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Henrietta Norton BSc Dip NT, Founder, Nutritional Therapist and mother of three

The experts in female nutritional health.
WELCOME...

… to the May issue of *Natural Health* magazine.
As we start looking ahead to the summer months, now is the
perfect time to take stock of the year so far and check in with your
body’s natural energy frequency. Have the months whizzed by
without much attention, or have you been savouring the turning of
the seasons? This month, Lynn Jackson shares her tips on restoring balance
(page 92) and delves into the world of vibrational therapy. As I begin my first
issue on Natural Health magazine, this feature really resonated with me, as now,
more than ever, it’s important to tune in to how my body and mind are reacting
to this new challenge. “Every single atom is tuned into a specific vibration,” writes
Lynne. “Including the food we eat, devices we use and our environment – even our
thoughts create an energetic vibration.” So, nourishing thoughts and food will be
top of my priority list this month.

Elsewhere in this issue, we have delicious vegan feasts (page 69), an energising
yoga practise for early risers (page 51) and easy ways to go green (page 115).
Whatever you have planned for the month, wishing you a restorative one – enjoy!

Holly
Editor, *Natural Health* naturalhealthmagazine.co.uk

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OVER to YOU...
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Thank you so much for the article about migranes in your April issue, I was diagnosed six years ago with an unusual form of migrane, so it was great to learn from your piece more about how to cope! Helen, via email

Yoga helps
I was so pleased to read your article about yoga for heartbreak in the April issue. I recently lost a friend to cancer and I had been looking for natural ways to deal with my grief. I have since taken up yoga and I am starting to feel happier.
Lucy, via email

... a case of No.1 Botanical Waters.
This range of natural, plant-based spring waters not only promotes wellbeing, but also partners beautifully with your evening meals. If you’re trying to give up booze or fizzy drinks, this tipple can make a great substitute. Each drink has a single subtle flavour that makes them perfect for any occasion. The 10 flavours in the case are: rosemary, basil, fennel, thyme, lemon verbena, meadowsweet, olive leaf, sage, mint and juniper.
For more information, visit no1botanicals.com.

NEXT MONTH’S STAR LETTER WINS...

WAKE ME UP
Thanks so much for your feature about Contrast Water Therapy in the April issue. I have to get up very early in the morning to commute to work, and I had never thought of using a hot and cold shower to wake me up, but it does the trick perfectly! I am glad to hear that the therapy also has other benefits.
Mirriam, via email

Laugh it off
As someone who’s got a bit of a reputation for laughing, I loved reading your feature about how ‘laughter is the best medicine’. I never really considered that it could be so good for me, so it’s been wonderful to find out that every time I laugh, I’m giving myself a health boost! I’m encouraging all my friends to do the same.
Camilla, via Facebook

Write to us at letters@naturalhealthmagazine.co.uk, tweet us @natural_mag or find us on Facebook at facebook.com/naturalhealthmag or on Instagram @naturalhealthwellbeing for your chance to win a top prize!
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Wholefoods Market
This MONTH
May is the month to...

DISCOVER MORE
Head to London later this month to discover a melting pot of ideas from the holistic world! The Mind Body Spirit Festival offers an immersive experience for anyone curious to learn more about finding a deeper meaning in life. Think meditation workshops, feng shui advice to boost your living space, yoga teaching from leading experts and modern shamanism to help you achieve your goals. Enjoy a massage, discover the colour of you aura or receive a guidance reading. Or, just shop till you drop and stock up on your favourite products – there’s plenty to discover! 24th-27th May at Olympia London. Visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk
BE SUN SAFE

If you’re planning an early summer break, now’s the time to get your suncare sorted. Various experts have thrown shade at conventional sun creams which contain chemicals that absorb UV rays, saying mineral screens which instead reflect them are the safer option, but now the FDA in America has ruled that until further research is done, only two active ingredients can be considered safe: zinc oxide and titanium dioxide. This follows the recent banning by the state of Hawaii of any creams containing octinoxate and oxybenzone, which are said to cause genetic damage to coral and other marine life.

We say, if it’s damaging the genes of other species, is it worth risking it on your own skin? Play it safe and opt only for mineral sunscreen with zinc oxide, like new Yaoh Vegan Hemp Sun Block, £11.99, yaoh.co.uk
CELEBRATE BELTANE

The first of the month, May day, or Beltane, as ancient pagans know it, is the time to celebrate the summer months and fertility for the coming year. Fire is the traditional way to mark it; years gone by saw communities gather around flames and even leap into them to cleanse and bring fertility. While we can’t condone this, a small bonfire with good friends and wine is nothing if not food for the soul and, if the weather allows it, why not unleash your inner pagan, kick off your shoes and dance barefoot on the grass? Beltane is a great time of year to reconnect with nature. If you want an even deeper experience, check out Edinburgh’s Beltane Fire Society and festival at beltane.org
TUCK IN TO MUSHROOMS
Mushroom fans, rejoice! A new study has found that two portions a week could have a protective effect on the brain, and slow the rate of cognitive decline as you age. Researchers in Singapore studied people over 60 and found the more mushrooms people ate, the better they performed in thinking tests. While it’s not possible to prove a direct link at this stage, scientists think the effects could be down to a unique antioxidant present in the fungi.
Homeopathy ABC

Mani Norland, principal at the School of Homeopathy (homeopathyschool.com), tells us:

W is for Wounds
(Cuts/stings/bites)
Homeopathy can improve healing times whilst helping prevent infection from wounds. You can use calendula ointment to clean open wounds. It can also be taken orally when there is pus draining from closed injuries. Hypericum should be your first choice in treating damage to nerve-rich areas. Ledum can work well on wounds caused from stepping on a nail, or from dog or cat bites – especially if the injured part feels cold.

WELLNESS WARRIOR

Meet Berta Corbera, she’s a nutritional therapist at Probio7

NH: What do probiotics do?

BC: Probiotics are live bacteria that can survive the acidic environment of the stomach and then boost the number of good bacteria in the gut. They are incredibly useful to our body, producing vital vitamins that our bodies need, and chemicals that can kill diarrhoea, viruses, and pathogens in our gastrointestinal tract. Our gut bacteria can, amongst other things, reduce inflammation, improve digestive issues and reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease.

NH: Are there any risks in taking probiotics?

BC: There won’t be any lingering side-effects but you may notice some subtle changes in your gut during the first few days of taking a new course of probiotics. You could experience some flatulence, bloating and temporary changes in the frequency or consistency of bowel movements. It is thought that these changes occur because the bacterial balance is changing the intestine.

NH: How can should we consume probiotics?

BC: One of the most significant groups of probiotic organisms is lactic acid bacteria, commonly used in fermented dairy products, such as kefir or yogurt. These bacteria have a long history of safe use in food. You can also find probiotics in supplements (such as our Probio7 supplements) and other foods, like miso, tempeh, pickles or sauerkraut.
SUPP SPOT

Plant Profile
The FHT (fht.org.uk) examines the health benefits of bergamot...

A native of sunny Italy, the bergamot is a cross between a bitter orange and sweet lime. As the fruit's flesh is sour and inedible, you won't find it in your local supermarket, but the fresh, citrus-scented essential oil, which is cold-pressed from the rind, is used extensively in perfumery and aromatherapy, and of course, to flavour Earl Grey tea.

Bergamot essential oil is both calming and uplifting, which makes it a popular choice in aromatherapy massage blends for those who are tense or have anxiety or depression. In addition, it can be useful for cystitis and other urinary tract infections, as well as gastrointestinal problems that may be stress-related or spasmodic in nature, such as indigestion, colic and flatulence.

The essential oil is also beneficial for certain skin conditions and may be used in preparations for acne, oily skin, psoriasis, cold sores, chicken pox, boils and wounds. However, it is important to note that bergamot can increase the skin's sensitivity to sunlight, so always consult a professional aromatherapist before use.

Important safety note: never ingest plant essential oils or apply to the skin undiluted.

WHAT’S THE BUZZ ABOUT?

FITNESS FURNITURE
One new trend has shown that you don’t need an expensive gym membership or a personal nutritionist to get into top form. Fitness furniture is here. A company called The Habit (thehabitfurniture.com), has created stylish, aerodynamic wooden coffee tables that double up as benches and dumbbells. Hello, toned biceps! Check out Mirror (mirrorco) which has developed an amazing steel-framed mirror that streams live fitness classes including personal shout-outs and motivational instructions throughout.

Did you know that smart fridges which tell you what to eat are in development? Look out for built-in cameras that will analyse our eating habits, check nutritional values and even help to create recipes.

“Incorrect food combining can result in a build up of acidity within the body, creating imbalance” - p28

Green goodness
Green tea cuts inflammation and even helps to reduce obesity, according to a new study.

Thank you
A study shows that being thanked more often at work promotes better sleep, fewer headaches and healthier eating, because it improves work satisfaction.

Traffic light lunch
People are likely to choose healthier and more sustainable canteen meals, if they are labelled with a traffic light system, according to the latest research.

The BAROMETER

Bad egg
Ethical beauty brand Lush is going entirely egg-free, reflecting customer preferences and concerns about animal welfare.

Not so sweet
The more sugar-sweetened beverages we consume, the greater our risk of premature death, particularly from cardiovascular disease, according to a new study.

Carb cutting
People getting a low proportion of their daily calories from carbohydrates such as grains, fruits and starchy vegetables are more likely to develop the heart condition atrial fibrillation (AFib), according to researchers.
Discover new inspiration, change career, work in natural healthcare

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How many times a day do you flip out your phone and tap the screen to submit yourself to the digital sphere? If you’re like us, the number is probably quite high.

While getting your phone out to check pending notifications, texts, and emails, or to take a sly selfie, might seem pretty harmless, but new research is urging us to be wary. Apparently, your phone, and other technological devices, have the potential to do damage to your skin. To find out more, we caught up with Debbie Thomas, an advanced skin and laser specialist.

Debbie told us that we should be aware of blue light, specifically “high-energy visible light (HVE) and infra-red light (IR), which is produced by phones, tablets, and monitor screens, as well as LED and florescent light bulbs. These lights actually penetrate the skin more deeply than UV rays from the sun, causing similar damage.”

“This light emitted from your seemingly harmless screens can break down the skin’s DNA, which can inhibit the skin from repairing itself, and can cause oxidative stress on cells, which results in free-radical damage, equating to loss of collagen, weaker skin, redness and pigmentation: all the signs of premature ageing.” Sounds like something we’d rather avoid!

Luckily, Debbie told us that there’s a thing or two we can do to avoid the damage. “The less you use these devices, the less exposure you will get – so step away from spending hours scrolling through your social media feeds, because it’s ageing you.”

Avoid using screens outdoors, too, because the screen actually reflects extra UV light from the sun onto your skin, giving you double the damage. Take a high strength antioxidant every morning (and night, if you use screens in the evening or have LED lights at home), and use modern triple defence sunscreens which block some of the IR rays, as well as traditional UVA and UVB rays.”

If you’re concerned about the potential damage your tech can do to your skin, it would be a good idea to invest in a protective face cream. We recommend HEVL SPF 50 Face Crème. It protects the skin from blue light and can be bought for £19.95 from the skinshop.co.uk.
“Alison helps me to cope with my back problem”
— Helen, West Sussex

Alison is a therapist on the FHT’s Accredited Register. Alongside standard medical care, she provides ongoing comfort and support to Helen, helping her live life to the full.

Could a complementary therapist like Alison help you?

The FHT holds the largest Accredited Register of complementary therapists to be independently approved by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care, helping you to choose a complementary therapist you can trust.

Visit fht.org.uk/findatherapist to find a therapist like Alison.
THERAPY OF THE MONTH

Indian Head Massage

There’s a wonderful world of alternative therapies out there just waiting to be discovered. This month, we look into Indian head massage

You carry it around with you all day. When doing the cooking, at work, having lunch, or even out on the dance floor having a boogie with friends. It’s sitting on your shoulders, weighing on average 10 to 11 pounds – we usually forget that it’s there, but we couldn’t be without it. Don’t you think it’s time that your head received a spot of TLC?

We caught up with Mary Toddd, senior guru therapist at Gina Conways, a Wimbledon salon. She specialises in holistic treatments such as massages and facials, and was able to tell us a thing or two about the Indian head massage: “Indian head massages are a type of traditional massage which originated and was solely performed in India until the 1970s; it was part of the practice of ancient Indian medicine called Ayurveda. Since then, the benefits of this massage slowly started to filter around the globe.”

Mary also tells us: “An Indian head massage isn’t like most other massages; it gets rid of any tension inside, allowing your body to feel more relaxed or energised, depending on your personality type, and it allows your scalp to feel clean and tension-free.

“It also improves circulation and the functioning of the nervous system, creates scalp exfoliation, and de-stresses and relaxes the body in general.” So, it’s a good therapy to use if you’re wanting to chill out from the pressures of 21st century life.

MASSAGE YOUR MIND

We also heard that the therapy is pretty safe. As Mary says: “There aren’t any risks involved with an Indian head massage, unless the client has any other health problems.”

The massage isn’t exclusive to people who can afford to splash out on expensive treatments, either. They can be given to yourself, by yourself, at home, free of charge. As Mary says: “You have the power within your own fingertips to relax your mind, especially if you use therapeutic oils. You can begin massaging your head starting from the sides and towards the top, slowly working your way towards the back and front, and essentially massaging your whole head with just your fingertips and thumbs!” Sounds like heaven to us!
There are times when all of us would rather be dreaming. Sleepnite® is a traditional herbal medicinal product used for the temporary relief of sleep disturbances and mild anxiety.

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SHOP YOURSELF HEALTHY
Everything you need to improve your life on a page

1 WRAP IT UP
We’re well into spring, but let’s be honest, the weather can still be pretty British – so a transitional cardi, like this sunshine yellow one from People Tree is perfect for when you need an extra layer. Sara Wrap Cardigan in Yellow, £89, peopletree.co.uk

2 BEE YOURSELF
Feet are often forgotten about, but they’re in need of some love, too! This Tips and Toes kit is loaded with beeswax, vitamin-enriched oils and botanical extracts. So sit back, relax and prepare to be pampered! Burt’s Bees Tips and Toes Kit, £15.99, lookfantastic.com

3 TURMERIC TEA
If you haven’t tried turmeric tea, you’re in for a treat. Golden turmeric is the queen of protective herbs. This tisane is full of lemon, cardamom and whole-leaf green tea, expertly blended with turmeric. Pukka Turmeric Gold Organic Herbal Tea, £11.95, juicemaster.com

4 LOCO FOR COCO
Whether it’s used as an eye make-up remover or an oil in cooking, coconut oil is a store cupboard essential. This one is preservative- and gluten-free and vegan-friendly. Coconut Merchant Raw Organic Extra Virgin Coconut Oil, £14.99, coconut-merchant.com

5 LOVELY LIPS
This balm works wonders on chapped lips. It uses bee propolis extract, which contains amino acids to promote cell turnover. All ingredients are raw, as the brand’s creator believes that your skin is a ‘mirror for your gut’. RMS Beauty, Lip & Skin Balm, £24, cultbeauty.co.uk

6 BE MY HONEY
Who said you need a separate moisturiser for your face and body? This 100 percent natural balm is multifunctional, so it can be used on both. 100% Natural All In One Honey Balm Multi Functional Moisturiser 100ml, £13.95, ultrabeehealth.co.uk

7 BAMBOO BRUSH
Say goodbye to knotty hair with this bamboo brush. It’s biodegradable, so it has much less of a carbon footprint than your usual plastic comb. Want to personalise it? You can get it engraved for extra style points. Bamboo Hairbrush Antistatic Wooden Comb, £7.06, etsy.com

8 TAKE NOTE
This stationery is super-stylish and will look perfect on your desk this spring time. The notepad contains 36 pages of plain, recycled paper, so it’s environment-friendly as well as budget-friendly. We love! Honey Bees Notebook, £2.50 etsy.com
“During a time where I was shifting my entire lifestyle, yoga became my constant.”

For Annie Clarke, yoga is so much more than just stretches – it’s a life-changer. Here, she tells us why...

Annie Clarke is a Jack of all trades when it comes to wellness: with an established health blog, turned book, namely Mind, Body, Bowl, she champions those three elements (mental health, physical health and nutrition) as her blueprint for feeling good. Both the mental and physical parts of this are largely down to yoga, which Annie has taught for more than three years. Her holistic approach to feeling good has seen her host many yoga events, retreats and women’s circles, all with the same aim to help people step away from prescriptive ideas and connect with their own sense of balance.

For me, yoga started as quite a physical thing. I was always really inflexible, so I wanted to work on that as I was desperate to be able to touch my toes. After a while though, I realised it wasn’t the stretching that was keeping me there but something else, and over time, I just kept going back. It became my time to totally disconnect from all of the business of my day-to-day life and offer myself a bit of time to just be; which was something I’d never explored before. During a time where I was shifting my entire lifestyle, yoga became my constant and, from there, it grew into being a big part of my life. I wouldn’t be able to choose a favourite yoga pose – I love different things at different times, and I really believe that we should adapt our practice in response to that. Sometimes I would want to choose something invigorating, and other times I just want to be soft with my practice. So the poses come and go – it’s good not to be attached!

I have started to host women’s circles, which I’m really enjoying, as well as continuing with my yoga classes and retreats. I really love the retreat aspect – it’s incredibly special to see the impact of the practice on my guests, first-hand, and it’s touching to have a personal connection with each of them through the experience. So, there will definitely be some more of those to come. My big intention this year is to ensure that everything that I share adds value to people and their lives. This mindset acts as a guidance point for navigating the opportunities that come my way. I’ve been putting a lot of resources into my YouTube channel to improve the production value, so that people can practice at home. I’m also working up another idea for a second book, although I keep reminding myself that I don’t have to do everything all at once!

Yoga keeps me motivated: even if my asana practice (the physical element) isn’t as consistent as I would like it, I still live the rest of my day guided by yoga. Like anyone, motivation can be hard to maintain and I have days, or weeks where I don’t feel like doing the things I should be. I think it’s important to check in with yourself and ask – why am I avoiding this? Is it because I have taken on too much? Or am I just feeling lazy? What do I really need right now? And, then let that guide you. I trust myself enough that I’ll always come back to my practice, so it’s getting the balance between adapting to the changing needs of my body and mind, whilst keeping a certain consistency to support my holistic wellbeing.

I believe that balance is a flow state – our ability to lean into different things at different times as it feels right for us. So for me, it’s not about trying to fit work and social life in all the time. If I have a busy week, I won’t make many (or any) social plans, because I won’t be able to fully commit to being present with my friends and family. Quality over quantity is a good reminder for that! I used to wait until the end of the day to wind down, but now I try to start the morning that way, too. Most days, I make myself a coffee and sit with my journal and that time feels really special to me. In the evenings, I try to switch off my computer and phone at a reasonable hour and take the time to cook, enjoy my dinner, and potter around listening to a podcast or audio book. I swear by getting enough sleep, too – it’s vital for your wellbeing and everything’s always better after a good night’s rest.

What I eat tends to shift quite a bit, particularly as I travel a lot. If I’m in a hot country for example, I can’t get enough of ripe, local fruit. At home, I struggle to digest fruit, whilst warm foods suit me well, so I try to eat local produce and whatever is in season, even if that does mean fewer avocados and smoothie bowls! I love to make big warming stews and curries, especially as I’ll keep them in the fridge and eat them over the course of the week with extra veg, which makes a busy life easier, too!

Visit Annie’s blog at: mindbodybowl.co.uk
Turn up your Hair Volume!
Get volume into your hair
THE SWEDISH WAY!

