifice," he surmises.

When you create a winning mindset like that, there'll be no stopping you. **HeW**

# W

we all know that in the UK, when it rains, it pours. Soggy socks, wet hair and a soaked sports bra aren't a great look, but what you probably didn't know is

that getting caught in a downpour can impact your workout performance. Making sure that you've got the right gear for the job will not only mean you stay dry but that you keep consistently nailing your workouts – come rain or shine.

WORDS | *Stacey Carter*

## FIT FOR THE PURPOSE

We know that exercising outdoors is great for our health. However, chances are, whether you're a hiker, a runner, a cyclist or a dog walker, you're going to encounter some light or heavy drizzle at some point if you live in the UK. According to a study by the *International Journal of Sports Medicine*, running in the rain decreases your temperature but increases your energy cost – meaning that when compared to a dry day, running in the rain is a lot harder on your body, as it uses more energy to keep you warm. While a coat with a hood is a great start, having a few key wet-weather essentials in your wardrobe will mean you're less likely to skip your workout and keep you dry and warm. So where to start? The keyword here is layers. You need to protect your core temperature, so a sports bra and a long-sleeved top is a great start. Then, depending on your activity, you need to look for waterproof (or at least water-resistant) layers. Shell jackets are excellent for running in as they're lightweight, however, if you're on a hike or a chilly dog walk, then you'll want something with a bit more padding to keep you warm. When you're choosing your gear, think about moisture-wicking fabrics, such as polyester and bamboo, and look for shoes with enough grip and traction to stop you from slipping on wet ground. Make sure that your shoes are made from breathable materials so they don't trap moisture against your skin.



# TAKE A

# CHECK

# RAIN

Find out how upgrading your kit can transform your wet-weather workouts

# TOP

# EFFORT

## 1 PEARSON STREETS AHEAD WOMEN'S WATERPROOF COMMUTER JACKET, £179, PEARSON1860.COM

The fabric used for this jacket has a rating of 10,000 hydrostatic head (H-H), meaning that it will cope with even the most persistent downpours. As well as pockets, the jacket has some extra features including a rear storm-flap to protect your seat and a drawstring hood that fits under a helmet – perfect for keen cyclists.

## 2 COTTON TRADERS LIGHTWEIGHT WATERPROOF JACKET, £64, COTTONTRADERS.COM

Lightweight, breathable, and with an internal pocket for storing valuables, Cotton Traders have made the perfect jacket for staying cool and dry when out and about – and it can easily be stored in a bag for the moments you need it most.

## 3 GOODMOVE HIGH IMPACT SPORT'S BRA, £30, MARKSANDSPENCER.COM

The breathable fabric is moisture-wicking and quick-

drying, so you stay fresh and keep dry for longer. Plus, this bra comes with multi-way straps to let you adjust your look and is made with recycled polyester.

## 4 MYZONE MZ-SWITCH SPORTS BRA, £49.99, MYZONE.ORG

Featuring a built-in sensor strap, the Myzone MZ-Switch heart rate tracker can be clipped on which directly measures your heart rate and calorie burn. Made of 92 percent polyamide and eight percent elastane, each sports bra is sweat-wicking, which minimises temperature fluctuations and discomfort.

## 5 SALOMON BONATTI WATERPROOF WOMEN'S SHELL JACKET, £135, SALOMON.COM

The waterproof fabric is durable and protective yet lightweight, while the ventilation system on the back keeps the air flowing – as does the smart-vent button on the front. Perfect for runners.



# BOTTOMS UP



## SKECHERS RELAXED FIT: D'LUX TRAIL, £69, SKECHERS.CO.UK

Explore the great outdoors in well-cushioned comfort with the D'Lux Trail from Skechers. This lace-up shoe features a water-repellent mesh and synthetic upper with a memory foam insole and a highly durable outsole.



## FALKE ACTIVE BREEZE NO SHOW SOCKS, £8.40, LUXURY-LEGS.COM

Pleasant to wear, whatever the activity, these socks are made of breathable lyocell and have a high level of moisture transport, meaning they won't hang on to any nasty smells post-walk.



## AGALLEA WALKING TROUSERS IN OLIVE GREEN, £89, BAMBOOCLOTHING.CO.UK

Agaltea is a new technical performance fabric from BAM, crafted from a blend of bamboo and organic cotton, with an eco-friendly water-resistant coating. With plenty of practical pockets to keep you hands-free while walking, these are perfect for a hike.



## SKECHERS UNO RUGGED - RUGGED ONE, £69, SKECHERS.CO.UK

Looking for comfy boots you can take on a hike and also walk the dog in? This design features a water-resistant suede upper with an air-cooled memory foam insole, making it a seriously comfy shoe with plenty of ankle support.



# Go The EXTRA MILE

We gear up for the London Marathon with Skechers

Whether you're taking part in this year's London

Marathon or just starting your journey with running, there's two things that are crucial to a successful run: a positive mental attitude and the right shoes. We catch up with personal trainer Marilyse Elena Corrigan and athletics coach Fordy Runs to get their expert tips and recommendations to put your best-foot-forward with running.

@marilyse\_elena\_corrigan\_pt



## Marilyse Elena Corrigan

My favourite running trainers have to be the **Skechers Go Run Swirl Tech – Dash Charge (£130)** women's shoes. Not only are they comfortable but they are a true fit, which is a bonus because you don't have to mess around with the sizing. They're lightweight on your feet and cushioned so you get that extra comfort when running. I love that they are breathable which is useful when you've been running a while and start feeling hot. I wear them a lot, and not just for running – they're also my favourite pair to wear in the gym and exercise classes. Jumping around is effortless in them with great support. To top it off they are stylish and reasonably priced. Highly recommended!

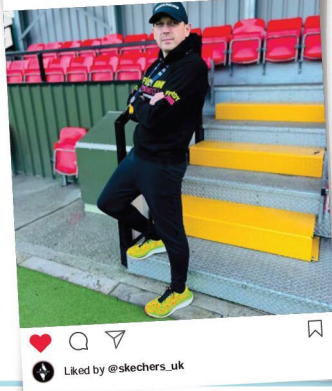


## Fordy Runs

My favourite Skechers running shoes are the **MaxRoad 5 and 6 (£150)**. The range is the most comfortable and enjoyable running shoe I have worn. I use it for every-thing because it's so versatile. The MaxRoad is perfect for marathon training as it offers the versatility to run easy miles long or short. I can be trotting about on a gentle three miles or busting out a 20-mile-long run, the MaxRoad is a joy to have underfoot. This year's model features the new Hyperburst Ice which feels great and works very well with the H plate underfoot to give you a balanced spring off as you run. The new upper is incredible and the overall comfort of the shoe makes it one of the best running shoes you can buy.



@fordy\_runs – YouTube @FordyRuns





## EXPERT TIPS TO GET MARATHON READY *from Marilyn & Fordy*

1. Kit yourself with comfortable running clothes and trainers and make sure you do a run in them before the big day.
2. Never focus on the total distance. Break the distance down, chop it up and make it manageable by setting smaller goals.
3. Fuel up in the lead up to the marathon. High carbohydrate loading will help delay fatigue when you run. Hello pasta!
4. Listen to your body first and don't be afraid to stop or walk. Remember, you don't have to be a runner to complete the marathon.

### Shop Skechers GO RUN Range



Women's Go Run MaxRoad 5, £130



Men's SKECH-KNITS ULTRA GO Lite Full Zip Hoodie, £55



Women's GO FLEX Ultra Violet HW FL Legging, £65



Men's Go Run Razor Excess 2, £150



Men's Go Run Razor Excess 2, £150



Men's Go Run Speed Elite Hyper, £165

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# LOOK WELL

From the best activewear for a workout at the gym to top make-up, hair and beauty tips, we've got all the style advice you need right here



## THE SLEEP-DEPRIVED GUIDE TO BEAUTY

Cast aside dark circles and sallow skin, and look stunning, sleep or no-sleep 😊

**W**e've all had to deal with the fallout of a sleepless night, right? Perhaps you were out late and didn't get enough pillow-hours in, or found yourself tossing and turning because of a snoring partner... whatever the reason, nobody likes to see their sleep-deprived face in the mirror come morning.



*“Ideally, we'd all be hitting the hay before 10 and getting a solid eight hours of quality shut-eye, but we all know that's not always within our power”*

“The reason sleep is so critical to functions like brain health, but also the health of our skin – and making us look better – is primarily because it is when healing, replenishment and rebuilding takes place,” says Nicola Alexander-Cross, optometrist and co-founder Peep Club (peepclub.co.uk). “The eye area is especially vulnerable to lack of sleep, since the skin around the eye area is thinner, and the blood vessels are closer to the surface of the skin, than the rest of the face – so our eyes are often the first place that reveal a particularly bad night's sleep when our body hasn't been able to heal, replenish and rebuild.” Hello, dark circles!

Not only that, but regular sleepless nights can lead to dull, sallow skin, lack of elasticity, dehydration and more pronounced wrinkles and lines. “Sleep is like nourishment for the body and skin,” says Faye Purcell, product development and skincare chemist at Q+A (qandaskin.com). “If you get enough good-quality sleep, you wake up feeling and looking refreshed. Not getting enough sleep can negatively impact the skin and result in many of the issues we've mentioned.”

So, ideally, we'd all be hitting the hay before 10 and getting a solid eight hours of quality shut-eye, but we all know that's not always within our power. What can we do to sparkle like a shiny diamond on those days where sleep has eluded us? Read on for our experts' tips.

- Elevate your head with an extra pillow when you sleep. Sleeping in a flat position on your back allows fluid to gather around the eyes giving them a puffy appearance

- the next day so grab that extra pillow! Sleeping on your back also helps keep your skincare products on your face and off your pillow and can prevent that 'creased pillow face' look.

- To soothe away red eyes try a gentle, preservative-free lubricating eye drop or spray like the Peep Club Instant Relief Eye Spray (£15, peep-club.com). Not only will it refresh your eyes to help you feel more awake, but it will also noticeably reduce redness in a safe and gentle way. Stay clear of whitening drops – these might be a quick fix but can have long-term damaging consequences if they're overused.

- Choose clever ingredients in your skincare. For instance, niacinamide can help reduce redness, strengthen the skin barrier, and brighten tired faces. Vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant is known for its radiance boosting benefits and can help skin look perky and wide awake. Peptides are another good ingredient to look out for as they are able to stimulate collagen production for plumper, more supple skin.

- Exfoliation instantly buffs away dead, flaky skin cells, helps boost blood flow, and reveals softer, brighter and a more even toned complexion. In the morning, opt for an exfoliating cleanser like the Q+A Niacinamide Gentle Exfoliating Cleanser, £7.50. It uses kind-to-skin jojoba beads to reveal a brighter and smoother feeling complexion.

- Curl your lashes before applying mascara – this lifts and instantly opens the eyes. You can also dab a dot of shimmer in the corner of your eye as this helps reflect the light, making your eyes look wider and brighter! If you suffer from dark under eyes, a colour correcting concealer in a red, orange or yellow tone will help to correct darkness.

- Cheat dewy and fresh skin by mixing just a couple of drops of a nourishing facial oil to your tinted moisturiser or foundation. It's a great way to hydrate dry and fatigued skin and give your face a healthy look. You only need a couple of drops as too much oil can make your face look greasy.

- Try replenishing the hydration in your skin as soon as you can – to compensate for the hydration lost due to your incomplete sleep. Keep a humidifier bedside if you can to accelerate the hydration process such as Peep Club's Hydrating Portable Humidifier (£55, peep-club.com) especially designed for overnight use. Kick off the day with a tall glass of water. And prioritise highly-moisturising and hydrating products first thing in your routine – ideally layering them to help gently restore the bounce to the skin.

- Lack of sleep is instantly noticeable in the eyes so use a product to perk up your peepers. Vitamin C will help illuminate the area – try the NEW Q+A Vitamin C Eye Cream, £8 which contains vitamin C and vitamin rich acerola cherry extract to brighten, nourish and energise. Hydrating hyaluronic acid is also great for plumping out fine lines and I love eye products that contain stimulating caffeine. Used topically, caffeine has amazing anti-inflammatory and de-puffing benefits. For extra oomph, keep your eye products in the fridge to give a cooling effect.

- When you wake up – apply a cool compress around the face. This could be something as simple as a cold flannel or something more sophisticated like an ice roller. The cool compress will help calm the dilated blood vessels to reduce the blood shot look of the eyes and lessen dark circles.

- Exercise can be very beneficial to your skin and overall health, so kick start your morning routine with a quick 10-minute workout. Everything from yoga, stretching, cardio and running will boost circulation, help bring blood, oxygen, and nutrients throughout your body and to your face for a healthy, rosy glow.

- When it comes to make-up – use the tried-and-true technique of colour correcting. A concealer with yellow, peach or green undertones can go a long way when it comes to hiding discolouration around the eyes. Draw attention away from the eyes completely by choosing a bold red lip – a classic technique for hiding poor sleep. **H@W**



Wanderlash mascara, £28, bellaworld.com

Awakening gold-coloured eye-masks with caffeine, £49, arbonne.com



Arella Dream, £29.99, arella-beauty.co.uk

Dr Sabrina Perfect 360 Eye Illuminate, £90, drsabrina.co.uk



BRIGHT-EYED BUYS



BEAUTY HEROES TO HELP YOU LOOK AND FEEL YOUR BEST



1-Day Instant Tanner, £9.99, skinnytan.com



Fluff It Up brow gel, £39, brows-by-sarah.com



Rose & Caramel Unity Tanning Drops, £24.99, roseandcaramel.co.uk



Ella & Jo Wide Awake Eye Gel, £35, ellandjo.co.uk

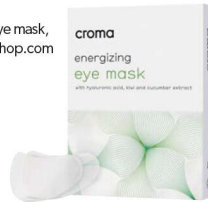


Dr Jackson Face Eye Essence, £60, drjacksonskincare.com



Croma Energising eye mask, £48, cromaskincareshop.com

By Terry Hyaluronic Concealer, £38, byterry.com



Rapid Lash, £39.99, lookfantastic.com



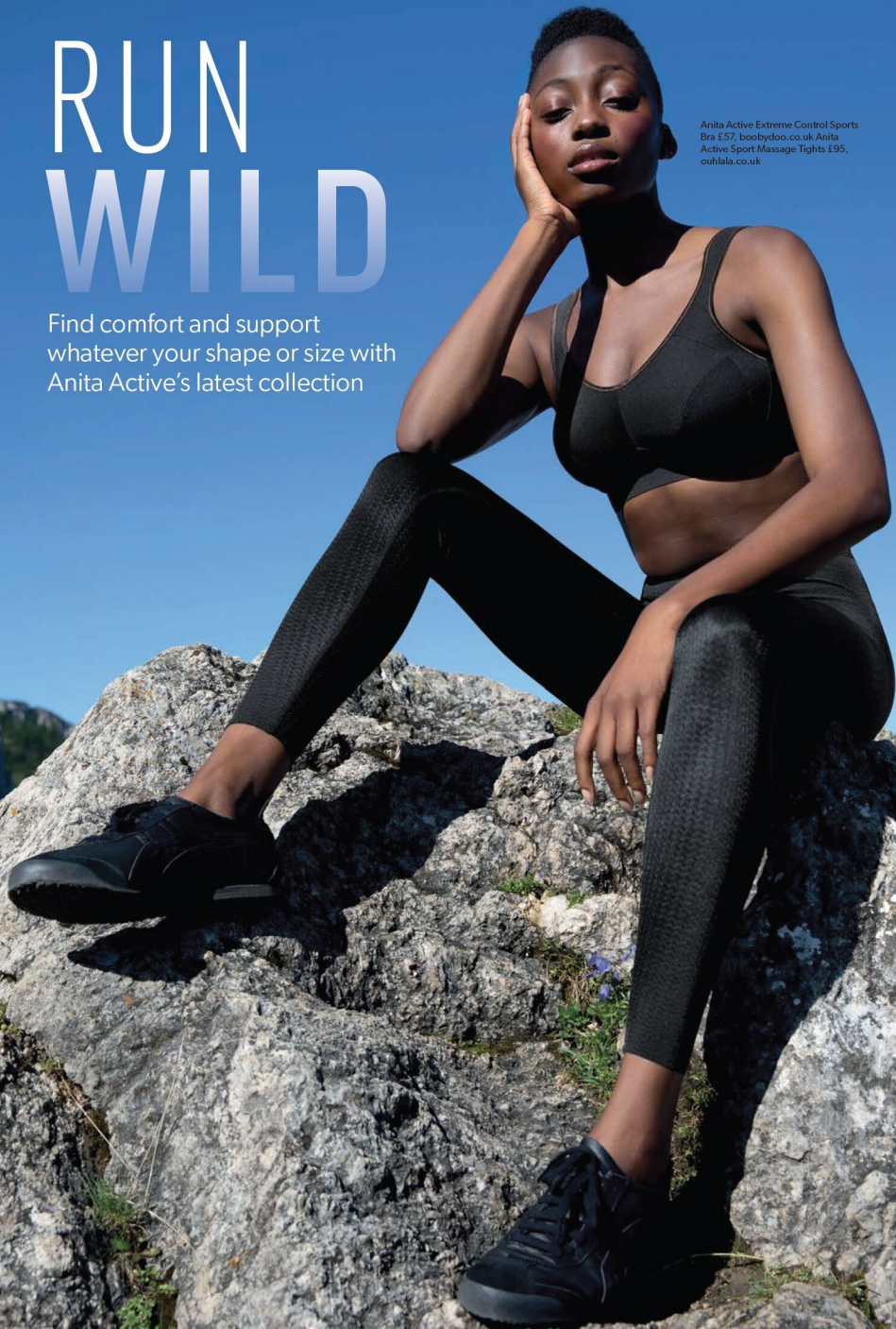
Neutrogena Hydro Boost Awakening Eye Cream £12.99, boots.com



# RUN WILD

Find comfort and support  
whatever your shape or size with  
Anita Active's latest collection

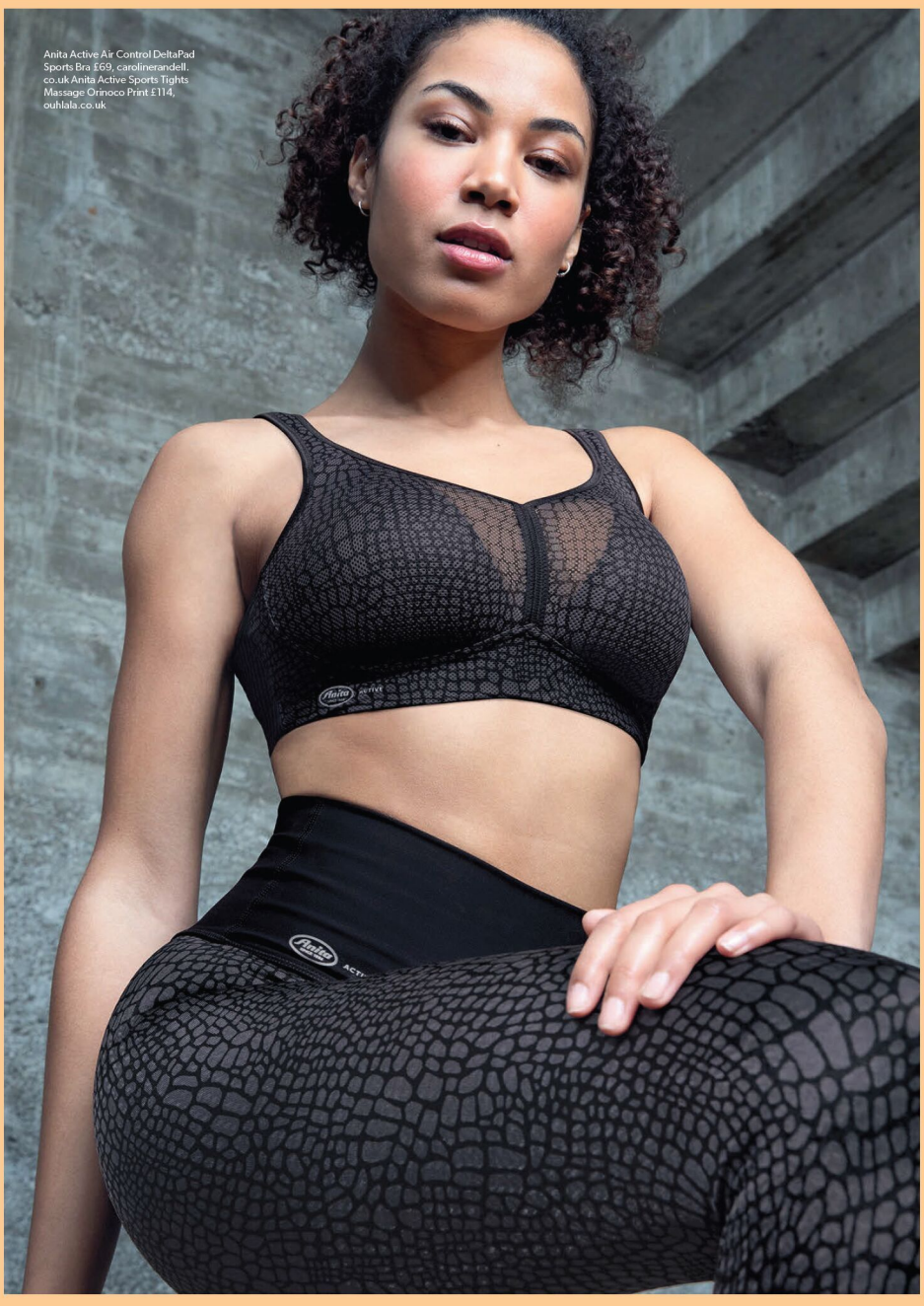
Anita Active Extreme Control Sports  
Bra £57, [boobydoo.co.uk](http://boobydoo.co.uk) Anita  
Active Sport Massage Tights £95,  
[ouhlala.co.uk](http://ouhlala.co.uk)



Anita Active Light & Firm Sports Bra  
£48, [amplebosom.com](http://amplebosom.com)



Anita Active Air Control DeltaPad  
Sports Bra £69, carolinerandell.  
co.uk Anita Active Sports Tights  
Massage Olivoco Print £114,  
ouhiala.co.uk





Anita Active Extreme Control Sports  
Bra £57, [boobydoo.co.uk](http://boobydoo.co.uk)  
and Anita Active Sports massage  
Tights, [ouhlala.co.uk](http://ouhlala.co.uk) £95

# Elevate your workout style

Regroup with your workout wardrobe for a fresher take on exercising

WORDS | *Liz Frost*

**I**f you've ever undertaken a wardrobe consolidation, you'll understand the joy that comes with clearing the decks of old, out-dated/poorly-fitting clothes, discovering forgotten togs and moving forward with a fresher sense of what your style is. The same should go for your workout wardrobe. Think about how much better you feel in the gym when your clothes fit well and look great. "Workout kit not only looks tired but it can also have physical consequences," says Helen White, product and brand director at BAM (bambooclothing.co.uk). "For instance, the moisture-wicking qualities of activewear mean that sweat is kept away from the skin. If this has degraded over time, then there is more chance of sweat causing rashes and irritating the skin, and of overheating."

According to Lily Rice, creative director of Presca Sportswear (prescasportswear.com) from a performance point of view, kit probably doesn't need to be changed as often as you would think. "Unless you're training professionally you're not using sports clothing as often as your regular wardrobe, plus performance fabrics tend to be super long-lasting," she says. "Bits that might need looking at are anything waterproof as this is often applied as a coating that comes off over time and sports bras, you want to ensure great fit there, too. Bear in mind any body changes, if you've changed shape, chances are that old kit might not fit well anymore and may need to be replaced."

When it comes to assessing what you need to replace, remember workout clothing is designed to support specific areas of the body and if this is reduced due to age, then problems can arise. As Helen explains, "High-intensity exercise without a good sports bra will not only be uncomfortable

but can result in permanent damage. Once your ligaments are stretched, you will never make them short and pert again."

Baggy leggings are no one's friend. "These can verge from annoying (mid-run yank-ups are not chic!)" adds Lily, "to dangerously distracting or just plain dangerous – loose clothing while climbing is a big no, no. Trainers, however, should last longer than you think and quite often can be repurposed. If you feel they aren't fit for running anymore then use them for something less impact, mine go on a journey from running to gym, to muddy dog walking before I'd even consider recycling them."

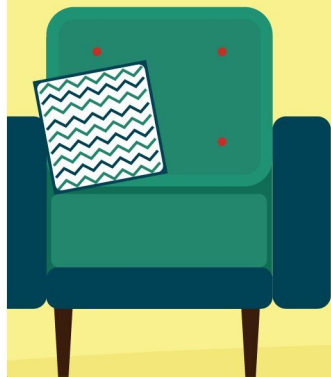
## Read on for our experts' tips on refreshing your workout wardrobe:

- "Before we go any further it's time to Kondo your existing sports wardrobe. Separate into what you actually wear and what hasn't seen the light of day. Now rehome that second pile" suggests Lily. "Next it's honestly time. No one wants to admit that the leggings they dropped lots of money on and forgot to return have never fitted but now's the time to clear them from your life and let them go to a better home. Same with the crop tops you swore you'd wear but never have! Having braved the sort, you should now be left with a pile that you know you love, time for the fit check. Trial each piece over the next few workouts, anything that feels wrong or uncomfortable it's time to ditch. Workouts should be a place for you to clear your head and have some 'me-time'. Exercise is certainly not about uncomfortable or unforgiving kit!"