Has your hair been affected by the cold winter weather? Or do you suffer with damage to your hair caused by colouring, brushing and frequent washing? This can leave your hair broken, matt and flat?

If this sounds familiar then we might have the answer you’re looking for! New Nordic™ have used long established traditions from Sweden and have combined high quality ingredients to produce a Hair Supplement called Hair Volume™, which strengthens your hair and the hair roots from within and helps to increase the hair’s volume.

Hair Volume™ is available in a 30 or 90 tablet pack - Take 1 tablet per day with a glass of water. Hair Volume™ is available from selected Holland & Barrett stores or online at hollandandbarrett.com. For more information or a leaflet call New Nordic™ on 0800 389 1255.

Hair Volume™ contains flavonoids from apple and millet, which are rich in herbal ingredient stimulating the cells to form keratin. Together with the amino acids, horsetail and biotin these are working as a stimulant on hair growth and makes your hair both stronger and more voluminous. Hair Volume™ also contains copper, which may help maintain the normal pigmentation of the hair – and zinc, which may help strengthen hair, skin and nails.

Hair Volume is also available in a tasty apple gummy - For more information visit www.newnordic.co.uk
Super Spirulina

We’ve always been told to get plenty of greens – but we didn’t think algae would be one of them...

If you’re a frequent health store visitor, you can’t have escaped the lure of spirulina. This deep green-blue powdered algae is quite a striking superfood – and there’s no disputing its nutritional status. As one of the oldest life forms on earth, spirulina consists of single-celled organisms that produce protein, carbs and vitamins as algae. This substance makes up one of the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet, packed with beta carotene, iron and amino acids. Plus, spirulina is low in fat and sodium, and is easy to digest compared to other single-celled algae. Win-win!

We spoke to leading London nutritionist, Lily Soutter (lilysoutternutrition.com), to give us more info on the health benefits behind this superfood: “Spirulina has been named ‘the food of the future’ – and for good reason. It’s extremely nutritionally dense, and is a good source of protein containing all essential amino acids, plus B vitamins, antioxidants and iron. However, it’s also important to remember that in reality, we’re unlikely to be consuming large amounts – so a bit of spirulina powder here and there is likely to only have a small impact on our daily nutrient requirements. Away from the western part of the world, spirulina is being touted as a possible tool in the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition, due to its nutrient-dense nature.”

Aside from its nutritional composition, spirulina is also being researched for its effects on cholesterol levels and the immune system, as Lily explains: “Whilst there are some positive studies on spirulina’s cholesterol-lowering effects, it’s important to note that higher-quality studies are required before any definitive conclusions can be made. There are also promising studies on spirulina when it comes to allergic rhinitis and blood glucose control in diabetics – but again, there needs to be larger, better-quality trials to confirm these benefits.”

What’s good for us on the inside often equates to what is beneficial for our skin; and spirulina is no exception. Antioxidants such as vitamin E contained within the algae help to eliminate free radicals, while the chlorophyll, which gives spirulina its beautiful, rich colour has cleansing properties which can also help your skin to retain moisture. Beauty products featuring spirulina have now started popping up: deputy editor, Allison currently uses a lightweight serum containing spirulina – so far, it’s hard to tell if it’s having an effect. Of course, consuming spirulina will naturally give your skin a boost, owing to the vitamins and minerals inherent to a healthy, functioning body. So, if you haven’t started taking capsules or adding a scoop of the super stuff to your smoothies; now is the time!

“Spirulina makes up one of the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet, packed with beta carotene, iron and amino acids. Plus, it’s low in fat and sodium”

NATURAL HEALTH 25
HOW TO EXERCISE INTUITIVELY

Forget pounding the streets and pushing through barriers – the new way to be active is to let your body guide you.

Sounds too good to be true, doesn’t it?
Pushing through the pain barrier to get results has been the go-to method for anyone with a fitness goal, but now a new school of thought is calling for intuition to lead the way. Enter, intuitive exercise.

“We’ve heard of intuitive eating, but what exactly is intuitive exercising?” Training intuitively means that you exercise based on how you feel,” says Marvin Burton, head of fitness at Anytime Fitness UK (anytimefitness.co.uk). “It can mean that you are impulsive, less structured and generally happier to be active, which can make you feel more in control and less ‘forced’ to comply with what you may not enjoy.”

So does this mean if you don’t feel like exercising, it’s a free pass not to? For example, if the alarm goes off early because you planned to go for a run, but you’d much rather roll over and go back to sleep, should you push through it and get up and go? “If you are tired and need the sleep, then I would suggest taking the rest,” says Marvin. “Exercising when you are tired won’t allow you to push yourself to the next level needed and can lead to injury. Kat Farrant, founder of Movement for Modern Life (movementformodernlife.com), agrees: “Sometimes, rest is the most healing thing we can do,” she says. “If you’re exhausted and you know that you haven’t slept properly, then you should absolutely go back to sleep.”

“It’s a question of getting to know yourself – would you benefit more from the rest, or does your body need shaking up and energising?” When we learn to be quiet with ourselves, to meditate, to do quiet practices of yin yoga, we get to understand ourselves and learn exactly what we need.”

The bottom line is, it makes for a truly holistic approach to exercise, which can only be a good thing. “The benefits of intuitive exercise is that normal exercise programmes don’t tend to consider other aspects of a person’s lifestyle, such as additional stressors at work, home, and life in general, which all make up someone’s overall wellness and their ability to train,” says Luke Worthington, human movement and elite performance specialist (lukeworthington.com).

STOP PUNISHING YOURSELF
Forcing yourself to exercise can be counter-productive, and not just in the form of injury. “It can cause central fatigue,” explains Luke, “also known as adrenal fatigue. You should feel better after working out – not worse. Ditch the exercise classes that claim to ‘smash’ or ‘break’ you.”

For Kat, the way exercise is sold to us is all wrong, and ‘no pain, no gain’ is a damaging slogan – we need to stop punishing ourselves. “It can actually cause self-hatred,” she explains. “We can be exercising as a means of punishing ourselves. Our exercise and even yoga that many of us practise is simply an extension of the way that many of us are taught to be in life – competitive and aggressive. We are taught that this is the best way to succeed. That way of being causes injury to ourselves physically, and emotionally, to ourselves and others, and can be debilitating and cause fatigue. But in fact, it’s those who are nourished and learn how to deeply care for themselves who succeed. We are able to learn how to support ourselves and others.”
You should feel better after working out – not worse. Ditch the exercise classes that claim to ‘smash’ or break you.

WHEN TO PUSH IT
Of course, there are numerous studies which show really pushing our bodies, for example with HIIT training (high-intensity interval training, when you exercise at the top of your ability for a very short period, then drop back to a more comfortable level), can decrease heart rate and blood pressure, and help us burn more fat. This sort of exercise has its place, too. “On the days you feel like a rock star, go for it,” says Luke.

“Pushing yourself is something that you should prepare for,” says Marvin. “You can do this by arranging your lifestyle and other contributing factors, such as eating well in the subsequent days. If you wanted to really monitor this, you could track your morning resting heart rate of a series of days and look at trends in your rested state. If you are waking with an elevated heart rate, then this would suggest you are not getting deep sleep and need further rest before working at a high-intensity.”

Understanding your body is something that takes practise and consistency, but it’s something that’s worth investing in. “The only way to exercise is intuitively,” says Kat. “It’s about having a deep respect for your body and for its long-term health. When we move intuitively it means that we’re able to sensitively be truly aware, awake and living in the here and now. We owe it to ourselves to be able to recognise how we feel, and be able to make our own exercises and practices bespoke to the real needs of our bodies, not our perceived needs or what we think we should be doing.”
Ask the experts
Don’t suffer in silence – our wellbeing wonder team of experts is on hand to answer your health questions

My periods are really irregular. Is this something I should be concerned about?

**Steve Kippax**, a western herbalist and practitioner of traditional Chinese medicine, [stevekippax.com](http://stevekippax.com)

The reason why your periods are irregular is very important. It might be nothing more than a hormonal imbalance, or it could be something more serious. Go and see your healthcare provider as it is imperative to get a diagnosis, and then a treatment plan can be created. Once you have done this, and if there is no serious underlying pathology discovered, then there is a variety of herbs you could try that have been used to regulate periods. Chinese angelica is very useful and is a major ingredient in the combination of herbs that make up Women’s Precious Pills, which can be used to help balance hormone levels. Vitex agnus castus is very useful in balancing the menstrual cycle; in fact, there are herbs that will help for all period manifestations.

I’m currently experiencing menopausal symptoms, including increased body odour. What lifestyle changes could I consider to minimise these issues?

**Thomas Laird BSc**, is managing director of Salt of the Earth, [crystalspring.co.uk](http://crystalspring.co.uk)

One of the most common symptoms of the menopause is hot flushes. These sudden moments of heightened body temperature typically lead to increased sweat production and body odour.

Traditional antiperspirants work by plugging your pores, effectively stopping you from sweating (no sweat, no smell). However, sweating is important for temperature regulation, so by plugging pores you are stopping your body from working as nature intended. I would recommend switching to a natural deodorant, as these work by leaving a thin layer of mineral salts on the skin, inhibiting the growth of odour-causing bacteria, whilst still allowing you to sweat.

Does the combination of food groups that I’m eating matter?

**Holly Zoccolan**, nutritional health coach and founder of [thehealthzoc.com](http://thehealthzoc.com)

The short answer? Yes! Incorrect food-combining can result in a build-up of acidity within the body, creating an imbalance. This results in digestive issues, bloating and your body not absorbing nutrients from your food.

**Some basic guidelines:**

1. Eat fruit on an empty stomach, so first thing in the morning. This is because the sugars in the fruit digest quickly, but if eaten with another food group, the digestion is slowed down causing bloating and digestive issues.
2. Starch and protein should be eaten separately as they are digested in different parts of your body.
3. Avoid eating proteins with different types of proteins, fats with fruits, and starches with other starches.

The most important thing is to ensure that you are balancing your body and creating an alkaline environment so your digestive system stays fired-up and active. This will also enable you to eat more food combinations. Listen to your body and you will learn which combinations work and which don’t.
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IS YOUR ALLERGY AGEING YOU?

The allergic response to conditions such as hay fever could make us age faster, says Jayney Goddard

Far from seasonal allergies being an annoyance, they can actually make us biologically older by speeding up the rate at which we age.

I now find that I’m seeing ever greater numbers of patients who are really suffering when they hadn’t previously done so. Allergies used to develop in early childhood, but now we are seeing seasonal allergies appearing for the first time well into adulthood. A number of factors are responsible, including nutritional issues, unmanaged stress, and environmental pollution. Of all of these, environmental toxicity is likely to be the worst culprit. We’re consistently being exposed to unprecedented numbers and types of environmental pollutants, and 40 percent of deaths worldwide are thought to be caused by pollutants in water, air and soil.

In the UK, 40,000 people die every year as a direct result of pollution – and the UK is a relatively ‘clean’ country with fairly strict controls over emissions and other environmental contamination.

ROOT CAUSES
When we try to root out the underlying causes of this current allergy explosion, we also have to consider the effects of the
INFLAMMATION OVERLOAD

So, given that this column is about holistic anti-ageing, you’re probably wondering what hayfever, allergies and environmental pollution have to do with the ageing process? Well, it turns out rather a lot in fact. There are many factors which are involved. These include wear and tear, oxidative stress, psychological stress and inadequate nutrition. In developed countries, we often take in an excess of calories through very nutrient-poor food, some of which is downright dangerous, for example trans-fats, high fructose corn syrup (now deceitfully re-branded as the benign-sounding ‘natural corn sugar’), processed meats, refined carbohydrates and more. All of these lead to inflammation, which is the body’s natural response to stressors and is usually helpful and protective. However, when it gets out of control, it causes devastating problems – chronic inflammation underlies every degenerative disease. These include arthritis, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, many cancers and even the neurological diseases, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s. We wrongly believe that these are a ‘normal’ part of the ageing process, but the truth is that they are preventable, and some can be halted and even fully cured in many cases. Inflammation also lies at the heart of the allergic response. In hayfever or seasonal rhinitis, every time that an allergic response is provoked by an allergen, precious resources are diverted away from our immune system – meaning that it can’t do its normal day to day job of keeping us well – and this increases the degenerative, and thus ageing, effects of stressors.

COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH

Conventional or pharmaceutical medicine really has no treatments for allergies other than the ‘sticking plaster’ approach of using antihistamines which, at best, provide temporary relief. Complementary medicine offers solutions which are extremely helpful as they work preventatively – by addressing the underlying reason why a person is developing such an over-reaction to allergens. Several branches of complementary medicine are outstandingly effective in this arena; homeopathy, acupuncture, nutrition, and even several disciplines that are designed to treat allergies specifically. Each of these approaches aims to understand why the body is producing a set of symptoms and then provides whatever is necessary for the body to heal itself.

In acupuncture, the practitioner will ascertain which energetic pathways – known as ‘meridians’ – in the body are blocked and they will insert needles, or apply pressure to that specific area to unblock the energetic flow, thus enabling the body to work correctly and to heal itself. Acupuncture is rapid, gentle and effective.

In homeopathy, the homeopath can work in two ways. First of all, he or she can prescribe homeopathic medicines which immediately address the distressing symptoms of allergies, fast and effectively. This is called ‘acute prescribing’ and the medicine given will usually be a highly diluted mixture of the allergens that the person is reacting to and, at this time of year, pollens and grasses are the usual culprits. In the second way of working, the homeopath makes a highly detailed, in-depth analysis of the patient’s symptoms, lifestyle, medical history and more, so that the person’s ‘constitutional’ remedy can be prescribed. This is also a highly diluted medicine but it differs from an ‘acute prescription’ as it is totally individualised and addresses all the person’s symptoms, holistically. The homeopath helps the person to become more balanced and healthy overall and better equipped to deal with stressors – including allergens. This is the essence of preventative medicine – the creation of a state of physical, mental, and emotional resilience – so that you remain healthy regardless of external factors which might undermine a person in a weakened state.

To find qualified, professional practitioners, or to find a selection of the best training schools that teach these approaches visit The Complementary Medical Association website: The-CMA.org.uk You can find more ways of combatting inflammation, allergies and anti-ageing tips in Jayne’s new book Rewind Your Body Clock: The Complete Natural Guide to a Happier, Healthier, Younger You (£14.99, Watkins).
VOTE FOR YOUR FAVOURITE BEAUTY BRANDS TODAY!

The nominations are in, the brands have been shortlisted and now it’s time to cast your vote. Every year we celebrate the very best in holistic and complementary beauty with the Natural Health International Beauty Awards. Our expert panel of judges and the Natural Health team test all manner of products, but we want to hear from you! Get involved and help us give your beauty heroes the recognition they deserve.

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Want a healthy heart?
Switch off the telly and eat a decent brekkie, says new research. A recent study has found that people who spent less time watching TV and regularly ate an energy-rich breakfast showed significantly less plaque and stiffness in their arteries, indicating a lower chance of developing heart disease or suffering a stroke.

Those watching the most TV per week were found to have almost twice as much plaque build-up in their arteries compared to those watching the least. Those who ate a high-energy breakfast were found to have significantly healthier arteries than those who ate little or no breakfast.
**MOVE MORE FOR BETTER HEALTH**

We all know that exercise is important for good health, but a recent study has found another potentially life-saving benefit.

According to research published in *The Journal of Physiology*, exercise may play a role in slowing the growth of colon cancer cells. The study discovered that after a short session of high-intensity interval training (HIIT), the growth of colon cancer cells was reduced. James Devin, lead author of the research said: “This suggests that a physically active lifestyle may be important in tackling human colorectal tumours. We would now like to look at how these changes in growth occur and understand the mechanisms by which biomarkers in the blood can impact cell growth.”

**NATURAL ACNE BUSTERS**

We thought it would be gone with the boy band posters and troublesome mood swings, but we were wrong. While acne is often thought of as a teenage problem, it can strike at any age. It can also hit your self-esteem hard. One study by the British Association of Dermatologists found that 54 percent of British adults have experienced acne and say that it has had a negative impact on their confidence. Luckily, there are some natural things you can do to help the issue:

1. Raw honey has antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties which make it a great natural remedy to remove-acne causing bacteria from your skin and soothe inflammation. You can use it on its own as a face mask or try it out as a spot treatment.

2. Tea tree oil has long been used as a natural acne home remedy. A few drops of it can help reduce and prevent the occurrence of breakouts but be sure to dilute it first because it can be harsh on the skin and may even burn.

3. Eating high glycemic foods may increase sebum production and contribute to acne, according to recent studies. Foods with a high glycemic index include doughnuts, white bread and sugary cereals. So, limiting your intake of foods such as these and replacing them with low glycemic index foods such as whole grains and vegetables may help resolve your acne.
of the best... Natural energy bars

Whether you’re en route to your hot yoga class, returning from a spin session or even pounding the pavements on a long-distance run, an energy bar can help. These bars are sure to give you a boost and are packed full of natural ingredients.

1 Aduna Green Goodness Superleaf Energy Bar, £5.67, aduna.com

2 Naked Cashew Cookie Raw Fruit and Nut Bar 35g, £1.20, buywholefoodsonline.co.uk

3 Panda Blueberry Licorice Bar 32g, 47p, adult-health.co.uk

“There’s no denying the intense healing power of proper sleep - one study revealed that sleep deprivation can actually slow down wound healing.”

SUNDAY SNOOZE

Juggling work, family, a social life and even some downtime can prove challenging for the most organised of us. So, if you’re missing out on enough sleep as well, you could be willing the weekend to come round more than most. Reckon those extra hours in bed at the weekend will help you catch up? New research isn’t particularly reassuring. Findings reported in Current Biology showed that insufficient sleep and untreated sleep disorders could put people at an increased risk for metabolic problems, including obesity and diabetes, and that extra sleep at the weekend was found to be insufficient in reducing those risks. That’ll be an early night for us then!

Mediterranean meals

Bring on the avocados and tomatoes! A Mediterranean diet can improve athletes’ endurance exercise performance in as little as four days according to new research.

Lose it

A high-protein, low-calorie diet helps older adults with obesity shed more weight, maintain more muscle mass, improve bone quality and lose ‘bad’ fat, according to a recent study.

Evening exercise

New research suggests that 30 minutes of high-intensity exercise performed in the early evening does not negatively affect subsequent sleep, and may also reduce feelings of hunger.

The BAROMETER

Junk food

A study has found that poor mental health is linked with a low-quality diet, regardless of personal characteristics such as gender, age, education, age, marital status and income level.

No-no to yo-yo

Restrictive and inconsistent diets make it harder for women to control a variety of heart disease risk factors, according to new findings.

Boozy pressure

Moderate alcohol consumption (7-13 drinks per week) substantially raises the risk of high blood pressure, or hypertension, say medical experts.
Can ancient plants really help you beat stress, boost your immune system and even ramp up your sex drive? Welcome to the wonderful world of adaptogens

A group of ancient plants called adaptogens have been utilised for thousands of years, by practitioners and healers all over the world. They were used to help people who had demanding physical work or who were recovering from illness. Back then, the things that were perceived as stressors to humans were a little different than what we’re dealing with in the modern world, but our body’s reactions to stress remain the same, just like the amazing benefits of these plants.

Which adaptogen could be just the ticket for your health needs? Read on to discover more...

1

ASHWAGANDHA

CALMING • NEW MUM SUPPORT • LIBIDO BOOSTER

Although it may seem new to us here in the west, ashwagandha has been a go-to medicinal root for thousands of years. In Ayurveda, it has been used to support immunity and is celebrated for its invigorating properties.