- "Make sure everything you buy is fit-for-purpose," says Helen. "Starting with your underwear, ensure your sports bra provides the right support; that your pants are comfortable and not digging in; that your socks provide the necessary

cushioning and shock absorption. Make sure your leggings have a comfortable waistband and that they are supportive and opaque so you won't feel self-conscious. Some have minimum seams to avoid chafing. Move away from synthetic clothing and try some natural-sourced fabrics such as bamboo. "You will see how much longer it takes to get smelly, and therefore reduces the need for washing so frequently, keeping the integrity of the fabric intact for longer. And remember, you are wearing it directly next to your skin so you want something that feels soft and comfortable. Just a small itch or niggle can be distracting and get magnified during an intensive workout."

- Don't want to buy brand new? "Hold





*“High-intensity exercise without a good sports bra will not only be uncomfortable but can result in permanent damage”*



a swap meet,” suggests Lily. “Round up your friends, pass on the first two steps and then meet post class to trade. Yes they might be different sizes or into different sports to you but that’s kind of the point. The large yoga tee you bought for the class you attended once and then found too baggy? Perfect for the yogi in your life who’s trading you the running vest she hasn’t been able to defer until now.”

● “Your workout wardrobe probably won’t need to be completely revamped. But it might be worth investing in some key pieces in the gorgeous bright colours that are around this season to lift your mood,” says Helen. “It’s surprising how clothing can get you in the right frame of mind, increase confidence and motivate you. When you look the part, you feel the part and ultimately will work out harder!

Invest in layers of different weights so that you can feel comfortable whatever the British spring and summer weather throws at you, from a featherlight base layer to an insulated gilet. And it is worth remembering that whilst casual wear will rarely perform well for workouts, stylish activewear can comfortably be worn for everyday usage, whether sitting at a desk or out in the garden. In fact, the breathability and moisture-wicking properties of natural-based performance fabrics lend themselves perfectly for holiday and travel wear.”

● “Give everything a good wash,” suggests Lily. “New, old, it’s time to take care of kit. If you’re shrinking your kit bag down, chances are you’ll be wearing the same pieces more often. Always wash at 30 degrees, never use fabric softener and if possible turn your clothes inside out before

you wash. Another great tip is to try and air your clothes post session, this helps deter bacteria which can fester if you chuck a sweaty tee straight into a washing basket while damp. Ew.”

So you’ve cleared your kit, you’re facing the world in a fresh new light with a streamlined wardrobe. But then you realise you need something you don’t yet have, maybe you’ve upped your game and need something extra. When buying additions, read the reviews, try on the kit and buy the best you can. “This is an investment, a new buddy who will join you on your workouts for the foreseeable,” says Lily, “so make good choices about who you allow into your freshly cleaned wardrobe line up!” Turn the page for our top workout buys. **H&W**



Zebra-Print Sport Crop Top, £6,  
[Primark.com](http://Primark.com)



73 Zero Running Gilet, £59,  
[bambooclothing.co.uk](http://bambooclothing.co.uk)



Grecia short-sleeve jersey, £105,  
[prescasporswear.co.uk](http://prescasporswear.co.uk)

# workout wanders

Our favourite picks to add to your fitness wardrobe



Core Collection Bib Shorts, £105,  
[prescasporswear.com](http://prescasporswear.com)



Enduro 7-8 Leggings in Wilderness Print, £55,  
[bamclothing.co.uk](http://bamclothing.co.uk)



Novea Base Layer in Blossom, £55,  
[bamclothing.co.uk](http://bamclothing.co.uk)

New Balance Women's London Edition 880 v13, £140,  
[newbalance.co.uk](http://newbalance.co.uk)

Marks & Spencer Go Train Leggings, Black, £29.50,  
[marksandspencer.co.uk](http://marksandspencer.co.uk)



Primark Zebra Seam-Free Shorts, £4.50,  
[Primark.com](http://Primark.com)





Florence & Fred grey marl yoga top, £18, **Tesco stores**



Marks & Spencer Jasper Leggings, Grey Marl, £25, **marksandspencer.co.uk**



Souluxe Longline T-Shirt, £10, **Matalan.co.uk**



Dash Activewear by Bonmarch, £18, **bonmarche.co.uk**

Blue Sports Bra, £12.99, **tkmaxx.com**



Lime Pop Dash-Print Leggings, £12.50, **Tesco stores**



Grey Marl Yoga Leggings, £16, **Tesco stores**



New Balance Women's London Edition FuelCell SC Elite v3, £220, **newbalance.co.uk**

PURA  
COLLAGEN

# WHY DOES COLLAGEN MATTER?

We hear from the experts at Pura Collagen about why this protein is so important



Did you know collagen makes up as much as 35 percent of the human body? A key ingredient in everything from skin, hair and nails to joints, muscles and bones, it's the most abundant protein in the body.

As we age our natural collagen levels deplete in an irreversible way. Beginning in our 20s we start to lose collagen at a rate of around one percent per year. With this, joints start to ache, skin wrinkles, hair thins and

our immune system and sleep cycles are compromised. Not to mention that when we hit the menopause, we lose over half of our collagen levels.

Pura Collagen's award-winning solutions are scientifically formulated, containing Bioactive Collagen Peptides which are clinically proven to aid in replenishing your body's optimal collagen levels. Taking Pura Collagen every day leaves you feeling and looking like the best version of you.

day can help to improve bone density, boost cognitive function and support a healthy response to common conditions associated with the menopause such as hot flushes, brain fog and sore joints. Simply mix with water and enjoy a refreshing raspberry and garden mint drink to help you feel your best.



## WITH PURA COLLAGEN, UNLOCK THE SECRET TO...

### A good night's rest with *sleep*

This sleep collagen powder is an overnight miracle worker containing the hydrolysed collagen peptide PEPTIPLUS. The indulgent double chocolate and salted caramel formula promotes relaxation and restful sleep to help you drift off whilst also boosting your natural collagen production. Add hot water and snuggle down for the best night's sleep you've had in years.

### Pain-free movement with *flex+*

By specifically targeting the collagen receptors in cartilage, joints and tendons, flex+ works to improve your joint strength, flexibility, and mobility. Thanks to the Bioactive Collagen Peptides FORTIGEL and TENDOFORTE, two scoops of unflavoured flex+ a day in your

coffee or smoothie can help you see results in as little as six weeks.

### Improved immunity with *protect*

Stimulating the natural production of collagen helps to defend you against harmful bacteria, viruses, toxins and more thanks to the targeted IMMUEPT Bioactive Collagen Peptide and key supporting ingredients. Available in natural ginger and lemon, just add hot or cold water for the ultimate pick-me-up.

### Managing the menopause with *balance*

This one-of-a-kind supplement uses the Bioactive Collagen Peptide FORTIBONE and key supporting ingredients to provide nutrition support during the menopause. Just one scoop a

### Your inner radiance with *glow+*

This multi-award-winning, unflavoured powder uses the Bioactive Collagen Peptide VERISOL and key supporting ingredients to strengthen your hair, skin and nails. Just two scoops a day can visibly reduce deep lines and wrinkles in your skin, stimulate hair follicles, and strengthen your nails with results in as little as four weeks. After prolonged use, glow+ can even reduce the appearance of cellulite. Add it to your coffee, smoothies or even porridge. **HOW**

To learn more or to shop Pura Collagen's full range, visit [puracollagen.co.uk](http://puracollagen.co.uk).

# your style

## TIPS TO UPDATE YOUR LOOK

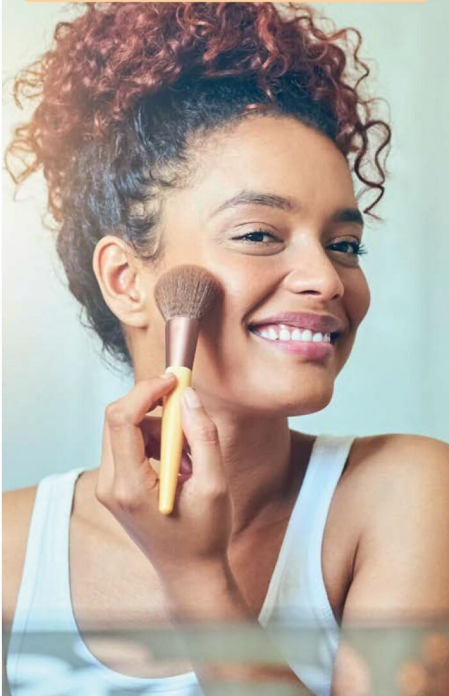
### CREATE THE PERFECT FAKE TAN

#### STEP 1

First use a loofah, exfoliating pad, or a body scrub to gently get rid of dead skin cells. If using the drops with a facial moisturiser, exfoliate with a facial exfoliator. Pump desired amount of your favourite lotion or cream and add 3-15 drops of tanner to it depending on the level of tan you would like to achieve. Apply a thick layer evenly over legs, arms torso and face (avoid eyes)

#### STEP 2

Your skin should reach your desired colour within six hours. Reapply if necessary. Add tanning drops to your daily moisturiser for longest-lasting results.



## IN OUR WASH BAGS

### Super Facialist Vitamin C+ Brighten Skin Renew Cleansing Oil

If you're looking to take your cleansing routine to the next level, this is your product. It contains a high-performance pro-collagen vitamin C active for a more youthful, healthy glow and a smoother, retexturised skin appearance, £12, available from boots.com



## BEAUTY ON A BUDGET

Give your skin and hair a spruce up this spring for big beauty benefits

### Q+A Rosehip Cleansing Oil, £10, qandaskin.com

This oil is a brilliant night-time cleansing treat. Great for all skin types but particularly those that want something to help repair and soothe. Rich in vitamins, omega oils, avocado, hempseed and argan oils.



### Dr Organic Guava Eye Serum, £9.99, drorganic.co.uk

Featuring exotic guava fruit that is abundant in vitamin C, this eye serum brightens and replenishes while providing luminosity and radiance – perfect for tired, dull under-eyes. It works to maintain hydration and keep the area around your eyes looking and feeling healthy.



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[beautycore.co.uk](http://beautycore.co.uk)



# TRAVEL WELL

Pack your bags because holiday destinations are back on the agenda. Whether you need to press pause on a weekend staycation or tap into your inner explorer further afield, wellness travel is something you'll definitely want to get on board with.

## BREAK AWAY, COME TOGETHER

From alpaca trekking to full moon adventures, here's where to go and what to do for a happy family holiday [➔](#)





Grand Resort Bad Ragaz

## SPEND A SUMMER IN THE ALPS

For fresh air and scenic backdrops, Switzerland is the destination for families. Hiking and trail routes surround the Grand Resort Bad Ragaz that are ideal for kids where the whole family can unleash their inner Sherlock Holmes with The Detective Trail on the Pizol. It lasts for two hours and includes a 60-minute leisurely hike, and a visit to the nearby Water Forest. Alternatively, walk in the footsteps of popular Swiss children's character Heidi, discovering her story on the Heidi Adventure Trail. For animal lovers, spend the afternoon llama and alpaca trekking, paired with a tasty fondue dinner in the forest. After exploring the vast hills of the Swiss Alps, swimming lessons (and even mermaid classes) await the youngest of the bunch and down time for the adults looks like a deep relaxation massage for some pamper time. Nightly rates start from around £864 for a family room, based on two adults and three children (under 16) sharing on a full-board basis. Head to [resortragaz.ch/en](http://resortragaz.ch/en) for more information and get your summer sorted..

Going away with the family has the potential to induce more stress than an overflowing inbox at times. There's the research, packing, the potential for a plan B and various itineraries – and that's even before you've left the house. But, if new travel trends are anything to go by, families are forgoing the traditional beach holidays and putting experiences first on trips that prioritise being active, exploring wellbeing and making long-lasting memories together. Inspired? Close down your computer tabs and iPhone notes because we've done all the leg work for you. Read on for our top five picks to make memories last longer than just a snapshot.



Wild ConTENTment

## GO OFF-GRID IN SHROPSHIRE

Need a break from the hustle and bustle? Recharge and disconnect at Wild ConTENTment – an off-grid, eco-friendly campsite located on an idyllic dairy farm on the Shropshire/Welsh border. Offering a camping experience with a twist, you'll stay in one of its fully-equipped bell tents and have the option to hire a mobile bathroom or Beryl featuring an outdoor shower, washing-up area and copper roll top bath, all fitted into a converted horse trailer. For a touch of luxury, you can book an orthopaedic mattress for the best night's sleep. Around the site, campers can explore a network of footpaths which lead to rope swings and hidden spots for bird-watching, as well as on-site activities such as yoga, Pilates, willow weaving, pottery and photography. For a more exhilarating experience, the site owners have teamed up with a local climbing instructor who offers a rock-climbing and abseiling adventure at nearby Llanymynech Rock. Shops and pubs are within walking distance, so if you fancy a night away from the camp stove, book a table at the Floro Lounge in Shrewsbury for a night out with the whole family. They have board games for groups, toys for small ones and treats for your four-legged friends too. Prices start from £65 per night for a pitch and Beryl combo with firepit. Head to [wildcontentment.com](http://wildcontentment.com) for more of its packages.

## HEAD FOR THE HILLS IN GREECE

For a family getaway further afield, the northern coastline of Crete is the ideal hotspot for a healthy break. Porto Elounda overlooks the stunning views of the Mirabello Bay in the north-east corner of Crete, with a retreat programme designed for everyone. The natural parks, sweeping verdant hills and glistening teal waters that surround the resort tick all the boxes for a low-key family holiday, while its extensive programme guarantees fun for all. Guided hikes, Greek cooking classes, biking tours, relaxing adult spa treatments, family meditation and yoga sessions are all on offer throughout your stay and you can choose from five-, 10- or 14-day programmes to suit your budget. The resort provides dining for all occasions, from Italian cuisine al fresco style in an old olive grove to beach front cocktails at the seaside bar, so you're never far from a real taste of the Mediterranean. Prices start from **£2,045** for five days per family. Visit **healthandfitnesstravel.com** for more information.

Porto Elounda

## RECHARGE AND RECONNECT IN THE ISLE OF MAN

Dubbed a 'playground of possibilities', the Isle of Man caters for families of all shapes and sizes. Located in the Irish Sea, it can be reached by a short flight from the UK or Ireland or by ferry from Liverpool or Dublin, making it an affordable wellness break while still getting away from the everyday. Whether you'd prefer to take a leisurely stroll through the glens or experience some of its best wildlife spots, there are plenty of ways to explore the island on foot. The island's coastline is particularly special, where you could catch glimpse of some of the marine animals which are abundant in the Manx seas while following the Raad ny Foillan Coastal Footpath with a chance to discover seals, basking sharks and bottlenose dolphins. For young adventurers, kayaking, abseiling, boating lakes and BMX tracks are all available around the island, so you'll have plenty of activities to choose from to keep everyone happy. Head to **visitisleofman.com** to discover more.

Visit Isle of Man



Oxien Howells  
Photography

## FIND YOUR FEEL GOOD IN PEMBROKESHIRE

You might think that families and festivals don't mix, but everyone is welcome at The Big Retreat. Based in the Pembrokeshire National Park, this annual festival has a star-studded line up, as well as fun and games for little retreaters. By day, families can join Mr Motivator for a workout on the main stage, explore the Tadorna Wildlife Hub to learn about small creatures, have hours of fun on the water slides and even give ArielYoga a try. With a packed itinerary, you'll no doubt need to refuel – and fresh food comes by the bucket-load. Head to the Chef's Kitchen to join a cookery demo to make some delicious plant-based bites and for the adults, the famous gin workshops kick off at 5pm. You can also expect high energy beats coming from the main stage with Scouting for Girls, Top Loader and Ni Maxine all set to perform. Music finishes at 11pm, so you can head to bed and feel refreshed for the next day. For three nights and four days of activities, a family ticket with a camping pitch is **£550** – and under-five's go free. Book your ticket at **thebigretreatfestival.com**

# Support your body's *defence*

## Floradix® Immune Support



- Contains vitamins and minerals to support the normal function of the immune system; D, C, B12, B6, selenium and zinc.
- Based on a herbal extract from plants and Echinacea.
- Contains fruit concentrates for a great taste.
- Free from alcohol, preservatives, colourings and artificial flavourings.
- Free from gluten and lactose.
- Suitable for vegetarians & vegans.

# 30 DAYS

## *To a Healthier You*

Fresh starts aren't just for January; you can create healthy habits at any time of year



**T**hose New Year's resolutions might be long forgotten by now, but don't worry. Making grand targets with no plan is probably only likely to lead to de-motivation, so we're all about simple, achievable lifestyle tweaks this year to help us feel inspired and healthy. Small changes can make a big difference. Turn over for an easy idea to try for each day of this month...

## 1 Eat alfresco

We all know that being out in nature is good for us, so why not maximise your time soaking up some vitamin D out in the garden, park, beach, woodland enjoying a picnic? It doesn't have to be anything fancy, even just enjoying your morning cuppa or lunch break sandwich alfresco can be enough to give you an extra boost after the long, dark winter months. Getting adequate amounts of daylight (particularly in the mornings) also helps to regulate your sleep-wake cycle and improve your shut-eye.

## 2 BATCH COOK

Got a quiet Sunday? Cook up some extra portions of meals that you can freeze ready for busy weekdays. You needn't spend all day cooking for the week ahead, just double up on some recipes and stash half in the freezer. Your future self will thank you for it.

## 5 Be a spectator

This year's London Marathon takes place on Sunday 23rd April and if you want motivation to get running, this is it. The atmosphere in the city is electric, and it's just as inspiring to watch the event on TV, too.

## Have a digital detox

What's your relationship like with your tech? Most of us are reliant on our phones and devices for everything these days. So if the thought of being without your phone for a few hours brings you out in a cold sweat, it's probably a sign you actually should spend some time apart.



## 8 START WRITING

Daily journaling is a great habit to get into for managing stress. Writing things down encourages reflection and helps you mentally unwind, while noting things you're grateful for can refocus your outlook. Not sure where to begin? The Wellbeing Journal (£20, [lovendu.co.uk](http://lovendu.co.uk)) has prompts, inspirational quotes and more.

## 9 Go wild

While making more of an effort to spend time outside this month you can do your bit for nature and try making your outdoor space more wildlife friendly. For ideas join The Wildlife Trusts Wild About Gardens campaign with the RHS for wilder gardens. Visit [wildaboutgardens.org.uk](http://wildaboutgardens.org.uk) for details.

# 3

## Give yourself a massage

A massage is a surefire route to relaxation. Sadly, most of us don't have the £££s to enjoy weekly treatments, yet we can harness some of the benefits to help de-stress at home every day. Try daily face and neck massage while applying your daily moisturiser – this helps to combat tension headaches. As can head and scalp massages, which also encourages circulation and hair health. Try Regrowz Scalp Massage Brush (£5.99, [regrowz.com](http://regrowz.com)).

## 4 DRINK MORE WATER

No health hack is easier or more affordable than making sure you drink your two litres of water every day. Struggle with the lack of flavour? Try infusing with fruit slices, mint, thyme, or caffeine-free herbal teas.



PROMOTIONAL CONTENT

## 6 LEVEL UP YOUR BATH TIME

Swallowing your vitamins and minerals isn't the only way to take them. Transdermal magnesium is absorbed through the skin, so ideal if you have digestive issues when taking supplements. Magnesium is instrumental to more than 300 physiological and psychological functions, including those critical to restful sleep and energy production. Add some BetterYou Magnesium Flakes (from £3.95, [betteryou.com](http://betteryou.com)) to a warm bath before bed to help soothe aches and pains, relax your body and aid sleep.

## 10 EAT MINDFULLY

If you would like to lose weight, think about how you eat as well as what you eat. "Start by giving your meal your full attention, this means switching off the TV and sitting down at a table," suggests life coach Susan Hepburn ([susanhepburnclinics.com](http://susanhepburnclinics.com)). "Appreciate how amazing food can be by taking in the colours, textures and aromas before you eat. When you taste it, appreciate the tastes and textures on your tongue, you want to make every bite a choice rather than a reflex or habit."

**11** **Chew your food**  
Yes, we do need to remind ourselves of this, for better digestion. "Take time as you eat, chewing each mouthful 10-12 times – when you slow down to eat you can really savour your food, helping you stay in tune with your body and know when you're full," explains Susan. "Think about how you're feeling as you eat, but don't judge yourself, simply observe what's happening and be curious about how eating makes you feel."

**14**

### Keep a food diary

Wondering why you're not reaching your weight goals? Keeping note of what you're eating and drinking and when can reveal patterns and unpick your relationship with food. "This will help you to understand your triggers: the feelings or events that drive you to food when you aren't hungry," Susan tells us. "On top of this, track any daily exercise as well as your general emotions, to help see patterns in your eating." Then you can begin to make effective changes.

**17** **Get up early**  
Lots of celebs swear by the benefits of being an early riser, or at least getting up an hour or so before the rest of your household to spend some quiet time with yourself. This time could be spent doing gentle exercise, reading, meditating or sipping tea.



**19** **EAT THE RAINBOW**  
It might not just be a colourful wardrobe that ramps up the feel-good factor this month – make your plates colourful too and you're sure to feel the benefits after 30 days if not before. For ideas on how to hit your five-a-day target, see page 62.

**12**

### REARRANGE YOUR FRIDGE

"In my experience, those who struggle with their weight or food will often be constantly opening the fridge door and looking into it, facing temptation," says Susan. "Make it easier to resist by putting all the 'naughty' food such as chocolate or cheese somewhere hidden – such as in the vegetable drawer – and put healthier options like fruits and vegetables on shelves where you can see them as soon as you open the fridge."

### 15 Create a healthy habit

As they say: motivation is what gets you started – habit is what keeps you going. Apparently, it takes three weeks to change a habit or build a new one. For example, if you're looking to boost your health and fitness, aim to do at least a few minutes of exercise per day, whether that's hiking or a YouTube yoga video. "So many of us are time poor. All movement counts so making simple changes like taking the stairs instead of the elevator, going for a 10-minute walk during our lunch break, it all adds up. And it creates good habits," says Revive Active health expert, Dr Fiona Barry (PhD BSc Lic Ac MBACc) (reviveactive.com).

**20** **SAY NO**  
When you don't say yes authentically, you say it resentfully, fearfully and avoidantly, and that leads to more problems than if you'd said no in the first place, says author Natalie Lue. Natalie's latest book *The Joy of Saying No* shows us how to avoid toxic patterns and nurture healthy relationships. Find out more at [baggageclaim.co.uk](http://baggageclaim.co.uk).

### 13 GO TO BED EARLY

According to sleep expert Dr Nerina Ramlakhan (dmerina.com) the first phase of sleep we get pre-midnight is often the most restorative, so go to bed early at least three or four nights per week. Netflix can wait.

### 16 Get crafty

Easter is upon us, and whether or not you celebrate it, the holiday offers the perfect time to try your hand at creative crafts. From crochet and card making, to stitching and painting, there is sure to be something you enjoy. Pastimes like these are said to be good for de-stressing and mental wellbeing. You'll find dozens of downloadable ideas at [hobbycraft.co.uk](http://hobbycraft.co.uk) to get you started.

**18**

### Dress the part

That is, wear the clothes that make you heart sing, otherwise known as dopamine dressing. This is different for everyone, so whether it's joggers and tees or brights, patterns and tailoring, choose the outfits that make you feel good.

### 21 CUT OUT ALCOHOL

You needn't wait for dry January or sober October. "Going sober isn't just a trend, it's a lifestyle choice that allows people to take control of their health and wellbeing, leading to a more fulfilling way of living," says Luke Hughes, PT and founder of OriGym (origympersonaltrainercourses.co.uk). "Alcohol is one of the worst substances for your body, so those who have the capacity to do so should seriously consider cutting it out of their diet for good."

## 22 *Get green fingered*

Bringing natural elements into our homes is good for us. What's more, studies have found that having plants in your bedroom can have a positive effect on both your mood and health and some are thought to help us sleep better. Martin Seeley, Sleep Expert from [MattressNextDay](http://mattressnextday.co.uk) ([mattressnextday.co.uk](http://mattressnextday.co.uk)) affirms that jasmine, aloe vera and lavender are particularly good for encouraging sound snoozing.

## 24

### Help your hormones

Our hormones influence our mood, energy, sleep, focus and quality of life, so it pays to understand more about them. Learn more by listening to the podcast *It's Your Hormones!* hosted by Dr Sohere Roked, a GP, functional medicine and hormone doctor.

## 27 *Switch up your workouts*

Not enjoying running, HIIT classes or weights? You'd be surprised at how much strength and stamina you can build through using your bodyweight on the yoga mat. "Yoga allows us to cultivate and create strength in the body without feeling like we have to pound the pavement or lift heavy weights," Cat says.

## 23

### SPEAK OUT

Telling yourself positive affirmations out loud on a daily basis really can influence your behaviour, says psychotherapist Jordan Vyas-Lee, co-founder of mental health care clinic Kove ([koveminds.com](http://koveminds.com)). "We largely live by learned behaviour and patterned reflexes and in order to change our daily cycles we really need to input something new in to that system," he explains. "Affirmations allow one to reconform goals, values, and direction every day."

## 25 *Focus on breath*

We're hearing more and more about the power of breathing right these days, and for good reason. "If we breathe with more awareness, intention and observation, we are able to understand both our physical and emotional body that much more," says leading yoga teacher Cat Meffan, founder of the Soul Sanctuary ([mysoulsanctuary.co](http://mysoulsanctuary.co)). If a 'still' breathwork practice isn't your thing, give yoga a go. "To be doing asana (physical yoga) you are connecting breath to movement, one of the only types of practice that does this with so much focus," adds Cat.