BENEFITS:
When taken regularly, ashwagandha can help increased vitality, energy, and endurance. It’s incredibly versatile and has the ability to regulate the stress hormone cortisol. It can help stabilise your whole hormonal system, also known as the endocrine system, especially the functioning of your thyroid and adrenals. Ashwagandha is the only adaptogen found to have a stimulating effect on the thyroid.

This potent root will help reduce the effect that stress has on your body. If you’re feeling run down, overwhelmed, or exhausted, ashwagandha’s ability to support normal energy levels and sleep can come in handy. You will likely be able to enjoy your life with more energy and vitality. It’s actually hard to imagine someone for whom ashwagandha wouldn’t be helpful! Anyone with a smartphone that constantly pings with emails and calendar reminders, or whose day consists of running from one deadline to the next, could benefit from its calming effects and ability to reduce the damaging effects of stress. For modern-day ailments, ashwagandha can be useful, alongside diet and lifestyle, to help get the body back in balance.
2
HE SHOU WU
IMMUNITY BOOSTER • BLOOD CLEANSER • YOUTH ELIXIR

This longevity-boosting root got its name from the man who discovered it. ‘He shou wu’ means ‘black-haired mister.’ He claimed the root restored his gray hair back to black and gave him the ability to father a child after years of not being able to. The root is also used in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam for slightly different challenges.

**BENEFITS:**
He shou wu is still used today for hair that is graying prematurely, perhaps due to its high zinc level or the harmonizing effect it has on the hormonal system. It has been found to stimulate the body to produce longevity-promoting antioxidants. Regular use will help encourage proper liver and gallbladder function. Additionally, like most adaptogens, it supports the immune system. It’s also known to calm the nervous system, making it a great herb for busy people. Studies have found it increased the life span of some animals, so one can only hope that translates to humans, too! On a different note, this adaptogen is traditionally seen as a spirit tonic. It may help bring out your inner creativity and make you feel more receptive and intuitive.

“Ancient plants called adaptogens have been used for years”

3
REISHI
CALMING • REJUVENATING • IMMUNITY SUPPORT

Meet the most studied plant on earth! Reishi is a mushroom, known as the queen healer mushroom, and its Chinese name translates to ‘spirit plant,’ as it’s celebrated as a plant that nourishes the spirit. It was discovered in China in 396 BC and emperors used reishi tonic as part of their quest for immortality. More recent studies have found that reishi indeed contains several compounds that may support longevity.

**BENEFITS:**
There are very few things that reishi doesn’t support in the body. It’s an overall strengthening and balancing super mushroom! It can help relax the nervous system to calm you. And, because it’s packed with antioxidants, it helps protect your skin as well as your cells’ DNA and mitochondria (energy centers) from getting damaged by oxidation.

Reishi has even been found to stimulate activity in brain neurons. It strengthens the liver, aids in detoxification, and boosts the immune system overall. Reishi may also help support the hormone system and improve sleep. It’s one of the adaptogens that are good to consume right before bed as it helps calm the nervous system and supports good-quality sleep! Ganoderic acid, found in reishi, can help inhibit histamine release and improve the use of oxygen. That means it may help alleviate those very annoying seasonal allergies. In addition, reishi may improve your cardiovascular function and it is a great overall preventative superfood.

4
PINE POLLEN
BRAIN FOOD • IMMUNITY SUPPORT • LIBIDO

This adaptogenic powder is exactly what you think it is – the pollen of a pine tree! Pollen contains the life force and fundamental nutrients for a new life – in this case, it’s the life of a new giant tree.

And thus, pine pollen is a nutrient-dense, potent, and healing super powder. It has been used in Chinese medicine for thousands of years and is rapidly gaining popularity in the west.

**BENEFITS:**
Pine pollen has both antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties and is rich in vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. It even contains vitamin D3, which is hard to find in a food source. Because this is a truly wild food, it’s also believed to help connect us to nature and our essence on a spiritual level. Pine pollen is celebrated as a rejuvenation tonic. It can have a great balancing effect on the endocrine system. It is the only known plant containing the hormone dihydrotestosterone, oestrogen, and progesterone. In the human body, dihydrotestosterone is produced by the adrenals – those very same glands that tend to get overworked in our very busy lives! DHEA, at healthy levels, will increase libido, boost mood and immunity. Pine pollen is, in fact, the only food from the natural world that can actually work like a natural testosterone replacement therapy, meaning it may boost your body’s testosterone levels. And yes, while this is the male hormone, women need some testosterone, too.

5
MUCUNA PRURIENS
MOOD ENHANCER • FORTIFIER • MOTIVATOR

Mucuna pruriens is a climbing vine native to Africa and Asia. A legume, it is often called the velvet bean because of its hairy and leathery pods. Many indigenous cultures eat the beans as a good source of protein and because of its uplifting mood benefits.

**BENEFITS:**
Mucuna pruriens is a psychoactive, as is coffee, but unlike coffee, it is non-addictive. Its seed contains a compound called L-dopa, which is a precursor of the neurotransmitter dopamine, a chemical in the brain that affects emotions, movements, and sensations of pleasure and pain; it also stimulates the reward center in the brain. With increased dopamine signaling comes a delicious mood boost. So, basically, Mucuna pruriens works as a natural mood enhancer!

In addition, because it contains L-dopa, it is a natural aphrodisiac, helping increase pleasure. This remarkable plant shares some of the same properties, in trace amounts, as ayahuasca and tobacco. You may very possibly experience more vivid dreams and deeper sleep after taking it. It’s also celebrated as a spiritual and consciousness-enhancing plant. The L-dopa stimulates the pituitary gland to produce human growth hormone, which helps improve muscle growth and strength. It’s also been shown to help lower levels of prolactin, which in turn, can reduce menstrual discomfort and the weight gain that can come with it, as well as improve fertility in men.
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Glynis Barber

**KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON?**

If you feel like you’re permanently stressed, it’s time to take control, says Glynis

We live in a very stressful world and it would appear to be getting the better of a lot of us. Stress and all its associated conditions – like anxiety and depression – are now in epidemic proportions. To understand why, we need to look at what stress is and its evolutionary purpose.

Put simply, stress is the body’s reaction to a real, or imagined threat. It puts the body into fight or flight mode and came in very handy when our ancestors were fighting off animal predators. Unfortunately, our brains now interpret many of our day-to-day problems in the same way and some of us end up being in fight or flight mode most of the time. This releases a flood of adrenaline into the system (along with many other hormones), increases heart rate, blood flow and oxygen intake and suppresses the immune system, temporarily. This reduces your inflammatory response to pathogens and foreign invaders in the body.

When stress becomes chronic and long-term (as is happening with so many people), your immune system becomes increasingly desensitised to cortisol. This hormone partly regulates inflammation, and this desensitisation can cause inflammation to increase and, even become out of control. Sound like bad news? Well, it is, because inflammation is thought by many experts to be the cause of a number of diseases from heart disease to cancer to diabetes. It could even trigger dementia.

The good news, however, is that there is much you can do to keep your stress levels under control – and doing this is probably the best thing you can do for your overall health. I would go as far as to say this should be a priority for most people, as there are very few of us that are unaffected by stress.

A good place to start is to recognise where your stress comes from. It is an inescapable part of life and a little of it can actually be positive, providing the motivation to complete a job or task, for example. But when stress is constant, day in and day out, and leaves you feeling anxious or overwhelmed, then it has crossed the line into something that needs to be reined in. It could come from financial worries, a sick child or parent, being out of work or a host of other concerns.

The key is in how you react to these stresses. It would seem that some people are more stress-resilient than others. Being resilient is your body’s ability to rapidly return to normal, both physically and emotionally, after a stressful event or episode. It’s also been observed that men and women experience stress differently, with women more likely to suffer from stomach-churning anxiety and also feelings of sadness in response to stress.

Emotions are very connected to our health and stress levels. As a doctor of functional medicine recently said to me: “Our biography becomes our biology.”

4 WAYS TO STRESS LESS

1. **Try deep abdominal breathing.**
   A recent study at Harvard concluded that taking 10 deep breaths every hour through the day can drastically reduce stress and anxiety.

2. **Don’t dwell on negative thoughts.**
   Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is effective in teaching how to change these thought patterns.

3. **Reprogramme your stress response.**
   Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) can help you do this easily and effectively – search online for videos that demonstrate this.

4. **Get moving!**
   Exercise has a positive effect on the brain, which then releases ‘happy’ hormones also known as endorphins.

Glynis Barber is an actress and co-author of *The In-Sync Diet* (theinsyndiet.com). She is also founder of agelessbyglynisbarber.com
YOUR 7 DAY GUIDE TO MEDITATION

Stay in the moment with these seven different ways to try meditation, for each day of the week.

Meditation has come a long way since it was first considered a hippy fad where people sat cross-legged and thought deeply. Nowadays, it’s a routine part of keeping feelings of anxiety and stress at bay, with a celeb following of the likes of Gwyneth Paltrow and Oprah. And, its popularity has only risen. In 2014, the question: ‘how to meditate’ was the fourth most-searched term powered by Google. Plus, 72 percent of GPs consider learning mindfulness meditation skills helpful for patients with mental health problems, according to NHS Mersey Care. Here’s how you can try it for yourself.

WHAT IS MEDITATION?

“Meditation is a practice that helps you control your mind and focus on the present moment,” explains David James Lees, Taoist monk and meditation teacher (www.wisdom.com). “There are thousands of different forms of meditation and many have their roots in ancient eastern philosophical, religious or healthcare practices. Many meditation techniques are simple to learn and are great for beginners. There are also a large number of non-religious forms of meditation that anyone can practice, regardless of their background, faith or beliefs. Mindfulness is a popular form of meditation, which involves intentionally focusing on the ‘here and now’. Other meditation techniques use the breath, visualisations, repetition of affirmations and mantras, and even physical movement.”

THE BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

“A big part of meditation involves training your mind to slow down, so your thoughts get quieter,” says Jody Shield, meditation ambassador for Lululemon and author of Self-Care for the Soul: Power Up Your Brightest, Boldest, Happiest You (£9.99, Yellow Kite). “This is achieved by giving your mind something else to focus on, such as your breathing, or a certain point in your body. When your inner world slows down, your outer world does too, and you become more present. One of the benefits is that you become more productive. This might sound counterintuitive, but it means less time wasted, more focus and faster problem-solving.” Plus, Jody points out that there are many scientifically proven benefits of meditation too, including:

• Reduced reactivity of the amygdala – the fight-or-flight response – as meditation calms your brain and reduces the dangerous side effects of chronic stress on the body.
• Increased activity in the prefrontal cortex: this helps to regulate your emotions and reduce stress. • Increased compassion: meditation alters the parts of the brain responsible for empathy.
7 MEDITATIONS FOR 7 DAYS

1. Breath meditation
“Sit somewhere comfortable with your feet flat on the floor, your back straight and your hands resting on your lap,” says Justine Curls, mindfulness coach (thelunahive.com). “With your eyes closed, notice where you can feel the sensations of your breath most vividly (usually your abdomen, chest or nostrils) and rest your attention on feeling the sensation of each breath, in and out. When your attention wanders from your breath to a thought, notice the thought’s content and without judging this, bring your awareness back to your breath. Do this for a few minutes a day and gradually increase the duration until you can sit for 10 minutes, or more.”

2. Walking meditation
“Choose a suitable location, such as your hallway or garden, where you can walk several steps in a straight line,” advises Justine. “Before you start walking, take a moment to breath in and out and feel the sensations of your feet making contact with the ground. Breathing in, take a slow step forward and feel how the sensations change in your feet and legs as your heel lifts off the ground. Do the same with your next foot, feeling into the sensations of both feet and legs. After taking several steps, pause, breath in and out, turn around and repeat these steps as you walk back to your starting point. When you get used to this, you can bring the same awareness to walking at a regular pace when out and about.”

3. Ch’an meditation
“Ch’an combines Buddhism with Daoism (Chinese philosophy) and the teachings of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius, but it’s not a religion,” explains ShiFu Shi Heng Dao, a Shaolin Buddhist master (shihengdao.com). “The aim is to cultivate a life free of complication, and develop wisdom and compassion toward all sentient beings. To try it, start with a breathing meditation and mentally count your breaths in rounds of 10. Focussing on counting gives your rational, analytical mind a task so that your thoughts don’t wander. In time, move on to following the breath into your body. Practitioners gain calmness, good focus and of course, the ultimate goal is enlightenment.”

4. Gratitude meditation
“When you wake, stretch your arms and think of one thing you are grateful to have,” advises Dr Audrey Tang, chartered psychologist and author of The Leader’s Guide to Mindfulness (FT Publishing, £14.99). “Stretch your legs and think of one person you are grateful to know. Finally, stretch your whole body and think of one thing you are looking forward to today. This keeps you focused in the here and now.”

5. Language-focused meditation
“Instead of seeing things as good and bad, right or wrong, tell yourself this can all be dependent on context,” says Dr Audrey. “Rather, by looking at an action as effective or ineffective in the pursuit of your desired outcome, you’ll become focused on what you want to achieve, as well as removing unnecessary, emotional weight from your behaviours.”

6. Inner-smile meditation
“Smile to yourself and then imagine extending this warm smile to every organ and muscle of your body,” says David. “Hold your attention on each part of your body until it begins to relax and soften.”

7. Loving-kindness meditation
“Imagine sending love and kindness to yourself,” says David. “Then extend this feeling of compassion out to a good friend, a neutral person, and someone you are having difficulty with, and then finally send it out the entire universe.”

• Increased focus and sharpened concentration.
• Decreased anxiety: the parts of the brain responsible for regulating thoughts about yourself are altered.

WHAT IF I STRUGGLE TO CONCENTRATE?
“Everyone struggles to concentrate,” reassures Martin Alyward, mindfulness expert (martinalyward.com). “It’s the mind’s nature to be active. Thoughts flow by habit and by stimulation. In meditation, we’re not trying to stop that flow, but rather to step back from it. It’s not that you shouldn’t get lost in thought, but rather that meditation allows you to notice when you are caught up, and to step out of the loop. With practice this gets easier, but with regular practice, you’ll very quickly notice differences in your mind, and in your decreasing levels of anxiety and distraction.”
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ALIGN YOUR LIFE WITH YOUR PASSION

Emma Cannon on why we need to achieve alignment

*Balance has always been at the core of my philosophy towards health.* Achieving balance — in energy, emotions and life — for my patients has been my work for 25 years. It is the cornerstone of Eastern philosophy.

But back in 2017, Forbes published an article by Todd Emus, calling time on balance as “one of the most harmful myths of our time”. A little extreme, perhaps? Surely Eastern philosophy can’t have got it so wrong? Todd talked specifically about work/life balance. He argued that constantly seeking to balance both only ends up in a “tug-of-war of your time and energy”. He has a point — striving to achieve balance can be exhausting in itself, and where does it actually get us?

When I started practising in the 1990s, the word balance wasn’t even in our language with regards to our health and how we lived life. In fact, everyone was living wildly out of balance, unknown to them.

But then some time around the millennium we became a bit more sensitive, more open and touchy-feely. Where we were once all shoulder pads and living at a hundred miles an hour, drinking Chardonnay after work every night and eating whatever we fancied, suddenly the wheels started to fall off.

**THE UNRAVELLING**

There is a theory in Chinese medicine that there is opportunity within crisis. One of the rules of energy is that sometimes things fall apart before they become whole. In this unravelling, huge energetic imbalances cannot be contained anymore. So the concept of balance was very important after the excesses of the 1980s and 1990s, simply because we had been so out of balance for so long.

There is still a lot of work to be done to achieve a balanced world, and that, my friends, is where alignment comes in. Alignment is that feeling you get when you aren’t pushing against the grain anymore, and instead you take the path of least resistance. You focus on your goal, you envisage it, and then you wait for the signs and the opportunities to come to you. People turn up at the right time, seemingly without effort, and stuff just works out. Synchronicity, the best friend of alignment, now features heavily in your life. Where once you were amazed by synchronicity, now you take it in your stride, quietly smiling to yourself with that inner knowing that this is all part of the plan.

This is not magic, nor is it make-believe. This is about having clarity and focus in your life. It’s about saying yes to the things that serve your purpose and not getting distracted by the things that don’t. Not everyone can choose a job that aligns directly with their purpose. But you can begin to make subtle and significant shifts in that direction. You can stop distracting yourself with unhelpful behaviour, such as unhealthy habits or substances you use to self-medicate with. This only serves to move you further away from your purpose.

Alignment is about identifying what you want more of in your life and nourishing that. Think about how you can spend more time doing what feeds your soul. Which activities or pastimes make you feel energised? Try to find ways to build these into your work and make them the focus of your life. Rather than sidelines your passion, live your passion. The things that give us energy are the expressions of our soul and our authentic selves. When you are clear about your life mission and give it your attention, it will grow and flourish. Balance happens without effort when you are in alignment, because with alignment everything flows. This doesn’t mean you will have a life without challenges, but it does mean that you will have a life of your own creation; an extension of your heart. What are you waiting for? The time is now!

Emma is an integrated women’s health expert, registered acupuncturist and author emmacannon.co.uk
There was a time when a cut or a scraped knee was part and parcel of an active childhood, and we bounced back unscathed from the bumps and bruises we acquired without a second thought. As adults, healing a bone, a wound, or indeed recovering from an illness seems to take us so much longer, however, there is plenty you can do to give your recovery a helping hand.

**GET MORE SLEEP**
There is no denying the intense healing power of proper sleep – one study found that sleep deprivation can actually slow down wound healing. Published in the *International Journal of Neuroscience*, the research found that those who didn’t get enough shut-eye had fewer capillary vessels and fibroblasts, which are essential for recovery.

When you’re asleep, hormones that encourage tissue growth are released, which can accelerate injury healing or sore muscles from intensive exercise. You also generate white blood cells while snoozing, meaning your defences against viruses and bacteria are raised. One study found that getting just one hour’s less sleep a night made participants three times more likely to come down with a cold!

**EAT WELL**
“A healthy and balanced diet, with plenty of vegetables, wholegrains, healthy fats and protein can also support your body in healing more effectively,” says Uxshely Chotai (thefoodpsychologyclinic.co.uk).

“It needs great nutrition to be able to function optimally.”

Aim to eat plenty of protein from meat, eggs, nuts, seeds, lentil and beans. Consuming some with each meal will give the body what it needs to rebuild muscle and bone. Vitamin C is vital for the body’s collagen production, which is what connective tissue, ligaments and tendons are made from. Fresh fruit and vegetables are your friends here. Packing in plenty of kale, spinach and chia seeds will ensure you get enough calcium which helps maintain strong bones. We need vitamin D to absorb calcium properly and because even the healthiest diet is unlikely to provide us with enough of the stuff, the best way to produce it is by safe exposure to sunlight each day. It’s advisable to take a supplement, especially during autumn and winter.

**MEDITATE MORE**
“Managing stress levels through techniques such as mindfulness, hypnotherapy and meditation is a great way to accelerate healing,” says Uxshely. “These relaxation techniques have been shown to have a positive impact on our physical health and, in particular, our body’s immune system, which plays a vital role in healing.”

“There are several studies that demonstrate that meditation may be able to improve immune function by increasing antibody count or delaying the progress of viral infections. For example, one study demonstrated that 48 people – after being given weekly meditation training for eight weeks – had significantly higher levels of..."
Relaxation techniques have been show to have a positive impact on our physical health and, in particular, our body’s immune system.

antibodies than the control group, as well as having higher levels than they started off with themselves. Another piece of research conducted by the University of California revealed that HIV-positive patients who practise mindful meditation slowed down the reduction of the immune cells that are usually destroyed as a result of the condition.