## 28 *COOK COMFORT FOOD*

84 percent of us Brits think the food you eat has a link to mental health, says research from WeightWatchers (WW), and we couldn't agree more. Eating to nourish your body and mind is one of the foundations of good health. But comfort food needn't be calorific. Get some culinary ideas from WW ambassador Lorraine Kelly, who has done a video for the brand's YouTube alongside chef Zena Kamgaing putting a healthy twist on Britain's favourite comfort foods, including a cheese toasty and Sunday roast. Visit [ww.com](http://ww.com) to find out more.

## 29

### Feel the cold

Lots of the celebs we speak to at H&W recommend cold showers as one of the best ways to give yourself a mental and physical boost. Now the weather is starting to warm up, this month is a great time to try a cold blast in your bathroom. Are you brave enough?



## 26

### LIFT YOUR MOOD

Struggling to switch off after a long day?

Try spritzing an aromatherapy mist around your room, like the Love Atmosphere Mist (£14, [spritzwellness.com](http://spritzwellness.com)) to help you unwind.

## 30

### Eat less meat

"Research suggests that simply reducing the amount of meat we consume can have positive impacts on both our overall health and the environment too," says leading nutritionist Rhiannon Lambert ([rhitrition.com](http://rhitrition.com)). "There is a lot of research that supports an increase in plant-based foods, to help increase longevity and reduce the risk of certain health conditions, including type two diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and even some cancers."



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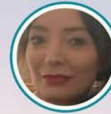
**Julie Ramsey, 69,**  
retired science teacher,  
- Scotland

"No more UTI symptoms and no more antibiotics – and I can't wait to go on a long haul holiday once again when we are allowed- I'll definitely be taking the URALIX!"



**Trudy Warren, 58,**  
retired practice nurse,  
- Plymouth

"I'm so pleased I have found URALIX- preventing the dreaded urinary symptoms that have bothered me for so long. I finally see a complete end to this horrible problem!"



**Kathy Close, 38,**  
- London

"Life changing supplement. No more antibiotics."



**Lina Pope, 61,**  
- Derbyshire

"I can honestly say, these tablets have changed my life and would 100% recommend them to anyone suffering from UTIs."



**Karen Boden, 54,**  
- Walsall

"After years of awful symptoms after taking Uralix for just a week my symptoms disappeared, I would really recommend them 100 percent."



**Donna Gouldthorpe, 51,**  
- Suffolk

"I found these capsules and I haven't had symptoms since. They are amazing."



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Prof. E. Schiff,

"URALIX is a new UK manufactured botanical supplement which has been specifically designed to improve urinary health."  
Dr Gemma Newman MBBCH DRCOG  
DFSRH MRCGP, Obstetrics-Gynaecology

"The overwhelmingly positive response after taking URALIX is very encouraging, and in line with the NHS guidelines of reducing antibiotics overuse."  
Mr A. Gautama, Pharmacist

# health clinic

THE INSIDE KNOWLEDGE  
FOR BETTER HEALTH

## FAMILY VALUES

It's official, spending time with loved ones is good for our health – that's according to recent research by experts at Nottingham Trent University, University of Kent and Coventry University. The study assessed people's strength of bonding with close social circles, such as family and friends, as well as with extended groups, including country, government and wider humanity. The results show that only bonding with family, rather than other groups, is linked to engaging positively with behaviours that can improve health. Importantly, the greater number of groups people had strong bonds with, the higher their engagement in healthy habits and the better their reported psychological wellbeing was, with less anxiety and depression. Even more reason to get those dates in the diary for get-togethers with your nearest and dearest.



### DID YOU KNOW?

*Diet, not genes, is likely to be the biggest risk factor for dementia.*

A study in the *British Medical Journal* on age-related cognitive decline revealed that changing your diet and lifestyle cuts your future risk of developing dementia by a whopping nine times. Eating healthily was the most important prevention step, followed by an active lifestyle, keeping mentally 'fit' as well as a decent amount of social interaction. Want to find out more?

Food for the Brain ([foodforthebrain.org](http://foodforthebrain.org)) offers a free online assessment of your diet and lifestyle, plus advice on how to cut your risk.

### WHAT'S TRENDING THIS MONTH...

## Inositol for PCOS

*Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) affects one in 10 women in the UK and seems to be on the rise. The good news? Inositol is a natural supplement that can help. In fact, it was one of Holland & Barrett's most searched supplements of 2022. "Inositol is a type of simple sugar that is naturally occurring in various foods," says Jodie Relf, PCOS dietitian from supplement brand MyOva ([myovacare.com](http://myovacare.com)).*

*"The most common forms found in supplements are myo-inositol and d-chiro-inositol. Studies show that through reducing insulin levels, myo-inositol restores ovulation, improves egg quality and reduces elevated testosterone."*



## HEALTH HEROES THE LATEST TRENDS TO KEEP YOU WELL THIS MONTH



**FeelFit Pea Protein Shake Simply1**, £74, [arbonne.com](http://arbonne.com)

Switch your morning brew to this coffee flavour vegan protein shake. It's packed with 20g easy to digest plant protein as well as more than 20 vitamins and minerals, and free from artificial sweeteners.



**Groov-e Light Curve Clock**, £24.99, [maplin.co.uk](http://maplin.co.uk)

The mornings might be getting lighter, but if you're still struggling to wake up this could be just the thing. Its sunrise simulation alarm clock gradually gets brighter to wake you up gently.



**Speed Eco**, £120, [merrell.com](http://merrell.com)

April showers are no match for these beauties, allowing you to step out for your walks in comfort and style. They are waterproof, breathable and light, perfect for the new season.



**Q+A Hyaluronic Acid Face Mist**, £6.50, [sephora.co.uk](http://sephora.co.uk)

Spritz this on your face post-cleansing, pre-moisturising, or use as a setting spray for a healthy, dewy glow. Hyaluronic acid deeply hydrates your skin and improves its ability to retain moisture.

# Bowel cancer: *the facts*

It's not something any of us like to think about, but do you know your s\*\*t when it comes to bowel health? Here's the lowdown...

WORDS | *Victoria Stokes*

**F**lush. Once most of us have finished using the toilet, we rarely give our bowel movements a passing thought. But, as bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK and the second biggest cancer killer, it's important to give your poo a second look.

According to figures from Cancer Research, one in 15 UK males and one in 18 UK females will be diagnosed with bowel cancer in their lifetime.

Cancer is often a word that makes us bury our heads in the sand, but early detection of the disease dramatically improves your chances of surviving it. So, what should you know about bowel cancer?

## IN THE KNOW

Ask Dr Anisha Patel, doctor, health educator, and the author of new book *Everything You Hoped You'd Never Need To Know About Bowel Cancer*. In 2018, aged 39, Anisha was diagnosed with stage three bowel cancer. Young, fit, and married to a consultant gastroenterologist and bowel cancer screening specialist, Anisha had no idea what would come next.

Since her diagnosis, she's channeled her energy into raising awareness of bowel cancer and has written this book to guide people through every stage of treatment. She says that currently there's still quite a bit we don't know about bowel cancer, but that greater awareness of the disease is a positive development.

"Bowel cancer is a cancer that has faced much stigma, and thanks to the 'poo taboo', it's often not spoken about as frequently as other cancers," she points out. "But the tides are turning, not only because more of us are talking openly about our experiences of bowel cancer on social media, but because of phenomenal high-profile individuals like Dame Deborah James, Chadwick Boseman, and Adele Roberts who have openly shared their diagnosis and the trials and tribulations that this cancer brings."

Awareness and education often go hand in hand, so let's get to understand bowel cancer a little better, shall we?

"BOWEL CANCER IS A CANCER THAT HAS FACED MUCH STIGMA, AND THANKS TO THE 'POO TABOO', IT'S OFTEN NOT SPOKEN ABOUT AS FREQUENTLY AS OTHER CANCERS"



## HOW DOES BOWEL CANCER DEVELOP?

The first and perhaps most obvious question to ask is, how and why does bowel cancer develop? "We don't have all the answers yet and bowel cancer is complex and multifactorial," Anisha explains. "What we do know is that as people age, their risk of bowel cancer increases."

Anisha notes that there is also an increased risk of bowel cancer with inflammatory bowel disease, certain genetic conditions, and a family history of bowel cancer, as well as a multitude of lifestyle factors too.

Typically, bowel cancer starts as benign polyps, a kind of growth on the inner lining of the bowel wall. Over a period of many years, a few of these growths will evolve eventually into bowel cancer. That's certainly a scary prospect. The more positive news is that just over half of bowel cancers are preventable and there's much you can do to reduce your risk, like quitting smoking, reducing your alcohol intake, as well as exercising regularly.

Anisha notes that eating a high-fibre diet (around 30g of fibre a day) and consuming less red and processed meats are also linked with a lower risk of developing bowel cancer. That said, Anisha is keen to point out that cancer doesn't discriminate. "There are many of us out there, myself included, who developed bowel cancer despite not having risk factors," she notes. "I want to highlight that cancer can affect anyone of any race, young or old, healthy or unhealthy. No one is immune."

## SPOTTING THE SYMPTOMS

Now you know how bowel cancer develops, what symptoms should you be on the lookout for? Your bowel habits might not be something you want to spend a lot of time thinking about, but Anisha says knowing what's normal for you may help you spot if something is amiss.

She suggests having a look in the toilet before you flush so you know your normal. "If there is a change in your bowel habits that lasts more than three weeks, for example an increase in frequency, looser stools, or new constipation, you must see your GP," she advises.

Other symptoms to look out for include blood in your stool, unexplained weight loss, a pain or lump in your tummy, and extreme tiredness. While these symptoms won't always mean bowel cancer, it's vital that you get them checked out. And if you're unsure what to look out for? Anisha advises visiting the Bowel Cancer UK website where you can fill out a symptom diary to take with you to your GP.



# "JUST OVER HALF OF BOWEL CANCERS ARE PREVENTABLE AND THERE'S MUCH YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE YOUR RISK"

## HOW IS BOWEL CANCER TREATED?

Receiving a bowel cancer diagnosis is undoubtedly a very scary and uncertain time, and if you find yourself in this situation, you might be wondering what's next. Treatment will depend on the stage of the cancer, but typically, Anisha says treatments include surgery alone for the earlier stages and a combination of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy for more advanced stages.

People with stage four bowel cancer can also receive immunotherapy and targeted therapy, which use the body's own immune system to fight cancer cells. Anisha describes these treatments as "a monumental development for the management of stage four bowel cancer."

As you might expect, the earlier the diagnosis, the better the prognosis. "We know that if you are diagnosed with stage one bowel cancer, and treated, you have over a 90 percent chance of surviving five years. This obviously drops as you progress from stage one to four," Anisha explains.

This is why eradicating the 'poo taboo' and increasing awareness is so important. When something feels unfathomably scary it's all-too-easy to push it to the back of your brain but educating yourself and others can be immeasurably positive. In fact, with much greater awareness of the disease, Anisha is already noticing a difference.

"There is no doubt that we have seen an increase in patients presenting with bowel symptoms in General Practice as a result. The hope is that we can diagnose patients at an earlier stage so they can have a better outcome."

So the takeaway is this: Know what's normal and what's not and don't be afraid to have those all-important conversations with your friends and family too. Knowledge is power and understanding bowel cancer could – literally – mean the difference between life and death. **HOW**

For more, read this

everything  
you hoped  
you'd never  
need to  
know about  
bowel cancer  
by ANISHA HAZEL  
DR ANISHA HAZEL

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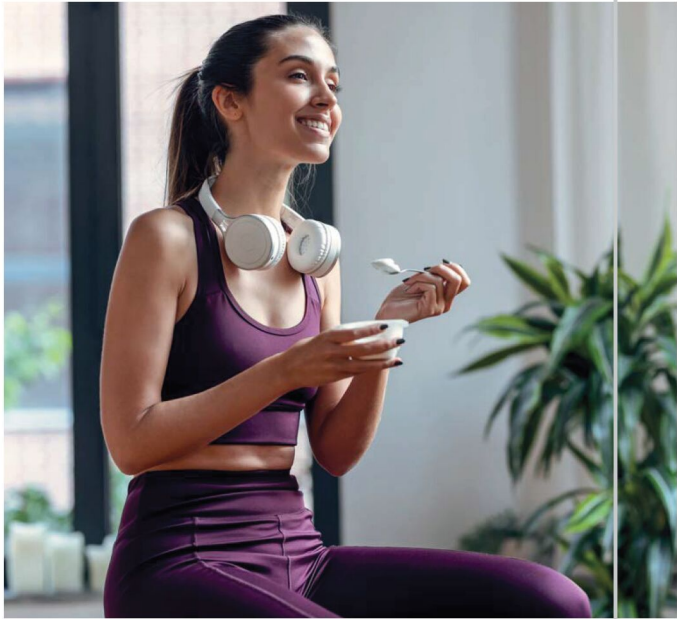


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# GOOD GUT GUIDE

Feel your best with these gut-friendly health boosters

As well as aiding your body with digestion, your gut health impacts everything from your immune system to your mood and sense of vitality. This well-documented link between our emotions and our gut comes down to the enteric nervous system, which sends signals to the brain via 100 million nerve endings. Here are three products designed to keep you and your gut feeling in tip-top health.



## THERA NORDIC REZCUE

REZCUE is a 100 percent water-soluble drink which prevents acid reflux and heartburn by soothing and repairing the gut lining. It works by using the dual effects from a unique combination of Zinc Carnosine and L-Glutamine, both scientifically proven to be highly beneficial for the GI tract. Zinc also supports a strong immune system and good skin health. £23.95, [theranordic.com](http://theranordic.com)



## LIVE CULTURES+ LAB4 PROBIOTICS

This expertly formulated probiotic is designed to provide comprehensive digestive support with four clinically proven lactobacillus and bifidobacterium strains to restore gut cultures. It's fortified with added vitamin A to support the gut lining and a non-bloating prebiotic and delivers 25 billion CFU's, proven to reach the gut alive. £18.99 for 30 capsules, [igennus.com](http://igennus.com)



## TIBICO SPARKLING WATER KEFIR

Love your gut and boost your immunity with Tibico. This sparkling water kefir is raw and high in potent probiotics. It's sugar-free and packed with lots of fermented compounds to support natural health and wellbeing. Tibico produces six amazing sparkling flavours. 330ml £2.60, 500ml £3.40. Free UK next day delivery and discounts available at [tibicohealth.com](http://tibicohealth.com)



40%

of the UK population suffer from at least one symptom of a digestive problem

[nutritionistresource.com](http://nutritionistresource.com)

100 million

nerve endings connect the gut to the brain, known as the enteric nervous system

[hopkinsmedicine.org](http://hopkinsmedicine.org)

95%

of serotonin (the happy hormone) is produced in the gut

[healthline.com](http://healthline.com)



# Become a health coach, and change lives

Are you fascinated with nutrition and natural ways to be healthy? Would you love to have the skills to improve the health, happiness and wellbeing of others? Perhaps you would like to change your own health and find a brand-new purpose in life?

Then consider a new career as a Health Coach, one of the fastest growing professions in the UK. You can be qualified and making a difference to yourself and others in less than a year.

*Este Rabe, Health Coaches Academy Graduate*

I have never experienced anything close to this course - partly because the team are so passionate - what I saw on the live training was life changing. You have empowered us so we can empower others. So professional, but so person-centred and a feeling of being part of the HCA 'family' too.

## WHAT IS HEALTH COACHING?

Have you ever made New Year's resolutions to improve your health or fitness and found, like 85% of us that by the 3rd week in January they are a thing of the past? It can be difficult to make positive changes to our health and stick to them. A Health Coach works alongside clients to re-think the way they live and create a brand new set of lifestyle habits that lead to living a more vibrant and energetic life. Health Coaches then support clients and hold them accountable to achieve their goals and enjoy a new found level of health and wellness.

### Why are Health Coaches needed now more than ever?

With spiralling statistics for preventable diseases such as heart disease, obesity and cancer, there is more awareness about the changes we need to make to avoid certain 'lifestyle' related diseases and prevention is always better than cure; but how do we change and where can we get the right support? People must take a more active role in their own healthcare and this is where a Health Coach comes in. Health Coaches can

educate people on how to be healthy and importantly, then help inspire and motivate them to change their lives for the better. Health Coaching is a 6 billion dollar profession in the US and has more recently taken off in the UK as we recognise an area of healthcare that has not yet had sufficient focus - mindset and behaviour change. That's exactly how a health coach can help.

### Could you be a good Health Coach?

Most Health Coaches who train with us have their own story that led them to the profession. This could be their own health reaching crisis point or the sadness and frustration of seeing those who matter to them suffer when so much could be done to help them. Whatever story brings people to us, the common theme is a deep desire to do something positive to change the quality of the lives of others, a fascination with natural ways to promote health and wellness and a strong desire to work in this field and do something that really matters. Does this resonate with you?

### Become a Health Coach with the Health Coaches Academy.

Founders Carolyn St John Loder and Ann Garry and their expert team have been Health Coaching in the

UK since 2003 and provide a thorough and professional training pathway to becoming a highly skilled professional Health Coach.



The HCA Health Coaching Diploma course is part-time and flexible with a blend of online, distance learning and 6 days of in-person live training. There are 6 intakes per year.

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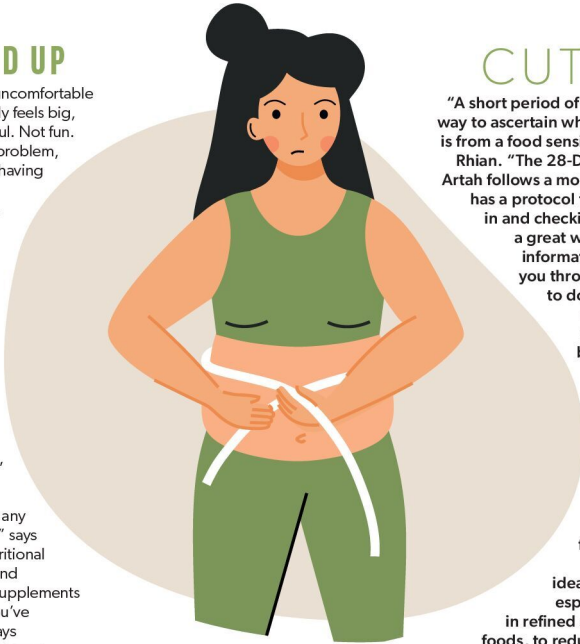
IS IT NORMAL...

# TO FEEL BLOATED?

If you're feeling the pinch around your waistband, it doesn't necessarily mean you've gained weight – bloating could be the culprit. Here's what to do about it

## ALL PUMPED UP

We've all had it – that uncomfortable feeling where your belly feels big, full and a little bit painful. Not fun. Bloating is a common problem, and usually caused by having excess gas in your gut. According to the NHS, it can also be due to a problem with your digestion, such as: constipation, a food intolerance, coeliac disease or irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). "If you're experiencing bloating regularly and it isn't obviously linked to food, alcohol, or stress, then it's important to speak to your doctor to rule out any underlying conditions," says Rhian Stephenson, nutritional therapist, naturopath and founder of nutritional supplements brand Artah. "Once you've done this, I would always suggest looking at food first."



## CUT IT OUT

"A short period of elimination can be a great way to ascertain whether or not your bloating is from a food sensitivity or intolerance," says Rhian. "The 28-Day Reset programme from Artah follows a modified elimination diet and has a protocol for introducing foods back in and checking for symptoms, which is a great way to get some immediate information. It can also help guide you through food timings and how to do periods of digestive rest, which are important when your system may be out of balance. I also recommend cutting out some of the key things that can cause bloating – zero calorie sweeteners are well known for causing wind and bloating. And, it is a good idea to take a break from protein bars, shakes and processed foods that have thickening agents. It's also a good idea to minimise heavy meals, especially when they are high in refined starches, red meat or fried foods, to reduce the digestive burden."

## BEAT THE BLOAT

So, now we have an idea of things to consider leaving out of your diet, what should you eat to support your system? "Fermented foods are important to include, but they may not take down bloating immediately. In fact, sometimes a sudden increase in fermented foods can exacerbate bloating (for example, if your microbiome is out of balance), so it's

important to ramp up intake slowly," Rhian explains. "You can also look to include natural herbs through cooking or teas that are prokinetics, digestive bitters and carminative herbs. These are agents that will help intestinal motility, stimulate digestion, and relieve wind and bloating. My favourite prokinetic functional food is ginger, which you

can take as a tea, in food or smoothies, or in a supplement. Bloating is where supplements can be extremely supportive, Digest + DeBloat (£32, artah.co) is a botanical tincture with digestive bitters and carminatives like gentian, dandelion, mugwort, and chamomile. It's great in water or tea for immediate symptomatic relief."

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# H&W SYMPTOM CHECKER

Parkinson's is one of the fastest-growing neurological conditions in the world – here's how to support your loved ones

WORDS | *Stacey Carter*

**M**any of us will know of someone in our own lives with Parkinson's. The condition primarily impacts older people, but there are also cases of early-onset Parkinson's (which is normally seen in people under the age of 50). And, while there isn't any cure for Parkinson's, there are treatment options out there and plenty of ways you can support friends and family affected by the condition.



## SYMPTOMS OF PARKINSON'S

"Parkinson's is caused by a lack of a chemical called dopamine in the brain," says Dr Bal Athwal, consultant neurologist at The Wellington Hospital ([hcahealthcare.co.uk](http://hcahealthcare.co.uk)). "Dopamine plays a vital role in regulating the movement of the body and this drop in dopamine levels, which is caused by a loss of the nerve cells, means that parts of the brain, cannot work normally, leading to several motor symptoms, such as:

- slowness of movement
- stiffness
- involuntary shaking or tremors

"Dopamine-containing nerve cells are also involved in other brain functions in the body," says Dr Athwal. "As these areas are affected, there may be other

symptoms." These include:

- pain
- depression and anxiety
- nausea
- vomiting
- constipation
- urinary symptoms
- a drop in blood pressure leading to falls and broken bones
- sexual dysfunction

Sometimes the symptoms of Parkinson's aren't always easy to pick up, but by being aware, you can take notice when something isn't quite right. "The three most recognised symptoms of Parkinson's are a tremor (shaking), slowness of movement and rigidity, or muscle stiffness," says Rowan

Wathes, associate director of the UK Parkinson's Excellence Network ([parkinsons.org.uk](http://parkinsons.org.uk)). "However, there are more than 40 symptoms and how they present themselves varies from person to person. Someone might have balance or coordination problems or they could lose their sense of smell, or even experience gait changes, where they lean forward slightly or shuffle when walking. Other people have fixed facial expressions (or a 'mask') because of changes in the nerves that control their facial muscles. They might struggle with low mood and fatigue, or their handwriting could become smaller and difficult to read. Insomnia, apathy and anxiety can also be early signs of Parkinson's."



## TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR PARKINSON'S

There isn't currently a specific test for Parkinson's – however, if you suspect you may suffer from the condition, or that someone you love may be affected, then you should seek further medical advice. "If your GP suspects you have Parkinson's, they will refer you to a specialist for further investigation," says Dr Athwal. "The primary basis of diagnosis is through analysis of the symptoms as they have developed over time and the clinical examination by the specialist." Investigations that are often used to determine a Parkinson's diagnosis include:

- An MRI scan to assess your brain's structure and health
- A DAT scan to analyse your body's dopamine transport system

"In the early stages, Parkinson's can be difficult to diagnose with certainty," says Dr Athwal.

"Sometimes a treatment trial will be implemented if your GP suspects you might have Parkinson's, to assess the effects, which can help to make the diagnosis." Although there isn't currently a cure for Parkinson's, there are treatments available to ease the symptoms and maintain quality of life for as long as possible. "The treatment options will be different for each individual. However, treatment usually involves a combination of medication, physical activity, and therapies. Your neurologist and GP will prescribe medicines that will supplement your dopamine levels and physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and psychological intervention can also play an important role in helping you to manage your symptoms day to day and take control of your condition."

## How to help a loved one affected by Parkinson's

"A Parkinson's diagnosis can be overwhelming and worrying," says Rowan. "Getting information about the condition, and asking for advice and support can be a tremendous help as people come to terms with it and what the diagnosis will mean for their future."

### 1. Find support

Support is available for everyone affected by Parkinson's on the Parkinson's UK website, parkinsons.org.uk via their free, confidential helpline on 0808 800 0303 and their online forum. "Local groups can be a lifeline for people with Parkinson's and their loved ones, to connect with others who understand and get advice," adds Rowan.



### 2. Know that help is out there

Want to know more about Parkinson's, or how to cope with chronic illness? "2 Parkis in a Pod is a great podcast," says Rowan. "Between them, Dave 'Clarky' Clark and Kuhan have been living with Parkinson's for more than 20 years and chat honestly and openly about the condition."

## PARKINSON'S FACTS\*

AROUND  
**145,000**  
people live with  
Parkinson's in the UK.

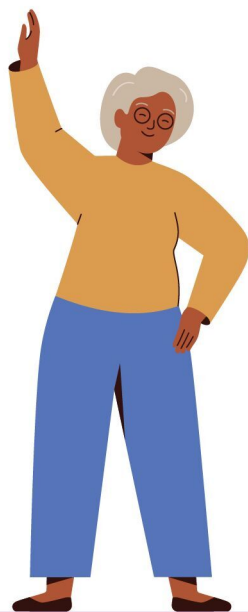
*Men aged*  
**50 to 89**  
are 1.4 times more  
likely to be diagnosed with  
Parkinson's than women.