**TRY HYPNOTHERAPY**

“There are plenty of clinical studies out there suggesting patients who receive hypnotherapy prior to surgery experience a wide range of benefits,” says clinical hypnotherapist Gail Marra (gailmarrahypnotherapy.com). “I work with clients preparing for all kinds of surgical interventions, from minor procedures such as a mole or tooth removal, to people recovering from accidents, injuries or traumas, or patients undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy.

It’s thought hypnosis has a positive effect on the body’s natural healing process because it relaxes us. When your heart rate slows down, and there is no adrenaline coursing through your veins, your body is in an ideal state to start healing. “Being in a state of deep relaxation and focused attention produces chemicals which facilitate blood flow, reduce pain and strengthen the immune system,” says Gail.

**TRY GAIL’S VISUALISATION EXERCISE**

1. Close your eyes and imagine for a brief moment one of your lesser fears. There’s no need to visualise a catastrophe or relive a trauma, but perhaps imagine yourself balancing precariously on the edge of something, or holding an insect in your hand, or something that conjures up a moderate fear response. Keeping your eyes closed, turn the feelings up a notch until you notice that familiar butterfly effect. You might feel your stomach flip, goose bumps on your skin, or a shortness of breath. Even though you are consciously aware that this is an imagined event, your brain is firing out stress hormones as if it were actually happening.

2. Now try the opposite. Close your eyes, think about the last time you laughed out loud – real head-back, mouth-open belly laughing. Take a moment and really be present in that memory. What happened that made you laugh? Who was there? Where were you? Turn the volume up on the experience, make it bigger and brighter, see what you saw, hear what your heard, be there! Laugh out loud.

3. Now feel the difference. Notice that the event that made you laugh so hard isn’t happening right now, yet the feelings come back up. Your wonderful brain fired out dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin and endorphins and it’s impossible to be fearful and calm at the same time.

4. If there is any area in your body that needs some attention and healing, close your eyes and focus on that area for a moment. Imagine sending waves of warmth or coolness (whichever feels right for you) to the area now. Give those waves a colour – whatever colour comes up, trust it. Now put energy into that colourful wave. How do you visualise that energy? Does it have substance? Is it visible or invisible? See it healing. Know that it’s healing. Remind yourself of the body’s natural ability to heal itself. Try to avoid thoughts of wishing or hoping, keep your thoughts focused on knowing.

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WAYS TO GET MORE SLEEP

Struggling to get enough shut-eye? These dietary changes could be just the ticket, says nutritionist Ian Marber

Here are five nutritional factors which could help you achieve the optimum amount of sleep you need...

VITAMIN D
At present, the precise mechanism by which vitamin D affects sleep is uncertain, but many studies have reached the same conclusion: namely, that low levels of this vitamin are associated with both insomnia and poor-quality sleep.

Vitamin D is produced by the skin during exposure to sunlight, and it is also found in various foods, such as oily fish, portobello mushrooms and egg yolks. However, this is one of those rare instances when the best way to ensure a consistent supply is to take a supplement.

MAGNESIUM
Magnesium promotes healthy sleep because, in addition to encouraging muscle relaxation, it is a key component of a neurotransmitter that carries messages from the brain to the central nervous system. This neurotransmitter is gamma-aminobutyric acid, but it is usually known as GABA. Foods that are particularly rich in magnesium include pumpkin seeds, spinach, oats, brown rice, quinoa, nuts and lentils, but any green vegetable will do, as they all get their distinctive colour from chlorophyll, which itself is a good source of magnesium.

I sometimes advise clients to take a magnesium supplement if they are struggling to sleep and most people find that a dose of 200mg is helpful.

VITAMIN B1
Otherwise known as thiamine, vitamin B1 is also involved in the production of GABA so, predictably, any deficiency of the vitamin can result in low levels of the neurotransmitter. It’s found in wholegrains, lentils, black beans and barley, but sunflower seeds are the best source.

MELATONIN
The hormone melatonin, is directly related to sleep. Production automatically increases as daylight starts to fade, inducing sleepiness, and decreases at dawn, causing us to wake. However, our capacity to manufacture it starts to decline as we age.

Staring at a laptop, tablet or smartphone late in the evening keeps levels of melatonin unnaturally low at the very moment they should be on the rise.

Melatonin occurs naturally in walnuts, mustard seeds, ginger, peanuts and oats, although tart cherries are possibly the best dietary source, especially when juiced.

VALERIAN AND HOPS
Scientific studies into valerian’s effectiveness have been inconclusive, but from personal experience, it seems that valerian tea might at least speed up the process of falling asleep. I leave a teabag to steep in hot water for 10 minutes, then drink the tea half an hour before getting into bed. It works for me, and a number of clients have reported positive results too, but these experiments should not be considered robust scientific research.

CARBOHYDRATES
Eating a carb-rich meal, a couple of hours before going to bed may encourage sleep. They contain little amino acids and boost the production of the main sleep hormone.
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Sunrise YOGA

Put a spring in your step now the seasons have changed with some morning vinyasa, says Sue Fuller

Now the days are warmer and the mornings are brighter it’s the perfect time of year to increase your vitality and add an extra spring to your step by starting the day with some yoga. A yoga vinyasa is ideal to perform upon waking and it will set you up perfectly for your day ahead.

Vinyasas are a series of flowing yoga postures; each posture is linked to the next by a smooth, steady flow of breath. Moving in such a way helps to wake up the body and mind and shift any stagnant energy that has accumulated whilst lying still overnight.

Yoga vinyasas are simple to perform and can easily be squeezed into even the busiest of days. Your body and mind will benefit immensely from even just 15 minutes a day of vinyasa-style yoga. All you will require is a mat, loose comfortable clothing and your alarm clock!

TRIKONASANA
THE TRIANGLE
From warrior 2, when you next inhale, shift your rib cage to the right (front) and straighten your right knee. Exhale and lower your right hand to your right shin, inhale and extend your left arm straight up, then look to your left hand. Remain in this posture for at least five complete breaths.

The triangle encourages energy to flow freely around the body – it helps to move stagnant energy and increases vitality.

SUNRISE YOGA
SEQUENCE
Start on your hands and knees. Root down with your hands and simply circle right to left with your hips, breathing deeply and moving through the whole spine. The secret to hip circles is to keep the spine fluid and the breath long and deep. Breathe deeply into the spaciousness you’re creating in your heart area, your shoulders, your side ribs and your hips. Breathing slowly, long and deeply will help you to feel braver and more connected. Then repeat by circling left to right.
ANJANEYASANA
LONG LUNGE
From the triangle, breathe slowly, lower the
left arm and rotate your torso, so that you are
folding over the front leg. Slowly lift your left
heel and slide the left leg back, so that you are
in a long lunge. Again, hold for at least five
complete breaths.
This posture will release tension in the hips
and legs.
Breathe slowly and then on an
exhalation, return to downward facing dog.
Take a moment to breathe slowly, before
repeating the same series on the other side.
ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA
DOWNWARD FACING DOG

When you are ready, move into downward facing dog by coming onto all fours and curling under your toes, then slowly unfold your legs and push the floor away with your hands, so that you move your hips up and back.

This posture is great for strengthening the upper body and easing out any tension in the backs of the legs. If you experience pulling behind the knees soften the knees a little and work to relax in the pose.
VIRABHADRASANA 1
WARRIOR 1
As you breathe slowly in downward facing dog, start to prepare to move into Warrior 1, turn your left heel in towards the centre line of your yoga mat, on your next inhalation step your right foot forward, as you do so, lift your arms up to create a prayer position above your head. Breathe slowly in, and out, through your nose for five complete breaths.
This posture is a great energising move – it provides a stretch for the whole front side of your body.
VIRABHADRASANA 2
WARRIOR 2

As you next exhale, draw the left side of your torso back 90 degrees, as you open and lower your arms so that they are level with your shoulders. Now turn your head to look forwards. Hold for five complete breaths.

This posture will strengthen the legs, it also helps to increase inner strength, plus it provides the perfect transition between warrior 1 and the triangle.
WHY YOU SHOULD BE GOOD TO YOUR GUT

Jo Wood explains the benefits of probiotics and prebiotics

Even though they may sound similar, probiotics and prebiotics each have a different role to play in terms of our health. Probiotics are beneficial bacteria, while prebiotics are food for bacteria. The food you eat plays a huge part in the balancing of good and bad bacteria in the gut. For example, a high-sugar or high-fat diet influences the gut bacteria negatively, allowing harmful species to overgrow. If you regularly feed the wrong bacteria into your gut, then they are going to be able to grow faster and colonise more easily without the help of good bacteria to prevent this. Studies show that harmful bacteria could cause you to absorb more calories than people with healthy gut bacteria.

Additionally, antibiotics aren’t great for your gut, as there’s evidence to suggest that they can strip away good bacteria, especially when taken during childhood and adolescence. As so many antibiotics are used worldwide, research is now focusing on whether there is a relationship between antibiotic overuse and health problems in later life.

Gut bacteria have many different functions in our body, so eating a balance of prebiotics and probiotics ensures we have the right levels of bacteria to stay healthy.

Probiotics are live bacteria found in certain foods or food supplements, and can provide huge health benefits, while prebiotics come from certain carbs that we can’t digest, but the beneficial bacteria in your gut can eat this fibre.

You can buy prebiotics, but so many foods contain them, and I always feel it’s better to come from nature rather than a processed source. Prebiotics are often in the form of fibre found in vegetables, fruits and legumes; particularly beans, peppers, bananas, berries, Jerusalem artichokes, parsnips, asparagus, dandelion greens, garlic, leeks and onions.

Good-quality yoghurt, with live cultures is a great addition to your diet – I love coconut kefir myself. Here’s why I love prebiotics and probiotics:

1. They can help with weight loss. Studies have shown that taking prebiotics could help women lose weight and keep it off. The bacteria strengthens the intestinal wall making it harder to absorb fat molecules.

2. They can fight colds, flu and coughs. Research focusing on athletes from New Zealand found that 40 percent of those taking probiotics for a month had fewer colds and stomach bugs than those on a placebo.

3. They can lower blood pressure. High blood pressure is one of the main risks for heart disease. A healthy diet and exercise can help lower blood pressure, and now there is evidence that probiotics can help, too.

4. Our emotions can affect our digestion, and scientists have suggested that the gut can influence our brain, and a happy gut makes a happy person. So, good food, equals a good mood!

“Gut bacteria have many different functions in our body, so eating a balance of prebiotics and probiotics ensures we have the right levels of bacteria to stay healthy”
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Breeze through the menopause

Make sure this powerful transitional stage is a smooth ride with these smart holistic tips and techniques

Going through the menopause can be tricky to say the least, especially when your hormones are raging all over the shop, but seeing it as part of your journey as a woman can help you to embrace those challenges.

“Menopause is a natural stage, moving a woman away from the child-bearing years into a stage that, according to ayurvedic and traditional Chinese medicine perspectives, is characterised by ‘soul development’,” explains top nutritionist Henrietta Norton (wildnutrition.com).

However, symptoms such as night sweats, insomnia, anxiety and palpitations are no joke, and they can be exacerbated if you are stressed or run-down. For this reason alone, it’s essential to support your body from the very start of this powerful process.

“It’s vitally important to remember that this is not a disease, it is a natural progression to a different stage of a woman’s life cycle and that it’s a mind, body and spirit experience,” says Henrietta. “Supporting your nutritional and emotional wellbeing during this process can provide the perfect environment for this ebb and flow to be experienced as a positive transition.” Here are just a few ways to embrace your journey:

EAT MORE PLANTS

“Include a range of pulses and beans in your diet, as well as a good variety of vegetables, both of which are sources of natural phytooestrogens (plant compounds that can mimic oestrogen),” says Shona Wilkinson, nutritionist for Nature’s Best (naturesbest.co.uk). “Soya is a well-known source of phytooestrogens, but a balanced intake of soya from whole bean sources, combined with other beans and pulses, is a better approach than focusing solely on soya. Cruciferous (cabbage-family) vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts and kale can also support balanced hormone levels.”
TRY ESSENTIAL OILS
A DIY aromatherapy massage is a great way to bring about hormonal balance, says Jo Kellet, of Tisserand Aromatherapy (tisserand.com). Just add three drops of geranium, three drops of clary sage, and four drops of cypress to 20ml of blending oil and massage over your abdomen and lower back every other night. “Geranium is a tonic for the adrenal cortex, which regulates the release of hormones, helping to maintain hormonal balance while, clary sage helps balance oestrogen levels and cypress regulates testosterone,” says Jo.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN
Going through the menopause can give your confidence a bit of a bashing, but research shows that visualisation and other mind techniques can help. “The human mind is a powerful tool that can bring about real chemical and physical changes in the brain and the body,” says cognitive hypnotherapist and menopause coach Pat Duckworth (patduckworth.com).

She recommends the following exercise:
1 Stand in front of the mirror. Close your eyes. Think of someone who loves you and whose opinion you trust and respect. Imagine them standing next to you.
2 Imagine stepping into the body of that person, so that you can see through their eyes. Open your eyes, looking at your reflection through the eyes of the person who loves you. Take what they see, all the details about you that they love and appreciate. Feel the love and good feelings they have as they look at you. Hear what they would say to you.
3 Now step back into your own body, looking through your own eyes, enjoying knowing that you are loved for who you are. Send yourself love and approval.

BANISH STRESS
Stress can have a massive effect on your experience so set aside regular time to do what makes you feel good about yourself. Try regular exercise such as running, swimming or brisk walking or mind-body practices such as yoga, mindfulness and meditation. Most importantly, don’t feel bad about spending time on yourself – a little bit of me-time is the best medicine out there!

DON’T BE SHY
Some symptoms of menopause can be embarrassing or awkward to discuss, but can be alleviated with natural remedies. For example, many women experience vaginal dryness, which can result in daily soreness and itching, to not mention problems with intercourse. Femmesse moisturisers are designed to give three-day’s worth of relief with each application – try the 33g tube (£9.99), which comes with a reusable applicator and contains one month’s supply of paraben and hormone-free lubrication (femmesse.co.uk). The Femmesse Moisturiser 6s contains six single use applicators for two week’s supply, and is a great option for travelling.

APPLY A CREAM
Natural progesterone cream can work wonders with menopausal symptoms, helping to improve skin appearance, reverse osteoporosis, reduce mood swings and improve sleep. Remember though, this should only be used under medical supervision so always check with your doctor first.

GET ENOUGH SLEEP
Decent shut-eye is crucial, according to women’s health expert Dr Dawn Harper. “As we reach the menopause our metabolic rate can slow. A lack of sleep doesn’t help, as it reduces levels of the ‘hunger hormone’ ghrelin so long-term sleep deprivation can mean you start to pile on the pounds.” The next time you feel like having a lie-in, do just that – and remind yourself that it’s purely for medicinal purposes!

CUT OUT CHEMICALS
Remember that environmental oestrogens that may act as harmful hormone disruptors. To minimise these, don’t cook or heat foods in plastic – use glass or crockery instead. Use pots or frying pans made of steel or non-toxic cookware. Cut back on chemical-based cosmetics and household cleaning products.

YOUR MENOPAUSE DIET
Supporting your body with a healthy, nutrient-dense diet is essential. You should aim to be eating most of the following foods (organic if possible) on a daily basis:
- Eggs
- Green leafy and root vegetables such as broccoli, spinach, kale and sweet potato a day
- Colourful fruits such as apples, pears, plums and berries
- Oily fish such as wild Alaskan salmon and sardines (but not farmed salmon or tuna, which contain too much mercury)
- Whole grains such as organic oats, brown rice, whole rye, buckwheat and quinoa
- Beans and pulses such as black soya, aduki, kidney, pinto, navy, yellow soya, black eye peas, chickpeas or lentils
- Raw garlic
- Fermented foods such as miso, shoyu, umeboshi vinegar, brown rice vinegar, sauerkraut, gherkins, natto, tempeh and umeboshi plums
- Salad or vegetable-based soup
- Milk and/or organic natural live yoghurt
- Nuts such as walnuts, almonds and Brazil
- Ground seeds, such as sunflower, flax, sesame and hemp
- Cold-pressed flax, hempseed, coconut or extra-virgin olive oil

Pill popping
There are loads of natural supplements that can help to combat menopausal symptoms. Here are just a few:
- **Black cohosh** reduces symptoms such as night sweats
- **Red clover** is rich in plant oestrogens
- **Vitamin D** and **calcium** prevent bone density loss
- **Wild yam** contains natural compounds similar to oestrogen and progesterone
- **St. John’s wort** balances mood swings
- **DHEA** supplements help to boost low libido
- **Dong quai** is a Chinese herb used to combat hot flushes
- **Sage** is a great remedy for hot flushes. We love A Vogel’s Menoforce (£13.99 from Holland & Barrett, Boots and independent health stores)
Hot flushes? Night sweats?

“I really suffered with hot flushes and these tablets have helped reduce the severity”

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For more information, visit: Rotana.com

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★ A five-night stay for two adults at Salalah Rotana Resort in Oman.
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★ Breakfast and dinner at Saffron restaurant
★ Private airport transfers from Salalah Airport, Oman

Terms & conditions

The prize has a 12 month redemption period from the day that the winner is notified. Travel is not permitted over Eid, any public holidays in the UK and UAE, and during Christmas and Easter holidays. The prize and its components are subject to availability. The winner must be 18 or over. The prize is valid till 23/05/20. Competition closes 23/05/19.

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Boost your healthy bacteria with Pro-Cognitiv supplements. Each capsule provides a guaranteed 10 billion bacteria, across four extensively-researched strains. It’s also packed with carefully-chosen nutrients, including magnesium to reduce tiredness and fatigue, and B3 which is sure to boost your mental performance! 60 capsules for £19.95, naturesaid.co.uk

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HERBAL HELPER
These vegan-friendly capsules provide natural support against candida and help to alleviate the symptoms of thrush. The Kolorex capsules combine the traditional New Zealand herb Horopito, a natural anti-fungal, with Aniseed to help support your gut health too. Get yours at rejuva.co.uk for £23.

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#WARPAINT4LIFE
Blueberries are delicious when made into a jam and spread on toast, and they’re pretty darn scrumptious when baked into a pie. New research has found that eating 200g of blueberries per day is an easy way to improve your blood vessel function, and to lower your blood pressure. The positive effects on blood vessel function were seen as quickly as two hours after consuming a blueberry drink, and lasted for one month. Over the course of a month, blood pressure was reduced by 5mmHg, which is similar to what’s seen from a patient using blood pressure-lowering medication. Sounds berry good to us!
# The superfood HOTLIST

Fill your basket with the latest healthy eating must-haves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPER CHOC</th>
<th>MISO HUNGRY</th>
<th>HANDBAG SNACK</th>
<th>SAY YES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superfruit red dates are coated with dark chocolate. Abakus Foods Chocolate Coated Red Dates, £1.50, Planet Organic</td>
<td>Use as a marinade, a pasta sauce or even in a toastie! Yugo Miso Chipotle Stir-in Paste, £5.99, boroughbox.com</td>
<td>A sweet treat that’s full of protein and lower in sugar. Irresistable! Nibble Brownie Bites, £1.49, Ocado.com</td>
<td>Vegan and lactose-free, high in fibre, and containing no added sugar. Nestlé YES! Fruit and Vegetable Bars, £1.99, Sainsbury’s</td>
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<tr>
<th>GÜD PUDS</th>
<th>CBD BENEFITS</th>
<th>THE DARK SIDE</th>
<th>MORNING GLORY</th>
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<tr>
<th>MILK IT</th>
<th>ICE ICE BABY</th>
<th>HERO GRAINS</th>
<th>OATSO GOOD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High in protein, allergen-free and a source of omega 3, calcium, iron and vitamins B2, B12, D and A. Qwrkee’s Pea Mlk, £3, qwrkee.com</td>
<td>A creamy, dairy-free delight peppered with crunchy hazelnuts. Breyers Dairy-Free Chocolate &amp; Hazelnut, £4.99, Tesco</td>
<td>Loaded with nutrients, fibre and protein, this grain combination is a UK first. Gallo Rice, Wheat &amp; Buckwheat pouch, £2, Ocado.com</td>
<td>Wholegrain oats, coconut and chia make these a tasty low-sugar treat. Nain’s Coconut &amp; Chia Oat Biscuits, £1.35, Waitrose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SEAGAN Diet**

What is it? We’re glad you asked! A plant-based diet combined with the occasional serving of fish – here’s the details...