**1.2%**

OF PEOPLE  
WITH A DIAGNOSIS  
OF PARKINSON'S  
ARE UNDER THE  
AGE OF 50.

There are more  
than 40 symptoms  
of Parkinson's.

\*Statistics correct at the time of print.  
Courtesy of parkinsons.org.uk.



# 7 ways to be Financially FIT

Get money savvy with our expert advice for everything from working out a budget to saving for retirement

**M**oney makes the world go round, as they say, but how much do you actually know about your own finances? According to finder.com, one in 10 Brits have no savings at all, and 41 percent don't have enough savings to live for a month without income. As well as that, more than one in four households have no emergency savings pot, as an ING International Survey found, and alarming research by unbiased.co.uk revealed that one in six Britons aged over 55 have no private pension savings. Money is no doubt a tricky issue, so we've turned to the experts to find out how we can start to take control of our finances once and for all and begin to save for a more secure future.

## 1 CREATE A REALISTIC BUDGET

"A budget should be tailored to you, your needs and your plans," explains Zoe Daglass, investment planner at Vanguard (vanguardinvestor.co.uk). "Everyone should have a budget as it's an important part of planning for your future with finances. When thinking of a budget, think of all those planned monthly costs such as bills but also think of all your unplanned costs. A budget is not there to weigh you down or make you feel bad, quite the opposite. It's there to empower you; to clarify what you're trying to achieve and to remind you that savings are not about money or numbers, they're about you, your aspirations and life goals. You can adjust the budget as your life changes. If you stick to it, you'll be proud."

## TALK TO YOUR PARTNER ABOUT MONEY

"Having open and honest conversations with your partner about their spending habits is essential as it's unlikely you will both agree on everything and resentment can build," says Heather Owen, financial planner at Quilter (quilter.com). "One of the best ways to discuss money is to create a budget so that all your bills and discretionary spending is down on paper. Then, you can have a conversation based on the facts of your shared financial situation rather than the hypotheticals. Avoid putting the blame on your partner and instead frame it around shared goals and how you can achieve them together."

## 2

## 3

### START TO GET OUT OF DEBT

"If you're in debt, a good place to start is by getting expert advice – for free – from a charity such as Citizens Advice, StepChange or National Debtline," says Laura Howard, personal finance expert at Forbes Advisor UK (forbes.com). "Avoid services that charge a fee for debt advice. You'll be given help to prioritise your debts so that you pay the most important ones first, and guidance on how to talk to the firms you owe money so that you can reschedule your payments and hopefully get back on track. It's crucial to be open with those you owe money to, and most will respond in a positive way. Debt is the kind of thing that can cause sleepless nights, stress and arguments, so anything you can do to tackle it is worthwhile. Just don't expect a miracle cure or an overnight solution. But a step-by-step approach can take you a long way towards a better situation."



## 4

## KNOW HOW MUCH TO SAVE PER MONTH

“Save whatever you can afford that doesn’t make you completely miserable,” says Puja Karia, consumer finance specialist at investment platform Willis Owen ([willisowen.co.uk](http://willisowen.co.uk)). “Saving is about making your future more secure and giving you some flexibility in life, but it shouldn’t be done to the point that you are unhappy. Start small, saving as little as £25 or £100 a month initially,

but aim to build this up over time once you’re in the habit of saving. Microsaving a few pence or pounds here and there is tempting, but it might not move the dial enough and get you close to your savings goal. Setting up a direct debit on payday is a good way to get in the habit of saving. Also, at the end of the month, review your finances and sweep anything left over into your savings account before you start afresh the following month.”

## 5

## KNOW YOUR ISA FROM YOUR SAVINGS ACCOUNT

“An ISA has the advantage that all growth in your savings or investments is not taxable,” says Katie Brain, consumer banking expert at Defaqto ([defaqto.com](http://defaqto.com)). “However, a cash ISA has little real value as you can earn up to £1,000 of savings interest tax-free for basic-rate taxpayers, AKA your Personal Savings Allowance. Cash ISAs would only be worth having if the interest you get each year is more than this. At current interest rates, most customers would be better off putting their savings into one of the best buy instant access savings accounts. The average Instant Access Cash ISA interest rates are only 0.22 percent, compared with regular savings accounts, which are around one to two percent.”

6  
WORK OUT HOW MUCH TO SAVE FOR RETIREMENT

“The more you save and the earlier you start, the better,” says Laura. “Equally though, it’s important to recognise ‘the here and now’ – that trip to Disney when the kids are young, or the new car you’ve worked for. If you’re employed, you may be enrolled in a workplace pension – a percentage of your pay is put into a scheme, and your employer also contributes. This is just designed as a minimum, though. A good rule of thumb is to put away ‘half your age’ as a percentage of your gross annual income. So, if you start aged 20, put away 10 percent, and if you start aged 50, put away 25 percent. Given this includes tax relief and your employer’s contribution too, it may not be as onerous as it sounds.”

7  
TEACH YOUR CHILDREN THE VALUE OF MONEY

“Empowerment and experience are better tools than words for teaching children about money,” says Laura. “When they’re little, you can introduce a sense of monetary value by giving them a choice between two little items or just one big one, for example. As they get older, giving them a fixed amount of weekly pocket money over which they have full control will highlight the consequences of saving, spending or a bit of both. Later, you can introduce the concept of ‘earning’ by supplementing this pocket money with cash in return for jobs around the house. Even when your kids reach adulthood, if they are working and still living at home, charge a (reasonable) rent and – if you can afford to – put it aside and gift it back to them when they move out or buy their first home.”



# NATURAL WOMAN

This month, we look at a number of health issues which are more common in women and some of the natural solutions to treat them



## Burning issue

Cystitis is one of the most common bacterial infections and you're 10 times more likely to suffer if you're a woman. Bladapure works as both a preventative and rapid treatment for bladder infections, with online reviews hailing it as a lifesaver.

## Cramping your style

Stomach cramps during periods are the most common annoyance but issues such as IBS and the menopause can also cause cramping. The penetrating heat of a natural cherry stone pillow can bring instant relief as it moulds itself to your tummy.



## Iron up

Women are much more likely to suffer with iron deficiency, which often leads to some reaching for a sugary energy drink, which can mask tiredness and could point to a deficiency. Iron Vital F is a tasty and highly absorbable natural iron and vitamin supplement, which won't cause constipation. Dosage can vary depending on your life stage so there's a useful guide to dosage.



## Yeast away

Yeast infections can blight your life and can be difficult to treat and often reoccur. Candipure is a new supplement which makes your body inhospitable to the Candida albicans yeast overgrowth. Just one capsule a day can keep yeast at bay!





# *Back it* **UP**

If you're finding yourself hunched over in pain, we've got you covered with our guide to giving your back some TLC



**H**ands up, whose back has felt more painful over the course of the last year? If you're anything like the H&W team, the odd day spent hunched over laptops at kitchen tables have definitely taken their toll. In fact, a poll of 2,000 UK adults by Neurofen revealed that 36 percent have experienced increased pain during the 2020 lockdown, with 25 percent putting it down to a poor office or workstation set up at home. Interestingly, 50 percent of all respondents claimed stress was a key factor in their increased pain. Back pain can range from anything from a mild ache to a debilitating condition that affects your sleep, work and mental health, which is why it's important to address the issue sooner rather than later. Some of the preventable causes of this type of pain include bad posture, incorrect desk set up and a lack of movement, but what can you do if you're already in pain? We've rounded up the best expert advice, from what to eat to the stretches to try, so you can find some relief.

## MAKE YOUR OWN STANDING DESK

Working from home has left many of us working in less than ideal conditions, whether that's on your sofa, your dining room table or even your bed. "Experts will say that whatever you do, don't work on your sofa, but not everyone has the luxury of having a home office with a desk and ergonomic chair," says personal trainer Badrul Islam, in collaboration with Feel Good Contacts ([feelgoodcontacts.com](https://www.feelgoodcontacts.com)). "Although it will seem like the most comfortable place to work, the sofa is actually the worst place as it encourages you to slump and puts a huge amount of strain on your back area which you inevitably crane. If you are working on the sofa, if possible, try to change your position by sitting on the floor and putting your laptop on the sofa or coffee table. We know that standing desks can decrease chronic back pain caused by prolonged sitting, so why not create your own one at home? Try standing up and working at the kitchen counter or position an ironing board at standing level. Position it next to a wall to create stability."

## ADD THESE FOODS TO YOUR DIET

It turns out that certain foods can help to ease aches, as nutrition expert Mina Khan ([formulatehealth.com](https://www.formulatehealth.com)) explains. "One of the easiest and most natural lifestyle changes you can make to help reduce your back pain is by consuming foods that have anti-inflammatory properties," she says. "These include carrots, salmon, nuts and turmeric, which can all be added to most peoples' diets on a regular basis. One of my favourite anti-inflammatory recipes is tuna-stuffed baked sweet potatoes with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkle of turmeric. These go perfectly with a nice helping of edamame beans and spinach. These foods contain high levels of antioxidants which reduce the levels of free radicals in the body, thereby reducing pain. Give some of them a try and see what you think!"



*“36 percent  
of Brits reported  
feeling increased  
back pain  
during lockdown”*



## TRY BREATHING EXERCISES

Sometimes, the cause of back pain can go beyond the physical. “Once the body has established neural pain pathways, which is often the case for those with chronic back pain, it is likely that the body’s nervous system becomes over-sensitised to this pain,” says Lyndsey Hayes, a health and movement practitioner specialising in supporting those with chronic back pain (lyndseyhayes.com)\*\*. “Even if the original reason for the pain has gone away (most acute injuries heal within six to eight weeks), the pain can still exist because the neural pathway has formed. This pathway can then be further triggered by stressful events or unresolved or suppressed emotions. This is common for people with lower back pain as they can often become very fearful of their back pain becoming worse or more serious. This usually results in a spiral of ongoing anxiety and often depression.”

So what can you do to help yourself? “One way to address this can be to re-balance the body’s nervous system by spending short periods of time when we specifically focus on slowing the breath down,” Lyndsey says. “Bringing greater control over our breathing enables us to ‘hack into’ the body’s regulatory systems (especially the nervous system) to positively influence our health and wellbeing and improve the body’s response to pain. This allows the body to return to a feeling of safety and can re-train the neural pathways associated with the pain. It’s not just breathing that is important but how we breathe. Most of our breathing is too shallow and too fast (around 12-20 breaths per minute). We need to look to slow the breath down and breathe all the way down into our belly (while breathing in and out through the nose). The most basic form of this breathing practice is to breathe at an optimal rate of a six second inhale and a six second exhale (sometimes this is known as ‘coherent breathing’, resulting in five breaths per minute). Ideally, you’d need to do this for 10 minutes every day.”

\*\*You can get Lyndsey’s free guide to reducing back pain at her website and find out more details of her holistic online eight-week back-care programme.

## STRETCH IT OUT

“The goal of these back stretches is to find the sweet spot of strength and flexibility to help increase mobility,” says Rachele Gilman, director of stretch inc. (stretchinc.uk)\*. “Our bodies are designed for functional movement, but our modern (read: sedentary) lifestyle often impacts how, why, and when we move. Stretching is necessary to reach and maintain peak performance. In this analogy, peak performance equates to living free and functional lives at each stage of the ageing process.”

### CAT/COW

This dynamic stretch works the entire spine to promote spinal flexibility. It keeps us limber and prepared for everyday tasks. If the position isn’t accessible on all fours, try the same movement in a chair with your hands resting on your thighs.

1. Begin on your hands and knees with the tops of your feet on the floor and your spine in a neutral, flat back position.
2. Keep your shoulders aligned with your wrists, your knees in alignment with your hips, and your knees and shins hip-width distance apart.
3. As you inhale, extend from the pelvis through the collar bone, roll the shoulders down the back, engaging the upper back for a slight back bend, looking up or out.
4. Exhale, round the spine, tuck the tail bone, and release the head and neck towards the floor, chin towards the chest. Repeat five times.

### MID-BACK EXTENSION

This stretch works the muscles of the upper back and core. It’s the move for you if you have to spend a long time sitting down. If you find yourself hunching over for any reason, this is a strong indication of a weak upper back and poor posture.

1. Start on your stomach, with your forehead on the floor, legs extended, ankles hip-width distance apart, and the tops of feet touching the floor. Place your hands by your side, backs of your hands on the floor.
2. Press your feet into the floor, roll your shoulders down your back, engage your glutes, and inhale to lift your chest using only your back muscles. Keep your gaze in front of you.
3. Engage the glutes to help prevent squishing the low back.
4. Exhale as you lower your body back to starting position. Repeat five times, concentrating on each inhale.