If you turned to veganism for the health benefits alone, this one small tweak to your diet may interest you. “Many of us are keen to follow a more plant-based, or even a fully vegan diet but love the idea of still eating fish,” says leading dietitian and nutrition consultant, Juliette Kellow. “The great news is, that combining the two incorporates key elements of current UK government guidelines for a healthy diet, which recommends that at least two thirds of what we eat should be based on plant foods. Meanwhile, they also suggest that we consume two portions of fish each week, one of which should be an oily fish such as mackerel, sardines or herring. This is in part because they are full of essential omega 3 fatty acids, which help the heart to work normally and maintain normal blood pressure. Enjoying a seagan diet that incorporates seafood at least twice a week, provides the missing link in purely plant-based diets, to help ensure that what you eat is nutritionally balanced.”

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**OF THE BEST NUT BUTTERS**

Whether you’re a smooth or crunchy fan, here’s the butters to go nuts for:

- **Pip & Nut Chocolate Orange Almond Butter, £3.45, sainsburys.co.uk**
  This dreamy combination of rich cacao and zesty orange, makes a sweet treat that goes well on pancakes, toast or straight from the jar!

- **Meridian Almond Butter, £3.40, tesco.com**
  Made using 100 percent almonds, this nut butter is as holy as they come. It’s low in saturated fat, with no added palm oil or artificial additives.

- **Whole Earth Smooth Peanut Butter, £2.89, wholeearthfoods.com**
  A classic choice for those who love smooth peanut butter, but don’t want any of the bad stuff. This has no added sugar or salt.

---

**Grilled Mackerel with Steamed Sweet Potato and Watercress**

- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 mackerel, filleted
- 150g fine green beans
- 50g watercress
- 1 handful skinned almonds
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 2 tbsp Good Oil or other omega oil
- Maldon sea salt and black pepper

1. Steam the sweet potatoes for 25-30 minutes and pre-heat the grill. Whilst the potatoes are cooking, season the mackerel and grill, skin-side up, for approximately 3 minutes until cooked (the flesh should come away easily from the skin).
2. Add the green beans to the steamer for the last 5 minutes. Remove the sweet potatoes from the steamer and mash with a fork. Chop the watercress, almonds and garlic and mix with the potatoes.
3. Stir the oil in and season. Serve the mackerel on top of the mashed sweet potato with the fine green beans on the side and season with the salt and pepper.

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**UNDER THE GRILL Cravings**

We reveal the reasons why pesky cravings maybe appearing

**Why am I craving sugary foods?**

Wanting sweet foods could indicate a nutrient deficiency, such as lack of zinc, magnesium or chromium. Or, you could be needing more carbohydrates. Opt for a piece of fruit instead when these feelings hit.

**Why am I craving salty foods?**

Quite simply, your body wants sodium, the essential electrolyte that aids basic bodily functions. You could also be dehydrated. Remedy this by cooking with Himalayan salt, rehydrating, or snacking on olives: a natural source of salt.

**Why am I craving carbs?**

Some experts put this down to your body seeking serotonin, the feel-good chemical. It may also be the result of needing more sleep. Studies show people who fail to get enough restful kip tend to crave starchy carbs. Instead, feed this feeling with the wholegrain, high-fibre equivalents.
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To take part you need to pay a registration fee of £149 and raise minimum sponsorship funds of £1,850.
Registered Charity Nos: Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust: 1131542/SC041236, Ovarian Cancer Action: 1109143/SC043478, Breast Cancer Care: 1019658/SC038104. From 1 April 2019 Breast Cancer Care will merge with Breast Cancer Now after that date all donations will go to Breast Cancer Care and Breast Cancer Now a charity registered in England and Wales (No. 1160558) and Scotland (SC045584). Women V Cancer is established under Giving Works. Registered Charity No. 1078770.
VEGAN feast!

Impress your plant-based pals with these delicious dishes from Rebecca Seal, Chantal Symons and John Vincent

PIZZA

MAKES 4 PIZZAS

FOR THE DOUGH

- 250ml lukewarm water
- 2 tsp dried active yeast
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra
- 375g strong white bread flour
- 100g ‘oo’ flour
- 1 tsp fine salt
- Polenta or flour, for dusting

FOR THE MARINARA PIZZA SAUCE

- 200ml tomato passata
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Freshly ground black pepper

SUGGESTED TOPPINGS

- Artichoke hearts in oil
- Capers
- Olives
- Cooked and squeezed out spinach
- Shredded uncooked kale
- Walnuts, crumbled
- Cubes of roasted squash
- Roasted peppers
- Roasted onions
- Roasted mushrooms

1 To make the bases, mix together the water, yeast and sugar. Allow to stand for 10 minutes, or until a frothy head has formed. Add the olive oil, then mix with the flours and salt in a large bowl. Using your hands, work the mixture until it forms a rough dough, then continue to work until smooth. Turn out on to a clean work surface dusted with flour and knead for 5 minutes, until it feel elastic.

2 Place the dough in a clean, lightly oiled bowl and cover with clingfilm. Allow to rise in a warm place for at least 4 hours, preferably 6, until doubled in size. Knock back the dough, using your knuckles, then divide into 4 equal-sized balls. Allow to prove for another 20 minutes.

3 Meanwhile, make the marinara sauce. Mix all the ingredients together and set aside until ready to use.

4 Heat the oven to its highest setting. Place a pizza stone or two in it to heat up, or use a couple of up-turned baking sheets.

5 When the oven is hot, roll or stretch out a dough ball to form a circle about 20-25cm in diameter. Repeat with a second dough ball if you have 2 stones or sheets. Remove the hot sheets or stones from the oven and dust them with flour or polenta. Slide the prepared bases on to the sheets and working quickly, use a large spoon to smear a thin layer of the sauce over the dough, leaving at least 2cm for the crust all the way around.

6 Quickly add your chosen toppings, then bake for 5-10 minutes, checking every minute or two after 5 minutes have elapsed – how long they need will depend on how hot your oven is.

7 Add any toppings that don’t need to be cooked (like rocket or pesto). Repeat with the remaining bases. Serve immediately.
FREEKEH SALAD WITH ALMOND FETA

Freekeh is a delicious toasted green wheat, with a slightly smoky and nutty flavour, which you can buy ready-cooked or dried. Find it in the supermarket as well as specialist food stores. If you can’t find freekeh, use bulgur wheat, farro, wheat berries, wild rice, quinoa or giant couscous instead. Choose parsley that has soft rather than tough leaves.

Choose a coconut yoghurt that has live cultures and a mild-flavoured olive oil for this recipe. If you cut down on the salt, the feta can also be used in place of cream cheese in other dishes.

SERVES 2

FOR THE SALAD
- 250g ready-cooked freekeh
- 1 x 400g tin of chickpeas, drained
- 12 pink, red or purple summer radishes, cut into wedges
- 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- ½ cucumber, deseeded and diced
- A large handful of fresh parsley, leaves chopped
- Almond feta (see below)
- A large pinch of sumac or za’atar

FOR THE DRESSING
- 2 tbsp tahini
- 2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- A pinch of salt

FOR THE ALMOND FETA
- 75g ground almonds
- 2 tbsp unsweetened coconut yoghurt
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- A pinch of garlic powder
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp vegan cider vinegar
- 3 tbsp water
- 2 tsp finely chopped fresh chives, parsley or dill, or a mixture

1 Whisk all the dressing ingredients together, then add water in teaspoonfuls to thin it to a creamy consistency.
2 Place all the salad ingredients except the feta and sumac or za’atar in a large bowl. Drizzle over 1 tablespoon of the dressing and toss together.
3 Divide the salad between serving plates, or arrange on a large platter. Drizzle over the rest of the dressing, then crumble the feta into chunks over the salad. Scatter over the sumac or za’atar.

ALMOND FETA
1 Place all the ingredients except the herbs in a bowl, then mix and mash together to form a crumbly mixture. Add the herbs, if using, and mash them into the ‘cheese’.
2 If the ‘cheese’ seems at all wet, place it in a piece of muslin (or even a clean tea towel) and squeeze out the excess liquid. Taste to check the salt levels - it should be pretty salty.
3 Use immediately or store in the fridge for up to 3 days, but bring up to room temperature before serving.

TOP TIP
To cook freekeh from scratch, allow about 100g cracked or broken freekeh and cook in a 1:3 ratio of freekeh to salted water or stock, for about 15 minutes, or according to the instructions.
CHOCOLATE CARAMEL TART

If ready-made pastry doesn’t say it’s made with ‘all-butter’ then chances are it is vegan, making posh puddings like this very achievable (but do check the label). Ready-made shortcrust pastry usually comes in 375g blocks or ready-rolled sheets. You will only need about half this much, but you can freeze the leftovers. Most dark chocolate is dairy-free, but, again, check the label and watch out for soya, too, if necessary.

SERVES 8

FOR THE CHOCOLATE TART
• 375g ready-made vegan shortcrust pastry
• 125ml unsweetened plant milk, plus 1 tbsp, plus extra if needed
• ½ tsp neutral cooking oil, such as sunflower
• ½ tsp golden syrup or agave nectar
• 400g dairy-free dark chocolate (72% cocoa solids), broken into pieces
• 2 tsp vanilla extract
• 2 tbsp caster sugar
• 150ml vegan caramel, date caramel or salt caramel sauce
• 1 tsp unsweetened cocoa powder
• 50g toasted flaked almonds

1 Heat the oven to 200°C.
2 Roll out the pastry to about 2mm thick and so it fits a 25cm loose-bottomed tart tin. Line the tin with the pastry, trimming the overhanging edges to form a neat edge. Chill for 15 minutes in the freezer.
3 Cut out a large sheet of baking parchment to fit the tart tin, then gently press it into the corners, pleating the paper so it sticks upwards over the edges. Fill with ceramic baking beans (or dried beans that you don’t intend to cook) and bake for 15 minutes.
4 Meanwhile, mix together the 1 tbsp milk, the oil and golden syrup or agave nectar.
5 Remove the pastry case from the oven and carefully lift out the paper and beans. Reduce the oven to 170°C. Prick the base all over with a fork, then lightly brush all over with the milk wash. Bake for a further 15-20 minutes, spinning the tart tin around halfway through for even baking, until the case is golden brown and quite crisp. Set aside while you make the filling.
6 Melt the chocolate, milk, vanilla and sugar in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of just simmering water until the chocolate is melted and the mixture thickens (if it becomes fudgy or grainy, add a couple more tablespoons milk and beat until smooth and silky). Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
7 Spread the caramel sauce smoothly over the bottom of the cooled pastry case. Spoon over the warm chocolate ganache, disturbing the caramel layer as little as possible. Use a spatula to gently spread the filling out. Chill for 2 hours until set. (Don’t worry if it looks like it has separated slightly.)
8 When ready to serve, transfer from the tin to a serving plate, dust with the cocoa and sprinkle the almonds on top.

BOOKshelf
LEON Fast Vegan by Rebecca Seal, Chantal Symons and John Vincent is published by Conran Octopus, £25. Photography by Steven Joyce.
EAT TO BEAT DIABETES

Choosing blood-sugar balancing foods may help control the condition, says nutritionist Louise Pyne

Type 2 diabetes is one of the most preventable diseases but, sadly, it is also one of the most prevalent. Latest figures show that 3.8 million people in the UK are currently living with type 2 diabetes and, worryingly, those numbers are on the rise.

Unlike type 1 diabetes, (a condition where the body is unable to produce any insulin), type 2 occurs when the pancreas doesn’t produce the correct amount of the hormone insulin to regulate glucose and break it down to produce energy. As a consequence, blood-sugar levels can be too high. Some of the tell-tale symptoms of type 2 diabetes include extreme thirst and dry mouth, fatigue and increased hunger – if you are experiencing any of these symptoms, it is advisable to consult your GP.

Among other factors, the risk of type 2 diabetes is increased by being overweight – and excess belly fat is a key marker for the disease. The good news is, that changing your diet and making a few simple lifestyle tweaks can really help to slash the odds or manage the condition, if you are already a sufferer.

It’s never too late to get started and it’s possible to raise your nutrition game with some diabetes-friendly foods you may already have in your kitchen cupboards.

1 NUTS

These are a great go-to snack when you are feeling peckish. Better still – according to a study published in the journal *BMC Medicine* – nibbling on 28g of nuts every day could help you lower the risk of type 2 diabetes by almost 40 percent. Pretty impressive, right? Nuts’ high omega 3 and monounsaturated fat content are known to have an anti-inflammatory effect, plus they can keep you satiated. To reap the benefits, choose unsalted, mixed, raw nuts, and eat them with a complex carbohydrate source, such as a piece of fruit to help fill you up for longer.

2 OATS

As the first meal of the day, it’s important to keep breakfast as healthy as possible in order to give you the energy that you need to make it through the day. Oats are one of the best foods that you can eat first thing. They are rich in slow-release carbohydrates, which help to avoid a rollercoaster of blood sugar highs and lows. Throw in some sunflower or pumpkin seeds and mixed berries in for an extra dose of nutrition.

3 CINNAMON

This warming spice has lots of benefits; it promotes anti-inflammation and may help to lower cholesterol.

In terms of its benefits in safeguarding against diabetes, cinnamon is thought to help regulate blood glucose levels. One study that involved eating cinnamon found that cinnamon lowered the fasting serum glucose (a marker for diabetes), and delayed gastric emptying – this result could mean that this humble spice could keep you fuller for longer, so that you’re less likely to experience food cravings.

4 APPLE

The saying goes, ‘an apple a day keeps the doctor away’ – and due to its low-sugar and high-fibre content, snacking on them may help to keep blood glucose levels even. Fibre helps to slow down the digestion of carbohydrates, preventing blood glucose levels from spiking erratically – just make sure that you eat the skin, as this is where most of the fibre is contained. Apples also contain a smattering of
vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, making them easy to eat on-the-go.

5 STRAWBERRIES
This summer fruit is teeming with health-boosting benefits. Strawberries are low in sugar, yet taste very sweet, meaning they are the ultimate go-to choice if you crave sugar, yet want to keep your intake down.

6 CHICKPEAS
These little morsels of goodness are a great veggie diet staple, as they’re high in fibre and help to control blood glucose levels. They’re incredibly versatile, so can be blended into hummus within seconds, with a splash of lemon juice, dollop of tahini and slug of olive oil, or tossed in spices and combined with spinach to make a satisfying – and diabetes-friendly – vegetarian curry.

7 GREEK YOGHURT
What’s not to love about Greek yoghurt? It’s high in gut-friendly probiotics and rich in protein. It’s also the perfect snack, if you’re looking to keep blood-sugar levels even, and there is research to show that protein-rich foods can help to keep your weight in check.

3 LOW-SUGAR SNACKS

1 SQUIRREL SISTERS NATURAL RAW BITES, £2.99, OCADO
Vegan-, gluten- and dairy-free with no added sugars, these little bites of goodness are naturally sweetened with whole dates and rich in fibre, vitamins and minerals.

2 HEALTH LABS MIXED BERRY GUT HEALTH BALLS, £2, WAITROSE
Designed to beat hunger in between meals, these balls are packed with antioxidants, too.

3 ODYSEA ORGANIC GREEK YOGHURT, £1.95
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Kicking CANDIDA

Tackle a troublesome yeast overgrowth naturally, with Henrietta Norton’s nutritional approach

Trillions of healthy bacteria live in our digestive tract, making up what is called microflora. These bacteria play a supportive role in your intestines, helping to make vitamins, release natural antibiotics, and break down toxins. Candida, a yeast-like fungus, is also commonly present in your intestines, and its growth is usually limited by your immune system and by your microflora. In other words, a healthy balance is maintained.

However, if candida is allowed to grow, due to a weakened immune system or a disease such as diabetes, the harmonious balance bacteria in your gut is upset, resulting in intestinal candidiasis. Not only can this imbalance cause problems such as vaginal infections, but candida also releases byproducts which are subsequently absorbed into the bloodstream, exposing the whole body to a variety of symptoms as the immune system tries to fight it off. Common symptoms include fatigue, bloating, gas, diarrhea and/or constipation, recurring bladder infections, menstrual irregularities, allergies, chemical sensitivities, and depression.

HOW IS CANDIDIASIS TREATED?
A comprehensive approach is necessary to reduce the overgrowth of candida organisms. The risk factors listed above must be reduced as much as possible, in conjunction with supporting immune, digestive, and liver function. Since yeast feeds on carbohydrates, a food plan must be followed that starves yeast of its main fuel — simple sugars. Additional supplementary support, in the form of healthy bacteria (such as probiotics), is also added to compete with candida in the intestines, resulting in a re-balancing of the microflora. Sometimes anti-yeast supplements or prescriptions are used to kill the yeast.

Following a wholesome diet, combined with other measures to promote intestinal health and boost the immune system — such as taking supplements, including caprylic acid or oregano — is a positive step towards addressing candida overgrowth.

HOW WILL I FEEL WHEN I START THIS TYPE OF PROGRAMME?
Many of the symptoms associated with candidiasis are associated with the absorption of yeast breakdown products. It’s common to experience a short-term reaction to this, which can take the form of headaches, abdominal bloating, muscle and joint aches, or fatigue. It’s also not unusual to crave the very foods that yeast thrives on, such as sweets, bread and alcohol. Work alongside a nutritional therapist who will be able to support you.

RISK FACTORS FOR CANDIDIASIS

The following list includes the most common triggers for yeast overgrowth:
- Repeated use of antibiotics, oral contraceptives, and/or steroids like prednisone
- Diet high in sweets
- Alcohol
- Low beneficial bacteria
- Chronic stress
- Diabetes
- Weakened immune system

HOW DO I STOP CANDIDIASIS FROM COMING BACK?
It’s important to reduce as many of the risk factors as possible to keep a healthy balance between yeast and microflora. But for sustainable results, following a good ‘candida diet’ has to be wholesome and healthy to promote intestinal immunity:
- Reduce refined sugars, white starchy carbs, animal fats, preservatives and additives, and food that has come into contact with pesticides as much as possible. Include plenty of vegetables and fruit, preferably organic.
- Eat with the seasons and choose local produce to ensure that your food is as fresh and nourishing as possible.
- Add herbs and spices into your diet like sage, garlic, cloves and ginger. These are abundant in anti-microbial properties.
- Consume plenty of fibre (from fruit, vegetables and moderate whole-grains). Drink plenty of filtered water to ensure the toxic residue caused by candida overgrowth is removed effectively.
- Develop a practice of mind-body techniques for stress reduction. This could be something like yoga or meditation.