### SUPINE TWIST

This stretches your lower back and your glutes. Tight glutes can disrupt a lot of systems, but one of the most common disruptions is low back pain. The supine twist gives your spine and mind a nice wind down at the end of a long day

1. Lie on your back with your legs out. Extend your arms into a T or bend at the elbows like goalposts.
2. Bend one leg so that the knee is pointed up, lightly hook the toes of the bent leg’s foot under the straight leg’s knee.
3. Guide the bent knee across your body to fall on the outside of the straight leg hip. You can use your hand to press the knee towards the floor, if accessible.
4. Turn your head towards the arm of the straight leg. Hold for five deep breaths. Repeat on the other side.

\*stretch inc. ‘specially’ trained stretchologists provide assisted stretch therapy at two studios, Pop Brixton and Seven Dials, and have an online stretch offering, so you can choose from 15-50 minute sessions, starting at £15.

# FOR WORN OUT WORKERS

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# 10 REASONS YOU'RE TIRED ALL THE TIME

Sleep problems are sometimes complex, but many issues can have a quick fix; here's our guide on how to revamp your slumber ☑



## 1 YOU'RE NOT DRINKING ENOUGH WATER

It might not be obvious, but not drinking enough water can affect the quality of your sleep. "If you're dehydrated, you may have a reduction in levels of essential amino acids, which you need these to produce melatonin – the sleep-inducing hormone," explains sleep expert Lucy Shrimpton, (sleepnanny.co.uk). However, drink too much, and you'll fall foul of the nighttime toilet run, as Lucy explains: "We have a decreased need to urinate at night to allow us 6-8 hours uninterrupted sleep, but if you drink a lot of water close to bedtime, your sleep may be disturbed because of a need to use the bathroom." The optimal amount? The NHS (nhs.uk) recommends drinking six to eight glasses of fluid a day. Water, lower fat milk and sugar-free drinks, including tea and coffee, all count towards rehydration.

## 2 YOU'RE MORE STRESSED THAN YOU REALISE

If you've ever spent a night tossing and turning, ruminating about conversations you've had during daylight hours, you'll know that stress plays a big impact on your ability to drift off. "Stress comes with a release of the hormone cortisol, which is a little like having adrenaline running through your body," says Lucy. "This can make it extremely difficult to settle to sleep. This hinderance to sleep can lead to more stress and so the cycle continues." The solution? Find a method of getting your worries out. Whether that's meditation, bedtime yoga, or simply jotting down your worries on a pen and paper, find a way of de-stressing that works for you.

## 3 YOU NEED TO MOVE YOUR BODY MORE

Not moving enough can also affect sleep. "Numerous studies have shown that regular exercise helps people to settle to sleep more easily and experience better quality of sleep through the night," says Lucy. "Also, a lack of exercise can lead to weight gain which can cause other sleep related issues such as obstructive sleep apnoea."

## 4 YOU'RE SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME ON 'SWITCHED ON'

Avoiding digital media can go a long way to improving our sleep. "It's widely known that using a screen within two hours of going to bed can cause sleep disturbance," says Liz Cooper, nutritional advisor at Bio-Kult (bio-kult.com). "This is because LED screens, found on televisions, computers, iPads and gaming consoles emit blue light, which can affect our circadian rhythm, a process that responds to light and dark and governs such things as our sleep-wake cycle."

## 5 YOU'RE NOT EATING ENOUGH PROTEIN

What we eat can also affect how we sleep, but avoiding sugar and your daily latte may not go far enough. "Getting the balance right with protein is equally important," says Liz. "Low protein intake is associated with poor quality sleep, while too much protein can contribute to difficulty maintaining sleep. Try to incorporate good quality protein sources such as fish, turkey, eggs, pumpkin and sesame seeds and chicken. These foods also contain tryptophan, which is needed to make melatonin. Other than increasing tryptophan, sufficient protein may support folate and vitamin B12. These compounds have a role in melatonin metabolism and balanced circadian rhythm."

## 6 YOU HAVEN'T GOT THE RIGHT MICRONUTRIENTS

Studies have also found an association between poor sleep and micronutrient deficiency. "Insomnia has been linked to low selenium and calcium," says Liz. "It has been shown zinc to help in regulating sleep; and research has also suggested that low consumption of certain B vitamins can negatively affect sleep. This is because of their role in the production and release of some neurotransmitters and hormones involved in sleep regulation, such as serotonin, a calming neurotransmitter which can also produce melatonin. In addition, B vitamins found in eggs, meat, poultry, fish, legumes and wholegrains, may help in the relief of restless leg syndrome, where a person's limbs move involuntarily, a condition which is often worse at night, stopping a person getting to sleep or waking them up repeatedly."



## 7 YOU'RE LOW ON MAGNESIUM

Magnesium has also been associated with sleep issues. "A study in 2019 found that those with better sleep quality were found to consume higher levels of vitamin B6 and magnesium," says Liz. "Magnesium is a great mineral which helps to regulate neurotransmitters, chemicals that send messages from your nervous system to your brain, aiding relaxation and the normal function of the nervous system. Increasing sources of magnesium such as green leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds and wholegrains in your diet, is an obvious way of increasing levels but also using a magnesium supplement, spray or taking a warm bath with Epsom salts before bed may also help to increase magnesium."

## 8 YOU NEED TO SORT YOUR GUT HEALTH

Maintaining good digestive health by having a balanced microbiome can help improve our nutrient absorption. "If we look after our gut health, it could help our bodies produce more sleep-promoting hormones such as serotonin and melatonin," says Liz. "Poor sleep and feelings of fatigue are often reported alongside digestive issues,

however, even in those who do not

suffer with noticeable digestive complaints, sleep disorders may provide a clue that the community of bacteria that reside in the gut may be out of balance. A human trial in 2015, suggested that multi-strain live bacteria supplements may help to regulate melatonin production, which helps to regulate the sleep-wake cycle."

## 9 YOU'RE NOT GETTING ENOUGH SOCIAL INTERACTION

It's not the first thought that springs to your mind when you're trying to work out why you're feeling sleepy, but our social connections can impact our ability to drift off, as Dr Guy Meadows from The Sleep School (thesleepschool.org) explains: "We've evolved to be in groups, and humans are natural, social beings, so when we're alone, our bodies activate fight-or-flight system. Our sleep becomes lighter and fragmented because our body is on the lookout." The good news is, nourishing social interactions, which, while hard to come about in the current climate, can help. Scheduling in catch ups with friends and family, whether virtually or in real life, can help to fulfill our social needs.

## 10 YOU NEED TO WATCH WHAT YOU DRINK

While it might be tempting to end the day with a nighttime tittle, your end of day treat might be causing disturbed sleep. According to The Sleep Foundation, research has shown "sleepers who drink large amounts of alcohol before going to bed are often prone to delayed sleep onset, meaning they need more time to fall asleep." The organisation also highlights the role our liver has during this process: "as liver enzymes metabolise the alcohol during their night and the blood alcohol level decreases, these individuals are also more likely to experience sleep disruptions and decreases in sleep quality." The best way to end the day? Almond milk, chamomile tea, or even a simple glass of milk are all good options.



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# The health HUB



CONNECT WITH THE H&W COMMUNITY FOR MONTHLY CHALLENGES AND MOTIVATION

## BE INSPIRED

**Marathon running is hard, but as veteran and mental health campaigner Sally Orange reveals, the challenges that come with it aren't unlike what we go through day to day.**

"I started running to raise awareness around mental health and the World Marathon Challenge [which involves running seven marathons on seven continents for seven days], was a chance to bring that to a wider audience. I'd be lying if I said there weren't moments that I really struggled – I remember beating myself up for walking at one point – but marathons are good lessons in reframing those negative thoughts. For anyone who wants to start training for a marathon,



my biggest bit of advice would be to break it down into bite-sized chunks. Making small daily changes has a much bigger impact than you might think. Just have fun with it and remember that everyone's goal is individual, you don't have to compare yourself to other people – focus on your why." Sally's marathon challenge is sponsored by Avanti Communications. Avanti has a long history of supporting veterans as part of its long-term commitment to the Services, and this latest partnership aims to help break the stigma around mental health in the workplace. Find out more at [worldmarathonchallenge.com](http://worldmarathonchallenge.com) and [sallyorange.com](http://sallyorange.com).

## STAY IN TOUCH!

We're always keen to hear your news and we love seeing how the magazine has inspired you. Get in touch via our social media channels for the chance to be featured in next month's issue!

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 [twitter.com/healthwell\\_uk](https://twitter.com/healthwell_uk)

 [editorial@healthwellbeing.com](mailto:editorial@healthwellbeing.com)

 [pinterest.co.uk/healthwellbeinguk](https://pinterest.co.uk/healthwellbeinguk)

## GET INVOLVED: Dates for your diary

### 1 LONDON LANDMARKS HALF MARATHON 2nd April 2023

Race through the cultural landmarks of the capital with The London Landmarks Half Marathon. Choose your charity to run for and explore the capital on a route like no other. Take in fabulous views of London's most iconic landmarks, including Big Ben, St Paul's Cathedral, Nelson's Column, the Gherkin, the Shard, the Tower of London and the London Eye. Find out more at [llhm.co.uk](http://llhm.co.uk).

### 2 PURIFY FESTIVAL 21st April 2023

With three days of music, dancing, camping and wellness therapies, all to raise vital funds for Dorset Mind Charity, the Purify Festival is back to inspire more people to look after their physical, emotional and spiritual health. Get stuck in a range of workshops, from Pilates and guided meditations to reiki and Indian head massage. Camp on-site, or treat yourself to one of the festival's luxury glamping pods. Find out more at [purifyfestival.co.uk](http://purifyfestival.co.uk).

### 3 WELEDA SPRING WELLNESS EVENT 31st March - 3rd April

Join natural wellness pioneers Weledea for a long weekend of immersive, seasonal experiences that celebrate nature, and head to the beautiful Lapwing Barns in the Peak District. Experience delicious organic food and massage treatments and reconnect with nature, all while learning how to support your own health and mind. Discover how at [weledea.co.uk](http://weledea.co.uk).



### DEAR HEALTH & WELLBEING,

"I was flicking through the January issue of *Health & Wellbeing* and I thought I would say how much I enjoy your magazine. I'm going to try the vegan swaps as recommended, such as nutritional yeast to make cheesy sauces and tofu for protein in my curries. Thank you so much for the inspiration!"

**Suzanne Short**



Image: Getty

## Five minutes with... Candice Brown

The *GBBO* star shares her 'happy dance' dish and how Lego soothes her anxiety

### How do you stay mentally active?

"I carry quite a lot of stress and anxiety around sometimes, and that's quite evident when I'm trying to do one hundred things at once but not actually getting anything done, so winding down is important. I struggle with sleep and my ADHD means my brain is always buzzing, so I love listening to audiobooks, playing with Lego and having a good old snuggle with my dogs in order for my mind to settle."

### Tell us about your London Marathon training?

"It's a real privilege to be running for Alzheimer's Research as part of 'Bab's Army' [in memory of Barbara Windsor] with some of the *Eastenders* cast. My dad had Alzheimer's and I'm also an ambassador for the charity, so it's a cause that's very close to my heart. I'm not really one for having a routine, but I can't be left to my own devices otherwise I'll give up, so I want to stick to this running plan in order to succeed. In truth, I actually hate running but I feel really lucky to be able to run this on behalf of Alzheimer's Research so when I think I want to stop or give up, that's my drive. I'm still waiting for that post-run glow!"

### What's your go-to dish that makes you feel alive?

"I love comfort food and those traditional recipes that evoke memories or thoughts or feelings. That could be jam roly poly with custard that you used to have at school, something your nan taught you how to make, or something your mum used to do on Tuesday nights – it's the stories behind the

recipes. I'm really working on no-waste meals at the moment, so I love taking those warming stew recipes and putting a little twist on it that might involve using a leek that's been in the fridge for God knows how long or chicken thighs for a beef casserole. Pies will always get me smiling and doing a happy dance too – and anything with a Yorkshire pudding!"

### Do you have any hacks to speed up your cooking?

"I spend so much time in the kitchen, so having my gadgets like the air fryer or scales connected to Vodafone's Pro II Broadband is a real game-changer. Interestingly, over a third of Brits admit they would spend more time in certain rooms of their house if the WiFi connection was guaranteed to be fast, and because I use the internet so much for recipes or researching a substitute for something, having that fast and reliable connection makes a huge difference."

### When do you feel most like yourself?

"Wearing a pair of dungarees and crocs in the kitchen with something on in the background like *Friends*. The kitchen is where I go to destress or celebrate – it's a mad place; sad place; happy place all at the same time. Otherwise, it's when I'm curled up on the sofa with my dogs, watching *Harry Potter* and eating cake. It's so important to do those things that actually allow you to be yourself as well." **H@W**  
Candice Brown has partnered with Vodafone to put its new Pro II Broadband to the test – the UK's fastest WiFi technology throughout the home.

## CANDICE'S RELAXATION RITUALS

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Quote ref: HW



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