Henrietta Norton is a nutritional therapist, author and co-founder of Wild Nutrition (wildnutrition.com). She has clinics at Grace Belgravia and SP & Co in London.
To get a proper perspective on the relationship between hormones and ageing, we need to talk about what is called the human growth hormone (HGH). This is considered to be ‘the youth hormone’, as it is produced in higher levels when we are growing, and then starts to drop precipitously at around the age 20. When we reach our 30s and beyond, our levels of HGH continue to peter out, which triggers a phenomenon called ‘somatopause’, which is part of what drives the ageing process.

At this stage many of us start putting on body fat – especially abdominal fat – and losing muscle; we feel tired and lethargic, and the dreaded ‘middle-age spread’ sets in, which makes it more important than ever to keep (or start) exercising as we get older.

High levels of HGH are associated with better health overall, and researchers say that it supports better body composition because it facilitates a greater muscle-to-fat ratio, and it is also associated with emotional factors such as feeling more positive and motivated which is a great wellbeing bonus.

Interestingly, all forms of exercise and movement in themselves contribute to the
CHOOSEING THE BEST EXERCISE
The following are all types of exercise proven to increase production of the human growth hormone and therefore to help rewind our biological clock. Obviously this is by no means a comprehensive list of the types of exercise that you might want to try, but hopefully you will find it a useful starting point for your rewind explorations.

Vigorous exercise: increasingly, research is looking at the amazing biological age-reversal effects of high-intensity interval training (HIIT), in which you intersperse intense exercise with moderate exercise within one short training session. HIIT is a really excellent way of increasing HGH – but only if you avoid carbohydrates for two hours after the session (as soon as you take carbs into your body, the HGH ‘tap’ is turned off).

Research published in the journal Preventative Medicine revealed that in a study of 5,825 adults in the USA between 1999 and 2002 (known as the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey), those who exercised regularly were markedly younger on a cellular level than those who led sedentary or even reasonably active lifestyles. Participants were asked demographic and lifestyle questions, including how often they exercised, and the researchers also analysed the participants’ telomere length against their levels of physical activity. They discovered that people with a high level of physical activity were, biologically, nine years younger than sedentary people.

The intensity of exercise is relevant too. When researchers compared vigorous exercisers with those who did a moderate amount of exercise, the difference for the highly active people was seven years; in this study, a high level of physical activity was deemed to be running between 30-40 minutes per day, at least five days per week.

We don’t know exactly why exercise seems to preserve telomere length, but the current scientific thinking is that it could be linked to a reduction of inflammation and oxidative stress, as exercise suppresses both of these over time.

Moderate exercise: HIIT is hard – and pretty advanced – but fear not. If you don’t fancy doing HIIT sessions, a very recent meta-analysis of studies in exercise reveals that just 30 minutes of moderate exercise can help to prevent 24 chronic diseases. So, happily, vigorous exercise isn’t the only way to reverse your biological age. For example, I encourage my patients to walk at a moderate pace for at least 20-30 minutes four times per week, or more often if they can. This is an outstanding strategy for burning off excess body fat (particularly visceral fat) and dramatically improving muscle-to-fat ratio. I have seen beer bellies on both men and women (usually related to poor diet, stress, lack of sleep and little exercise, rather than beer by the way!), disappear within weeks.

Tai chi: originally a Chinese martial art, tai chi has been recognised for hundreds of years for its health-promoting advantages, and its anti-ageing benefits in particular. Over the years, hundreds, if not thousands, of studies have shown that this low-impact form of exercise – the aim of which is to enhance the flow of energy (known as chi) around the body – can help improve quality of life and support the management of symptoms for those suffering from conditions ranging from insomnia, arthritis, osteoporosis and high blood pressure to breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s and much more. Tai chi addresses all the multifaceted constituents of fitness: muscle strength, flexibility, balance and aerobic conditioning.

Optimisation of the production of HGH. And the longer you can keep your body producing higher levels of HGH, the longer you will experience robust health and strength – both physically and mentally. So finding a form of exercise that you love and are happy to do regularly really is vital to boosting your healthspan.

If you are doing everything right to rewind your body clock – eating the right foods, working on your stress-response management, and meditating – but you don’t exercise, it could be compared to ‘one-hand clapping’. That is to say, it’s not a waste of time, just not entirely fruitful! All researchers agree that, by exercising, you can limit bone and muscle loss as you age. However, there are so many types of exercise to choose from that it can feel difficult to know what will be best for you. So let’s look at the key benefits of a range of some of the most popular and beneficial anti-ageing forms of exercise to help you get started.

Extracted from Jayne’s new book Rewind Your Body Clock, (£14.99, Watkins Publishing), which offers the ultimate blueprint for anti-ageing the natural way.
"The People's Friend" is the magazine of choice for anyone who loves feel-good quality fiction. To celebrate our 150th Anniversary, we are offering you the chance to try a subscription and get 15 issues for only £15, saving 29% off the shop price! As well as saving on the shop price, you'll receive every issue straight through your letterbox every week, before it's on sale! A subscription to the "Friend" is an affordable treat and is the perfect ingredient to brighten any woman's day.

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IAN MARBER

A Difference of Opinion

If the man in your life doesn’t take his health as seriously as you do, you’re not alone, says our nutritional therapist in the know.

As the saying goes, men are from Mars... well, I am sure you know the rest, given one very famous book title that has become shorthand for the fact that men and women behave differently. However, did you know that men and women have notably contrasting attitudes to health and nutrition?

When researching my new book about nutrition for men – specifically men in their 40s and upwards – I found many statistics that really underline how differently men behave when it comes to health and nutrition. Some may not surprise you.

It seems that, in addition to making 80 percent of the health decisions for their families, women are twice as likely than men to attend regular medical check-ups and take prescribed medication as directed. When it comes to nutrition, women take smaller bites of food and eat more slowly than men. On the whole, women eat less red meat and take less salt than men, but eat more fruits and vegetables. Women undertake more diets than men do – estimated at 17 times over the lifetime – while, on average, men do so only five times.

Could it be then, that macho identity is the cause for what seems like a lack of interest in their own health? It also feels quite outdated, in this age of awareness and identity, and so I assumed these attitudes would be limited to older men. Yet perhaps not. In 2012, the University of Huddersfield designed a test, creating two diets; one with burger and chips for lunch and pizza and beer for dinner, the other pasta salad and fruit for lunch, with rice, vegetables and a glass of wine in the evening. They asked 200 people about their perceived masculinity and femininity of the diets, and the vast majority chose the first diet as significantly more masculine, and judged men who ate the second as more feminine. The participants were not older people, they were students. Could it be that gender stereotyping is not limited to the older generation, as one might expect, but persists and affects all ages?

You may ask, ‘so what?’ But it is important, as men are more likely than women to experience cardiovascular disease, lung and colon cancer. Then there’s prostate issues. Amazingly, a 2016 survey conducted by Prostate Cancer UK, found that 17 percent of men didn’t have a clue about their prostate gland, while 92 percent who had heard about it didn’t know what it did. Yet prostate cancer is the third most common in Britain, despite only half the population having one.

So, what can be done? My best advice is to cajole and encourage the men in our families to take better care of themselves; to be more involved and not to bury their heads in the sand. It’s highly likely that this task will fall to women (which feels rather unfair and sexist in itself) but the message is that men can do better, however they may need to be told to do so.

Ian is one of the UK’s top nutritional therapists (ianmarber.com). Manfood by Ian Marber (£13.99, Little Brown) is available from Amazon.
Link Nutrition’s range of natural Food Based™ supplements combine vitamins, minerals, mushrooms and herbal ingredients to create supplements that are safe, effective and absorbable.

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Whether you’re an avid city-dweller or not, it can be hard to avoid pollution. Toxic fumes and smog clouds can damage your skin leading to premature ageing, as well as making your complexion appear dull. Luckily, the beauty shelves have wised up to this! Look out for ingredients with antioxidants, such as vitamin A and vitamin C as these help protect against free-radical damage. Or, to make life easier, we’ve rounded up our pick of the best natural offerings.
10 WAYS TO TAME UNRULY HAIR
Banish the bedhead and beat the frizz with these top tips

GO COCO
If you thought that coconut oil was just for fancy stir fries or cosmopolitan smoothies, you thought wrong. “Coconut oil is one of nature’s best hair care treatments for unruly hair. It’s packed with fatty acids and nourishing natural nutrients that make it super moisturising for all hair types,” says Lauren Taylor, Founder of Kokoso Baby Skincare, kokoso.co.uk. “When used as an overnight hair mask, coconut oil filters into and rejuvenates hair shafts. It helps to tame fly-away strands, manage general unruliness and leaves hair feeling softer, smoother and silkier than usual.” Raw Organic Extra Virgin Coconut Oil, £14.99, coconut-merchant.com

SWITCH TO SILK
Aside from looking luxurious and chic, silk pillow cases are a little known secret weapon when it comes to beating bad hair days. “Silk pillowcases carry numerous benefits to both the hair and skin and can be particularly beneficial to those with frizzier hair types,” says Emma Coleman, dermatology nurse and aesthetician. “Friction caused by tossing and turning in the night can be one of the most common causes of frizz and can cause lasting damage to your hair follicle over time, leading to dull and lacklustre hair. Silk produces far less friction in comparison to cotton, minimising frizz, breakage, kinks and ensuring your style survives overnight.” Oxford Pillowcase, £60, theethicalsilkco.com

LOOK AT THE LABEL
If your hair looks inexplicably dull despite you paying it care and attention, you may need to start reading the ingredients list. “Sulphates, surfactants that make large, stable bubbles, can be too effective at cleansing, and leave hair stripped of protective natural oils, which opens it up to damage,” says Noughty Co-founder Lorna Mitchell, noughtyhaircare.co.uk. “Silicones, used to create silky textures, can build up weighing the hair down and masking damage. Noughty products are formulated without these ingredients, using gentle naturally-derived surfactants, barrier-enhancing plant oils, and scientifically-researched active extracts to help flatten the scales of the hair cuticle, defending the hair shaft.” To The Rescue Moisture Boost Shampoo, £6.99, noughtyhaircare.co.uk

INTRODUCE OMEGA
The secret to head-turning hair lies in the nourishment it’s getting from within. “Hair is one of the places that often gives us an external indicator of what is happening deep inside,” says nutritionist Libby Limon, libbylimon.com. “Healthy locks are associated with overall optimal wellness. Preliminary studies show that Omega 3 Fish Oil (£14.95, linknutrition.com) has the potential over time to promote thicker, glossier hair. It also looks after your scalp, reducing skin flakiness, inflammation and even psoriasis. A healthy scalp with balanced oils will eliminate greasy or dry roots, leaving your hair more manageable.”
CONDITION IT
Want to beat frizz and unruly tangles? The answer is a high-quality conditioner. “Moisture is everything. For most of us, the only time our hair is moisturised is when it is conditioned. It needs nourishing, not a coating of ‘plastic’ which is what many conventional conditioners tend to deliver,” says Tabitha James Kraan, organic hairdresser tabithajameskraan.com. “Use a conditioner that doesn’t contain harsh chemicals, artificial fragrance or silicones.”
Clean Conditioner
Amber Rose, £32, tabithajameskraan.com

GET SOME ARGAN
“A lightweight oil like argan will add a conditioning final step and promote shine,” says Jonathan Andrew, global brand ambassador at Fudge Professional, fudgeprofessional.com. “When you use an oil, pump or spray it into your palms then rub between your hands. Then use your fingers as a comb, and work from the bottom upwards.”
The Ordinary 100 percent Organic Cold-Pressed Moroccan Argan Oil, £5.99, cultbeauty.co.uk

PROTECT FROM THE HEAT
If there’s one environmental factor guaranteed to frazzle your hair, it’s heat. Yet many of us depend on our heat stylers to combat messy strands. “There are many benefits to using a heat protectant such as Briogeo Farewell Frizz blow dry perfection & heat protectant crème, (£22.99, briogoeohair.com),” say Valerie Maine and Stephane Ferreira from Live True London, livetruelondon.com. “The product coats hair and creates a barrier against heat that helps to prevent damage when using heat stylers or exposing your hair in the sun. Moreover, it can camouflage split ends, and adds a silky feel to the hair while also helping to hold it in shape, and prevent frizz and flyaway. All of this improves the manageability of your hair and the results of your heat styling – whilst simultaneously protecting the health of your hair.”

CHOOSE A BETTER BRUSH
In the quest to conquer wild locks, the answer may lie with a high-quality brush. “Look for a brush with widely-spaced pins. Pins that are further apart are better for your hair, as they gently grip the strands without pulling them. They also allow for smoother de-tangling than brushes with closely-grouped pins. De-tangling with a gentle brush is important, as harsher ones are a common cause of hair breakage,” says trichologist Anabel Kingsley. “Furthermore, a cushioned base helps ensure only gentle pressure is placed on the scalp, reducing the likelihood of irritation.”
Bass Brushes, £11.54, uk.iherb.com

APPLY A MASK
Lemon and honey isn’t just for cough sufferers – it does a thing or two to soothe hard-to-control hair. “Honey, such as Hilltop’s Raw Lavender Honey (£7.10, superfooduk.com), is one of nature’s natural conditioners as it is an active fighter of dandruff,” says celebrity hairstylist Asgar Sahoo. “It’s also a natural antiseptic and it contains nourishing properties to leave your hair feeling soft. Lemon can be highly beneficial for hair growth, oily hair, split ends and inflammation of the scalp. With the two ingredients combined, the results are heavenly! Hair should feel super-soft and be much easier to manage.” If you fancy testing this out, combine 1 tbsp of lemon juice, 2 tsp of olive oil and 1 tbsp of honey, massage into your hair and scalp and leave for 30 minutes before rinsing with a mild shampoo.

TRY VINEGAR
We wouldn’t usually associate vinegar with film star locks, but the condiment, specifically the apple cider variety, can boost your tresses. “Some shampoos contain a really high alkaline pH which can lead to cuticle damage and an irritated scalp,” says Karine Jackson, organic hair expert and owner of hair salon, karinejackson.co.uk. “Vinegar such as Willy’s Organic Apple Cider Vinegar (£10.99, hollandandbarrett.com) counteracts a high alkaline pH which helps improve scalp health.” It’s an easy treatment, too - simply mix one-part vinegar with four parts water, apply to shampooed hair, leave on for two minutes, then rinse.
Ditch your morning mug and wake up the natural way with Dr Organic’s new caffeine-powered range.

Infused with energising organic coffee, an extra shot of refreshing mint, as well as a complex blend of ingredients such as ginger, black pepper and guarana, these Dr Organic products will deliver a stimulating kick of caffeine directly to your skin. The Mint Coffee range helps to purify, energise and invigorate while revealing naturally-illuminated, healthy skin and a smooth complexion.

**THE MUST-HAVE INGREDIENTS TO CLEARER SKIN**

**Organic Coffee Extract**
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**Caffeine**
A powerful natural compound which can penetrate and protect the hair follicles, providing energising and stimulating properties for stronger, healthier hair.

**Organic Aloe Vera**
Organic Aloe Vera grows in some of the most arid conditions in the world, and is well known for its incredible soothing, cooling and hydrating abilities.

**Peppermint and Spearmint Leaf Oil**
Refreshing herbs with a calming and purifying effect on the skin, the oils are naturally rich in salicylic acid, vitamin A and antioxidants to help smooth, stimulate and rejuvenate.

**WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?**

- **Anti-Dandruff Shampoo and Conditioner:** refreshing products that have been expertly blended with purifying ingredients and a clinically-proven, anti-dandruff active, which provides targeted action and effective relief from scalp dryness and irritation.

- **Coffee Skinny Body Scrub:** the naturally refreshing mint and mineral-rich dead sea salt helps to buff away dead cells and encourage blood flow, while polishing and illuminating skin.

- **Espresso Body Wash:** cleanses and energises while delivering intense aromas of fresh spearmint and menthol to help skin feel instantly clean and refreshed.

- **Espresso Face Mask:** packed with black pepper, volcanic clay and a naturally-stimulating kick of caffeine to supercharge your complexion.

- **Espresso Face Scrub:** the coffee seed extract and uplifting peppermint will gently buff away dead skin cells while revealing an illuminated, energised and softened complexion.

- **Espresso Face Wash:** the organic coffee bean extract, refreshing spearmint oil and invigorating menthol, works to help reveal a naturally-cleansed, clear complexion.

All available from hollandandbarrett.com
**NEW MUST-HAVES**

These wonderful purchases are hot off the press!

- **Antipodes Blessing Anti-Pollution Light-Face Serum**, £34.99, lookfantastic.com
- **Quantum Botanika my Balancing Cream**, £52, nataliyarobinson.co.uk
- **Only Curls Enhancing Curl Gel**, £16, onlycurls.com
- **Mauli Sleep Dharma Pillow Mist**, £22, maulirituals.com
- **Jane Iredale Eye Shadow Kit**, £46, janeiredale.co.uk
- **Oleum Vera Detox Masks Gift Set**, £24.99, prezzybox.com
- **Neal’s Yard Frankincense Intense Hand Treatment Serum**, £30, nealsyardremedies.com
- **Irene Forte Pomegranate Face Mask**, £99, ireneforteskincare.com
- **Innersense Hydrating Hair Masque**, £28, gloworganicbrighton.co.uk

**BEAUTY ED’S PICKS**
Heal your SKIN FROM WITHIN

If you want a clear complexion without slathering your face in harsh chemicals, look to the ancient Indian system of Ayurveda

Breaking out in spots? Got itchy-as-hell eczema?
You’re not alone. Statistics show that 54 percent of women have some sort of facial acne, and a whopping 15 million Brits are living with eczema. And while you can apply the latest lotions and potions, there’s the possibility that your complexion troubles aren’t purely skin deep. Instead, it may be that your skincare, diet and hormones, and even the state of the weather, are all interconnected – the net result is showing up on your face.

This is, according to Ayurveda, a holistic eastern medicine that dates back 5,000 years to the Himalayans in northern India. Ayurvedic practitioners look to the mind, body and environment – and how these elements change over time – to find a balance that will lead to healthy skin. “Our skin is an expression of our health and environment,” agrees Sebastian Pole, ayurvedic practitioner at Pukka Herbs (pukkaherbs.com). “When we’re tired or unwell, it can look grey and dull, but exploring how herbs can deliver internal changes can lead to lasting improvements.”

CLEAN BEAUTY

Skincare is a big part of the ayurvedic tradition – it is thought to provide an insight into internal health. Caring for the skin is a daily ayurvedic ritual, which begins with self-massage, followed by cleansing and exfoliating with ayurvedic herbs. Rasayanas (rejuvenating herbs and practices, such as ashwagandha and full-body oiling) are used to support the skin as it ages. “Ayurveda targets the root cause of a condition, rather than just treating the symptoms,” reveals Sebastian. “If your skin is red, irritated or inflamed, Ayurveda would promote incorporating antioxidant-rich herbs, such as turmeric, and drinks like green tea into your diet. These can fight off harmful toxins that otherwise damage and age skin.”

Burgeoning in popularity, Ayurveda’s holistic approach to health is arguably more relevant to today’s fast-paced society than ever before – a society in which causes of stress, sleep deprivation and poor diet can all lead to skin troubles. “Ayurveda teaches us that we each have a unique mind-body type known as our dosha,” adds Sebastian, “By identifying your dosha, you can better understand your skin type.”

There are three doshas – vata, pitta and kapha. These are the basic building blocks of who we are, and they’re key to ayurvedic skincare treatments. At birth, we’re born with the perfect doshic balance (prakriti) but habits, climates, behaviours, diets and other lifestyle changes can lead to an excess of one type of dosha. An ayurvedic practitioner can identify which type of doshic energy is dominant in your body, or you could find out by taking the ‘What’s Your Ayurvedic Dosha?’ quiz at naturalhealthmagazine.co.uk.

PERSONALISED SKINCARE

When identifying skin health, ayurvedic practitioners look to complexion qualities and conditions to identify a doshic skin type. Abida Haalstenberg, founder of ayurvedic skincare company Samaya (samayaayurveda.com), reveals the main things to look out for. Identifying these traits will help you to recognise your own dosha type and how to balance it.

VATA SKIN

Vata is dominated by air and space, so vata skin tends to be dry, thin and dehydrated. It’s at its most vulnerable in windy weather, during which times rough patches of skin might develop. Eczema is an example of a vata skin imbalance. See panel, right, for more details.

“Suffer from skin bothers? The ayurvedic approach can help by settling internal imbalances, while soothing topical issues.”
PITTA SKIN
Pitta is governed by fire, so pitta skin tends to be oily and more likely to suffer a breakout when out of balance. Fiery pitta skin is often characterised by a reddish tone, and inflammatory rashes are a common concern.

KAPHA SKIN
Kapha is dominated by water and earth, so kapha skin tends to be moist. When kapha skin is out of balance, there may be clogged pores and excess oil. Kapha skin can be greasy but it doesn’t burn easily.

COMBINATION SKIN
There are dual dosha skin types, such as vata-pitta (dry and sensitive), kapha-pitta (oily and sensitive) or vata-kapha (dry with an oily T-zone). If you have a dual type, ayurvedic practitioners recommend altering your diet and skincare according to the seasons.

CURING CONDITIONS
Suffer from skin bothers? The ayurvedic approach can help by settling internal imbalances while soothing topical issues. Here, Abida reveals the practices that could calm complexion troubles.

YOU’RE SUFFERING FROM... ROSACEA
Try... a pitta-pacifying diet that favours cool and non-spicy foods. Take saffron, shatavari, gotu kola, aloes and turmeric supplements, plus drink fenugreek or tulsi tea.

YOU’RE SUFFERING FROM... ECZEMA
Try... a vata-pacifying diet, which will include soups and stews, plus water-rich fruits and vegetables, to replenish moisture levels. Add turmeric, amla, tulsi and ashwagandha to your diet. Neem oil can be used to reduce itchiness.

YOU’RE SUFFERING FROM... FINE LINES
Try... using naturally active plant extracts mixed into oils [such as those containing vitamin C and sesame oil]. These are fantastic because their molecular structure is relatively close to our skin, so they naturally penetrate deeply. Massage the oils into skin to promote blood circulation, helping to firm and tone.

YOU’RE SUFFERING FROM... ACNE
Try... using turmeric, almonds, neem and sandalwood topically on your skin [via an oil, for example]. It may also help to include more coriander and cumin in your meals, plus to follow a pitta-pacifying diet.

DRY SKIN HEROES
In Ayurveda, the vata dosha is ruled by the air and ether elements. Due to the combination of two air elements, these effects transpire to dry and dehydrated skin, which can then translate to an overall dull complexion. Turmeric is recommended for vata skin (used on the exterior) due to its natural skin brightening properties. Turmeric contains an active called tumerone, which not only brightens and enhances the skin, but it also reduces inflammation on the exterior and interior of the body. This versatile ingredient is the key component in Urban Veda’s Radiance skincare range, which also harnesses the elasticity-restoring benefits of liquorice and hydrating punch of aloe vera and goji berries.

Try this...
Urban Veda Radiance Facial Oil £29.99, urbanveda.com
Harnessing the brightening and anti-inflammatory powers of turmeric, this clever oil can pep up vata skin types using the power of papaya and a plethora of herbs and seeds to heal blemishes and boost elasticity.

STAR BUYS
1 Mauii Rituals Supreme Skin Rose Mist £36, mauiirituals.com
Made with hydrating actives such as kumari, turmeric, amla, neem tulsi and honeysuckle, this nourishing mist is great for even sensitive skin!

2 Holy Lama Natural Ayurvedic Enhance Massage Oil £10, holylama.co.uk
Ideal for balancing and soothing pitta dosha skin, this massage oil is made from a blend of jasmine, ylang ylang and lemon essential oils.

3 Khadi Ayurvedic Face Masks £12.90, khadihair.co.uk
Blended by ayurvedic experts, these masks draw on ancient principles to nourish skin. Try the neem or sandalwood mask to calm a breakout.
Feed your skin with the Ayurvedic superfood Turmeric, to restore your skin's natural glow

HERE'S YOUR 5 STEP SKINCARE REGIME TO ACHIEVE RADIANT SKIN...

1. **Radiance Facial Wash**
   Enriched with Ayurvedic anti-inflammatory Turmeric to balance and brighten skin tone.

2. **Radiance Exfoliating Facial Polish**
   Cleanse pores and buff away dead skin cells with skin brightening Turmeric extract.

5. **Radiance Facial Oil**
   Hydrating Liquorice combines with organic Turmeric and antioxidant-rich Papaya to heal blemishes and marks, restoring the skin's natural glow.

3. **Radiance Day Cream**
   Improve signs of hyper-pigmentation and lock in moisture.

6. **Radiance Night Cream**
   Enhance vitality and protect against water loss during the night.

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JO FAIRLEY’S FAVOURITE

Natural hand TREATMENTS

The Beauty Bible guru reveals the ones that make a difference

When it comes to telling your age, hands are a dead giveaway – almost as good as a peek at your passport, in fact. Exposed to UV light on a daily basis – not to mention extremes of hot and cold, and the really drying effects of touching paper – hands nevertheless aren’t on most women’s beauty radar the way our faces are.

But, increasingly, as with our complexions, natural beauty brands are turning their attention to hand treatments designed to turn back the clock. The following aren’t necessarily ‘hand creams’ as we usually think of them and offer more powerful concentrations of age-defying ingredients in the form of serums or intensive creams that would be just too rich for day use.

With serum-style products, you might want to layer these under a moisturiser for that extra ‘comfort factor’ but the following bring pleasure of their own. I now have an arsenal of treatments by my bed. Here are some hands-down winners...

1. Neal’s Yard Frankincense Hand Serum, £30, nealyardremedies.com
   Harnessing sustainably-harvested Omani frankincense – long a signature ingredient of Neal’s Yard’s turn-back-the-clock skincare – this super-silky serum plumps up skin with hyaluronic acid, rosehip seed oil and narcissus extract. And it smells positively meditative.

2. Liz Earle Superskin Hand Serum, £23.50, uk.lizearle.com
   This flip-top tube contains visibly smoothing rosehip and cranberry seed oils, firming Kigelia Africana extract, natural vitamin E and pomegranate extract plus its classic Superskin scent that so many women adore.

3. Kiss The Moon LOVE Night Cream for Hands, £28, lovealula.com
   An award-winning, ultra-rich blend of shea butter whipped with natural rosewater for a deeply conditioning and luxurious overnight hand treat. There’s rosehip oil to support the skin’s natural repair process, together with essential oils that target age spots. Oh, and redness.

4. Beauty Kitchen Abyssinian Oil Intensive Daily Hand Treatment, £12.99, beautykitchen.co.uk
   A powerful (yet affordable) hand and nail treatment with a whisk-you-to-a-spa fragrance, packed with micro-algae to replenish skin’s natural moisture levels. You don’t have to save this for bedtime – but it’s a good time of day (or rather, night) to appreciate its pleasure factor.

5. MV Organic Skincare Hand Rescue, £29, cultbeauty.co.uk
   This isn’t specifically anti-ageing but with its glorious fragrance of sandalwood, tangerine, benzoin (as well as rosehip oil), it’s a marvellous, intensive treat for chapped, cracked or hands plagued by sensitive skin or eczema. Rich in calendula oil, it’s one to have to hand (literally) for allergies, sun damage or even burns from cooking (I keep this in the kitchen, rather than on the bedside table).

“Hands aren’t on most women’s beauty radars”
1 reusable cup. Less monthly waste.

Every year 45 billion feminine hygiene products are disposed of globally. Most of these will end up in landfills, but some make it into our oceans and onto our beaches.

Buy now at www.feminesse.co.uk
While winning the lottery or becoming world-famous would be great, new research has suggested that realistic life goals are the key to optimum wellness. Psychologists from the University of Basel have found that **perceiving one’s personal goals as attainable, is an indicator for later mental and emotional wellbeing.** The researchers also found that goal-setting in general was beneficial. Participants who set social-relation or health goals, were found to be more satisfied with their relationships or their own health. So keep striving, but keep it real!
Heal yourself
IN 60 SECONDS

Can the ancient concept of Yang Sheng nurture our wellbeing and fit into a time-strapped lifestyle? Alice Whitehead investigates...

Before ‘self care’ there was Yang Sheng – the Chinese philosophy of nurturing healthy habits to nourish life. Rather than wait for your doctor to prescribe medicine, this Taoist approach encouraged the idea of prevention.

“It very much puts you in the driving seat of your own health,” says Chinese medical practitioner, Katie Brindle (katiebrindle.com), author of Yang Sheng: The Art of Chinese Self-healing (£15, Hardie Grant). “These are simple techniques and steps you can take yourself in order to feel better, without the involvement of any outside therapists.”

These steps can be quickly incorporated, too. Dating back to the second and third centuries BC, the concept of Yang (to nourish or nurture) and Sheng (life or growth) is that our vitality and longevity can be sustained and strengthened through holistic healthcare practices such as exercise, meditation and dietary choices.

“The concepts of health maintenance and disease prevention informed how the ancient Chinese would interact with their doctors. People would pay the Chinese medicine doctor when they were well and would stop paying the doctor when they fell ill. The doctor would routinely ‘prescribe’ a healthcare regime including meditation, qigong exercises, Chinese herbs and acupuncture treatments,” says Alexandra Lees, co-founder of Wu Wei Wisdom, a unique system of integrated therapy, based on ancient Taoist and traditional Chinese medicine (WuWeiWisdom.com). “This contrasts with the traditional Western medical approach, where we typically only visit the doctor when we are sick. It is a very self-empowering concept as it teaches us not to rely, or become dependent upon, other people or things for our health.”

The aim of Yang Sheng is to balance and support the energy of mind and body – the Taoists refer to this energy or life force as ‘qi’ or ‘chi’ – and take affirmative and regular steps to prevent ‘dis-ease’ in the longer term.

“Practising Yang Sheng helps you to understand how your body works, not only physically, but mentally, emotionally and energetically – and how all these levels interact with each other,” Katie adds. “Once you understand this, you can then take steps to balance yourself using small tweaks to how you breathe, your diet, exercise, emotions and your sleep habits.”

And the best bit? Most Yang Sheng practices can be done at very little cost and easily slot into your daily routine. “Yang Sheng places emphasis on the idea that a series of small and regular actions and lifestyle choices can over time add up to produce larger benefits for health,” explains Alexandra. “It should be an ongoing process of health maintenance that we apply over the course of our life.”

60-SECOND RITUALS TO TRY AT HOME:

1 Get outside
“The simplest way to apply Yang Sheng is to attune to your natural environment and the seasons,” says Alexandra. “The ancient Taoists taught us that if we can live in harmony with nature it will support our health and wellbeing. This includes adding seasonal ingredients to your meals to ensure a balanced and nutritious diet that promotes healthy qi flow.”

2 Try healing sounds
Practise this ancient breath technique, advises Katie. “As you take a long breath out, make one of the following sounds: Sxxx for your lungs, Chooooo for your kidneys, Shhhhhhh for your liver, Haaaaa for your heart and small intestine, Whoooo for your stomach, spleen and pancreas and HMMMMM for your trunk or core. Visualise the matching organ and imagine old, stale energy coming out of it, like mist. Repeat five times for each organ. Ideally, do three rounds.”

3 Feel grounded
“Wu Ji is a very simple, yet powerful qigong standing position, that is both energising and relaxing,” says Alexandra. “Stand with your shoulders relaxed, arms loose at your sides, palms facing backwards, knees slightly bent, feet hip-width apart. Visualise a stream of flowing energy running from the top of your head, down through the centre of your body following a nice ‘S’shape’ in your spine, and then out between your legs and into the ground. Visualise any areas of tension or discomfort in your body. Imagine breathing deeply into and softening the muscles in these areas.”

4 Get combing
“Combing is an age-old Chinese self-massage therapy which works on the notion that every meridian (energy channel) in the body has a connection with the scalp,” says Katie. “Combing stimulates your qi (energy) and increases blood flow, which boosts nutrients. This daily ritual promotes healthy hair while reducing stress and tension, leaving you feeling rejuvenated and relaxed. I recommend a jade comb and practising first thing in the morning to stimulate the scalp and give you a wake-up boost. Start at the frontal hairline and slowly comb backwards, covering all of your head with a light but firm pressure. If you have long hair and it gets caught, shorten your strokes. Then, starting in the middle of your scalp, comb each side of the head down from the crown until you reach the nape of your neck.”
5 Connect to the breath
“Our minds can often be busy with heightened stress, causing many of us in the West to ‘pant’ rather than ‘breathe’. So, focus more on the breath, observing the rhythm and how the breath enters and leaves the body,” says Alexandra. “Even one minute will give your mind a simple, singular point of focus which is deeply restorative. Aim to create a calm, long and rhythmical breath that extends deep into your diaphragm – the Taoist call this the ‘Natural Breath Technique’.”

6 Self massage
“Gua sha is a therapeutic self-massage technique that has been widely practised in China for thousands of years. It involves using a round-edged tool, traditionally made from jade or metal, to press-stroke the skin until redness appears,” says Katie. “After gua sha most people report feeling better both physically and emotionally, with a feeling of weightlessness and relief. In studies it has been shown to boost immunity and reduce inflammation in the body. Start gently, use oil and gently press-stroke up to eight times across your skin, focusing on the chest, back and neck areas.”

7 Drop your shoulders
“Often we hold tension within our body without even realising it,” says Alexandra. “So, several times a day, observe the position of your shoulders and how tense they are. Consciously drop and lower your shoulders away from your neck and chin and visualise exhaling out tension in your body as you do so.”

8 Apply some pressure
This acupressure exercise is instantly calming, says Alexandra: “Loosely hold your thumb in the palm of the other hand (either hand is fine), so that your hand is wrapped around the whole of your thumb. Take a few deep breaths.”

9 Eat mindfully
“We often eat on the go and rush our meals,” says Alexandra. “Instead, try choosing a fork or spoonful of food from your plate and chew your food slowly for one minute at a time, noticing the flavour and texture of each mouthful. This will not only mean your meals become more satisfying, but it will also support your digestion and you’ll be more aware of when you are full so it will help prevent over-eating.”

10 Offer gratitude
“To sensitively balance the energy of the mind we need to avoid mental and emotional overwhelm,” says Alexandra. “This is particularly important at the end of each day when we should be unwinding and preparing for a good night’s sleep. Before bedtime, take a minute to write out a short list of everything you are grateful for that day. Don’t over-think it, just write out the first things that come to mind. This will help you process your busy day, set aside any unresolved issues and create a positive mindset that is more conducive to a restful night’s sleep.”
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I don’t get the chance to read as many books as I’d like to. Time is the currency that we don’t have enough of today. In my busy life, reading books is quite a luxury, yet right now I am reading three books simultaneously! They are all so inspiring and exciting that I feel I simply must share them with you.

Waking Up in 5D: A Practical Guide to Multidimensional Transformation by Maureen J. St Germaine (£14.99, Bear & Company) is particularly intriguing. It explains how we are starting to transition in consciousness and vibration from the narrowly-focused third dimension to the higher level of the fifth dimension, where we can live in a state of love, joy and kindness, which is compared to heaven on earth.

Maureen explains how we can develop a higher self-connection, increase our sensitivity to recognising the dimensional shifts and make a conscious choice to remain in 5D, passing through the transitional fourth dimension.

I appreciate this all sounds rather ‘out there’, but who doesn’t want to live in a loving space where we experience joy and connection with ourselves and others? The author claims we are being manipulated by fear, and I have to say, I agree.

The news, the fake news, the bombardment of misinformation, and the Western lifestyle takes us out of alignment with ourselves. It is only when we are in alignment that we can co-create as intended. I truly believe we can dissolve fear by looking at it head on, with courage, secure in the knowledge that we can change our beliefs and our behaviour.

Maureen believes that “When you open your mind, you become creative. When you open your heart, you become compassionate. When the heart and mind are synchronised, they open the portal to 5D, and being fearless is an expression of this alignment. It occurs when your beliefs, thoughts and actions are in alignment, producing integrity. When you learn (not believe, but know) that you are responsible for your reality, then you will be fearless, too.”

Another book that is engaging me deeply is Facing Love Addiction: Giving Yourself the Power to Change the Way You Love by Pia Mellody (£12.99, HarperOne). I have three main addictions, which are romance, shopping and eating. The good news is that I am more in control of them than I have been in years. I am eating healthily in every way in my natural food SEED Café; I am buying for my Shop at No 4, rather than for myself, and get great pleasure watching other people enjoying my taste and buying from me. So this just leaves falling in love.

What I have learned from reading Pia Mellody’s excellent book is that loving someone isn’t the problem. The unhealthy aspects are co-dependence and love addiction, and the attraction to ‘unresponsive love avoidants.’

Pia has spent 15 years researching and treating addicts and outlines a compassionate, positive process to work towards healthy relationships. She explains how our childhood experiences of abandonment or engulfment can influence our choice of romantic partners, friends and associates. This has certainly been true for me, and Pia’s book is full of simple ways to recognise ourselves acting a certain way, so that we can replace unhealthy behavioural patterns with a system of recovery which allows relationships to grow and develop without manipulation and control.

My third book says it all in the title: Elegant Simplicity: the art of living well, is by the philosopher and visionary Satish Kumar (£14.99, New Society Publishers). Satish, now in his 80s, has lived an incredible life of dedication to pursuing a life that “Prioritises the ecological integrity of earth, social equity and personal happiness.” He shares his life story as a former monk who took a decision to walk an 8,000 mile peace pilgrimage, coming to a quiet halt in the UK. He was the editor of Resurgence magazine for many years and founded Schumacher College in Devon. Satish has written books, made films and brought wisdom-keepers together in regular conferences, becoming an inspirational leader to so many.

Reading Satish’s elegant words takes me to a place of meditation and reminds me to always stay in a state of love. My intention is to continue to read books that fill my life with wisdom and knowledge – and prioritise this as a key aspect of living my life with joy.

Lynne Franks is holding and hosting a series of her transformational retreats and workshops alongside her favourite wellbeing and personal development experts and friends at her new holistic destination, Hub at No 3. You can discover more at hubatno3.com
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GOOD vibrations

Learn how to tune into your body’s natural energy frequency and you may be able to restore balance, says Lynn Jackson

Phrases like, ‘raise your vibration’ or ‘I’m getting good vibes’ might sound like flower power throwbacks from the 1960s but, thanks to scientific developments, the idea of vibrational therapy is starting to become cool again.

Vibrational frequencies play an extremely important role in our lives. Every single atom is tuned to a specific vibration which can be measured. This includes the organs and cells in our body, the food we eat, our electronic devices and our environment; even our thoughts create an energetic vibration.

While the ability to measure these frequencies is a relatively modern development, vibrational healing is nothing new. Ancient Indian texts accurately describe the human energy anatomy, with diagrams showing the location of the main energy centres and details of how imbalances may affect the physical, mental and emotional state of the person.

Vibrations are, of course, invisible, but we intuitively know when our vibration is high – life flows and we feel positive, compassionate and enthusiastic. When something unpleasant happens, such as an accident, a row at work or a relationship break-up, the frequency drops and our life is apt to shift out of gear.

Whenever this happens, it is important to restore equilibrium by balancing the energetic frequencies within the body. Here, we look at six ways of effectively raising your vibration to bring harmony, health and balance into your life.

1 ENERGY WORK

Also known as healing, this is arguably the ultimate vibrational reset, with a highly individualised, targeted treatment. The healer or therapist acts as a power source to emit high-frequency, vital life-force energy through their hands straight into the client’s aura (the electro-magnetic vibrational charge around the body).

Part of the intense interest in the field of vibrational medicine is the knowledge that disharmony shows up in the energy field before it becomes a problem in the body. This means that if imbalances can be detected while still in the energy field, disease can theoretically be avoided altogether, and an experienced healer is able to hone, direct, and regulate the energies accordingly.

For minimal imbalances, however, it is perfectly possible to heal our own body. Energy flows where attention goes; clearly envisage the desired outcome, place your hand upon any area of pain, tension or discomfort and imagine light and feel-good energy flooding the affected area.

2 CRYSTAL HEALING

Crystals aren’t just beautiful objects; they are actually a living and evolving form of solidified vibrational energy that many believe resonate extremely well with the crystalline structures within our own body.

Just as magnets use energy to attract or repel, crystals use energy in the same way, transforming, vibrating, pulsing, moving and shifting it in accordance with their innate properties and energetic signature.

Crystals can be used to heal a variety of physical and emotional conditions, but it is important to match the right one with the task at hand. Crystals can be programmed, but this is a job for the professionals, and it is often worth trusting any deep healing work to an experienced practitioner. Crystals can be placed on or around the body for deep healing, or in the home to energise the space. Crystals such as Hematite, Selenite, Shungite or Black Tourmaline can absorb and remove certain types of energy, while clear Quartz, Rose Quartz, Sunstone and Apophyllite can conduct new energy into your body, mind, spirit or environment. Use Smoky Quartz, Amethyst, Citrine, Sodalite or Black Kyanite to balance misaligned energies, remove negativity and imbue life-enhancing vibrations.

3 ESSENTIAL OILS

The essential oils in a plant, serve the same function as blood in the human body. Their complex chemical constituents cleanse, protect, oxygenate, nourish, and offer many therapeutic benefits such as anti-parasitic, antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral properties. It’s therefore no surprise that they have been used for thousands of years to treat physical and emotional ailments.

Megahertz tests reveal that the higher the frequency, the more life force an object contains. More life force means better health and, according to research, the vibrational frequencies of essential oils are the highest of any known natural substance, influencing emotions and affecting structural and physical change. A very simple way of harnessing their sweet-smelling power is to put a few drops into your bath or onto your sponge before...
hormones and Neroli can relieve insomnia and is useful for stress-related depression. Sandalwood, meanwhile, is relaxing and calming, enhances mental clarity, acts as a natural aphrodisiac and is a powerful antioxidant and anti-ager.

4 VIBRATIONAL ESSENCES

Unlike essential oils, which are made from the physical substance of the plant, vibrational essences are the energetic blueprint or source signature of the material substance. These essences therefore work on multi-dimensional levels of vibration; the best-known vibrational essence is undoubtedly Bach Rescue Remedy.

Vibrational essences are typically made from flowers, crystals or herbs steeped in water, with sunlight used as the alchemical catalyst. They may be taken sublingually, applied to the soles of the feet or wrists, added to a bath, or diluted with purified water and spritzed to raise the vibration and aid healing.

5 SOUND HEALING

Sound moves in waves through the air and affects the autonomic (subconscious) nervous system in a variety of ways depending upon the vibrational energy of the sound. Some sounds, for example, the rhythmic ebb and flow of the ocean, can be used to produce deep relaxation and a meditative state known as ASC (altered state of consciousness). Gongs and Tibetan crystal bowls emit specific vibrational frequencies, and are used by sound therapists to influence brainwave activity and trigger the innate healing processes of the body’s parasympathetic nervous system in a prescriptive way. Similarly, tuning fork therapy uses calibrated tuning forks to apply specific vibrations to certain points on the body, releasing tension and opening the energy channels to bring emotional balance and pain relief.

6 TENSION AND TRAUMA RELEASE EXERCISES (TRE)

TRE is a physical vibrational therapy that is primarily used to heal chronic stress. It comprises a series of exercises, which are used to activate a natural reflex mechanism of shaking or vibrating to help the body release deep muscular patterns of stress, tension and trauma. Animals employ a tremor-like shaking mechanism to quickly calm down the nervous system, and a similar process is also part of our human natural behaviour, but we have culturally learned how to suppress it because shaking has long been perceived as a sign of weakness.

TRE (which must initially be taught by a certified provider to ensure that the tremor mechanism is intentional and correctly controlled) allows stress to release without any need to talk about the traumatic experience, and the process can release emotions ranging from mild upset, to severe anxiety.

Everyone is different, so try a few different methods and see how you feel. You’ll know your vibration is rising because you’ll feel more confident, calm, joyful and kind.
Here’s your MORNING INSPIRATION

How do holistic gurus start their day?
We asked six speakers from the upcoming Mind Body Soul Experience to share their morning rituals...

ANDREA MCLEAN
Journalist and presenter

“I start the day with a drink of bio culture to help my gut. It needs to be taken 10 minutes before any food or drink, so I have it first thing. If I’m heading to the studio I wake up at 5:45am and get dressed in the gym gear I’ve laid out the night before. On the way to work – either in a cab or on the train – I meditate for 10 minutes using the Insight Timer app. I then write in my diary – anything I need to release, or process is written at the back, and at the front is my practical to-do list. Before work I head to the gym, and I either run or do weights, listening to podcasts (I like to listen to interviews by motivators like entrepreneurs or sportspeople) then finish with stretching. I’m in work for 8:30am, briefs and newspapers read, and feel ready to start the day.”

Join Andrea’s workshop Relight your Fire on Monday 27th May, from 11am-12pm.
Visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk/london/workshop/andrea-mclean/relight-your-fire

DAVID HAMILTON
Meditation author

“As soon as I wake up, I spend five minutes lying in bed considering what I’m grateful for, focusing mostly on the past 24 hours, but sometimes I consider the larger aspects of my life. I get showered and then I spend 15-30 minutes in meditation. Experience has taught me that a gratitude ritual helps start the day on a positive note. Meditation trains me to be able to feel calm and present. As a scientist, I’m also well aware of the research that demonstrates how meditation creates beneficial, physical changes in the brain. This is partly why I do it but, if I’m honest, it’s mostly because of how it makes me feel.

“Too many people wake and then start to worry about the things they need to do, and so I start the day in a state of mild stress or anxiety. I know this from experience, as it’s how I used to start my day. This exercise helps me approach the day with a little lightness in my step, with my mind more likely to settle on the light, rather than the dark.”

Join David’s workshop, How the Mind Heals the Body, on Friday 24th May from 2.30pm-4.30pm.
Visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk/london/workshop/david-hamilton/how-the-mind-heals-the-body

BHAVINI VYAS
Director of The Yoga Jam

“I usually wake up to the sound of the birds singing at the top of their lungs, outside my window, which makes me feel grateful for nature and my surroundings. I’m not really one for a day-to-day routine, but I have a few things which I definitely incorporate in various orders, depending on my schedule. I head straight to the bathroom for my morning shower, which I always end with at least a minute of very cold water, to raise my prana and wash away any sleepiness; then I head straight onto my yoga mat. I’m someone who likes to maximise my time and be as useful as I can be throughout the day. If I don’t take care of the things I need to for my own body, mind and surroundings, then I’m useless to myself and to others around me. For me, I know this starts with taking care of my prana, my vital life force energy, which is influenced by all the things I do in the morning. Deep down these practices also impact my ability to connect meaningfully with those around me. On days where I know I’ll be at full capacity until bed time, which won’t allow me an evening workout, I’ll head straight to the gym.”

Join Bhavini’s workshop The Yoga Jam, which also features Emma Bonnici.
Visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk/london/workshop/the-yoga-jam/the-yoga-jam-featuring-bhavini-vyas-emma-bonnici-friends
The Mind, Body, Spirit Experience show takes place 24-27th May 2019. For more information visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk

SAH D’SIMONE
Transformational speaker

I wake up and move into child’s pose whilst still in bed. I say at least three things I’m grateful for, then I set an intention to live from my heart. I remind myself of my innate qualities of compassion, kindness, courage, patience, creativity and love. I follow with a set of Tibetan buddhist mantras that help to reinforce my mission to be of service. Then, I sit down to meditate for an hour, followed by breathwork, a three-five mile run on most days, and then a 20-minute dance.

On a physiological level it re-designs the architecture of my brain, it strengthens my immune and nervous system, and on a psychological level, it calms the inner critic and burns away ignorance. It replenishes my inner resources, therefore I can have space between the stimulus and response – I can respond to life, rather than react to it. I learn from triggers, and not overwhelmed by every little thing that passes my mind, or that life throws at me. It gives me a wider perspective and a more compassionate outlook.

Join Sah’s workshop The Happiness Method: Intersection of Ancient Wisdom & Modern Science on 24 May from 6pm-7.30pm.
Visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk/london/workshop/sah-dsimone/the-happiness-method-intersection-of-ancient-wisdom-modern-science

SADIE FROST
Actress, producer and fashion designer

“I always light some incense and set intentions for the day, usually something like, ‘feeling ultimate peace’. I then do 15 minutes of vipassana meditation, followed by some gentle stretches to align my spine. After those three things, I usually feel ready to start my day. I find vipassana a very comforting meditation; there are so many different types to choose from but I prefer this one. It really helps with stress, anxiety and gets you focused for the day ahead. Modern living is very stressful; I find my different jobs, both in fashion and film, can be quite hectic. I have lots of meetings each day and I’ve got to be on hand for all of my four children’s needs. My mind has to be alert and focused to jump between these different tasks. By having this time for myself in the morning, I manage to create a huge sense of calm, strength and focus.”

Join Sadie and Holly Davidson for their workshop The Art of Maintaining the Perfect Balance on Sunday 26th May from 4pm-5.30pm.
Visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk/london/workshop/holly-davidson-sadie-frost/the-art-of-maintaining-the-perfect-balance

HOLLY DAVIDSON
Personal trainer

“I start work at 6am, so I’m up every day at 5am. I need to keep my mornings simple: I prep breakfast, clothes, my work bag and anything I need for the day, the night before, so I don’t spend time running around. This allows me time to enjoy a black coffee and a cup of rosebush tea with oat milk. I select an angel card, which I always post onto my Instagram page, and find a nice quote to go with it. The angel cards are something my mum used to have when we were kids, so they have lovely childhood memories attached to them and I’ve made them a part of my daily routine. They have a set of 40 positive words and each morning I pick one at random. Then, I spend 10 minutes writing my morning pages (stream of consciousness writing, ideally done first thing in the morning). I’ve been doing this for the past six months. It’s something my cognitive behavioural therapist recommended – it’s a great way to express feelings, thoughts, happy moments, worries and concerns. Writing it down helps to clear my head for the day.”

Join Holly and Sadie Frost for their workshop The Art of Maintaining the Perfect Balance on Sunday 26th May from 4pm-5.30pm.
Visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk/london/workshop/holly-davidson-sadie-frost/the-art-of-maintaining-the-perfect-balance
After discovering that changes to her diet could drastically improve her health, Lauren has launched her dream business all thanks to CNM, the College of Naturopathic Medicine.

I became very unwell with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome during my second year at university. After seeing a variety of GPs and specialists, who all told me that my case was incurable, I discovered that changes to my diet and lifestyle could truly have the power to help relieve my symptoms and improve my overall wellbeing. I became really interested in nutrition and how the human body works, so I left university with a new career in mind and enrolled in Naturopathy and Nutrition at CNM. Their combination of academic learning and clinical training was really attractive to me, as well as the flexibility to still work alongside and study part-time.

What I loved most about CNM’s course was that it really helped me understand just how important diet and lifestyle can be when maintaining your health. It gave me the tools I needed to make decisions for my own health and provided me with the experience of working with clients in a clinical setting. CNM changed my life because it gave me the ability to have the lifestyle I always desired. I launched my dream business in something I’m truly passionate about: nutrition and coaching people to become the healthiest versions of themselves. I have now co-founded my own wellness brand, ARDERE, with my sister, where we provide expert nutritional advice, offer healthy recipes and sell 100 percent organic natural-wax aromatherapy candles. I’m particularly interested in helping people who have a poor relationship with food or weight issues. If you’re keen to learn more about functional medicine, and how diet, lifestyle and overall wellbeing can be achieved through natural modalities, CNM provides great resources and develops your skills to become a confident practitioner.

“CNM changed my life because it gave me the lifestyle I always desired.”

Interested in studying?

CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) is the UK and Ireland’s leading training provider in a wide range of natural therapies with a 20-year track record in training successful practitioners.

Full and part-time studies. CNM’s Diploma in Naturopathic Nutritional Therapy is now available in class and online.

Contact them to find out more, or to book your free place at the next Open Event at your nearest CNM College.

01342 410 505, naturopathy-uk.com
You might think
little of dashing a splash of toilet
cleaner down the loo, or chucking a
capule of laundry detergent into the washing
machine, but new research has suggested that you
should be more wary of the effect chemical pollutants
have in the home. Environmental contaminants
were found to have the same adverse effects on
male fertility in both humans and dogs.
We recommend you steer towards cleaning products
with only natural ingredients. For instance,
the Tincture Naturals Kitchen Set,
which can be bought for £16.97
from tincturelondon.com.
SAVE THE PLANET

If you make one change this month, make it this…

Piercing a plastic straw into a carton of juice and sipping the contents might seem pretty harmless, but the action has potential to do great damage. The excessive use of plastic straws is doing great harm to the environment, specifically the oceans. Water is being polluted and aquatic life is being killed off on a huge scale due to the enormous amount of plastic in the sea. Every year about eight million metric tons of plastic ends up in our oceans, and in 2025, the annual input is estimated to be about twice that. Straws are a big contributor to that figure, and are among the top 10 items found in coastal clean-ups according to the Ocean Conservancy. To lower the impact, we recommend buying some paper straws, and popping them in your handbag in case of thirst. You can buy some biodegradable, paper ones at wholesalepaperstrawsuk.co.uk.

GREEN PEACE

If you’re bringing up kids, then you might want to pay attention to some new research. A recent study from Aarhus University, Denmark, has found that children who have grown up with greener surroundings have up to 55 percent less risk of developing various mental disorders later in life. Kristine Engemann who spearheaded the study commented, “the risk of developing a mental disorder decreases incrementally the longer you have been surrounded by green space from birth and up to the age of 10. Green space throughout childhood is therefore extremely important.” Researchers also know that noise, air pollution, infections and poor socio-economic conditions increase the risk of developing a mental disorder. So growing up in a green, unpolluted area should decrease these risks too. In addition, other studies have shown that more green space in a local area creates greater social cohesion, increases levels of physical activity level and can improve children’s cognitive development. So move to a greener area, and try to fit in as many picnics and bike rides as you can while they’re tots!
of the best... Reusable coffee cups

Got a take-out coffee drinking habit? You’re not alone. In Britain we drink more than eight million takeaway coffees a day. This all adds up, and the material your cup is made from can have a big impact on the planet. Reusable coffee cups are an eco-friendly alternative.

1 KeepCup
Cork Brew, £20, johnlewis.com

2 Frank Green Reusable
Coffee Cup, £20, climpsonandsons.com

3 World’s first reusable
cup made from recycled
cups, £11, amazon.co.uk

Do you know the facts about composting? If you don’t, May’s the month to get clued up. May 29th is National Learn About Composting Day!

GET IN THE GARDEN

May is the perfect month to get in the garden. It’s the time to get sowing, planting and lawn mowing in preparation for summer! “As bulbs fade and herbaceous borders grow in leaps and bounds, it is now clear that summer is approaching. Sowing and planting out bedding can begin, depending on regional weather variations, and you can take softwood cuttings. It’s also time to get back into the lawn mowing regime, as the grass will be loving the warmer temperatures this month brings,” says the Royal Horticultural Society.

DON’T WASTE GIFT WRAPPING

Does your grandma fold every piece of wrapping paper? Save every bag and every shred of tissue? That’s good. Be like grandma, says Kathryn Kellogg. When you don’t have tons of leftover wrapping to reuse, check out these zero-waste ideas.

SHOPPING BAGS
I always find shopping bags in the recycling bin at work. If the bag has a brand logo on it, you can always cover it up with a greeting card.

PACKING PAPER
With the amount of online shopping people do in the office, there’s never a shortage of butcher paper in the recycling bins. You can always doodle festive drawings on the paper, or keep it plain and add some decorative pizazz in other ways.

SILK SCARVES
Of course, they don’t have to be real silk, but there’s always a plethora of these scarves at the charity shops. They make such a beautiful addition to any present and are a present in themselves.

CLOTH NAPKINS
Cloth napkins are a little more rigid than silk scarves, but I tie them both the same way. The knot on top makes a cute bow. Cloth napkins are also a dime a dozen at the thrift store. They come in all different colours, perfect for any scheme to go with your additional decorations on special occasions.

NEWSPRINT
I think that newsprint is such a great wrapping idea.

Taken from 101 WAYS TO GO ZERO WASTE by Kathryn Kellogg, published by The Countryman Press (£8.79)
SOFTLY DOES IT

Feel the difference with relaxed bamboo yoga wear, from sustainable fashion brand BAM

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AVAXHOME - the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers
18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

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AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu
SHORT SLEEVED SERENITY TOP £34
SKIRT LEGGINGS £42
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EASY YOGA PANT £44

For the full range, visit
bambooclothing.co.uk
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Koko Dairy Free Super was created with dietitians to offer specially boosted nutrition for everyone. A coconut-based alternative to milk, it is enriched with 9 key vitamins and minerals and provides more nutrients than any non-specialist milk – plant or dairy. It’s low in sugar too!

With a delicious, creamy, full bodied taste and only the tiniest hint of coconut it is perfect on cereal, in smoothies and shakes or enjoyed straight from the glass. And, it’s free from all major allergens. It really is Super!

Available in either chilled or ambient variants in larger stores of most major supermarkets. Also available in independent healthfood stores.
Spring SKIN
Restock your beauty shelf after a spring clean with these new season must-haves

HEAVEN
We’re all guilty of spending too much time looking at screens, which can be harmful for our skin. Enter Prism Age Defiance, which promotes collagen and elastin production, helping your complexion against the blue light emitted by computers, mobile phones and tablets screens.
£28 for 15ml or £73 for 50ml, shop.heavenskincare.com

NYK1
Is your skin in need of a detox? If so, try NYK1’s charcoal face mask which works as a powerful exfoliator to shed old and dull skin cells, resulting in a fresh look and feel to your skin. You need to try it to believe it!
£16.99, NYK1.com

HRI HERBAL MEDICINE
As the warmer months draw closer, you may want to lighten your daily make-up routine or go bare-faced. So, keep your complexion beautifully clear and spot-free with the natural, active herbs in HRI Clear Complexion tablets. This unique blend of blue flag and burdock root concentrated extract is available at Morrisons, ASDA, Holland & Barrett, Tesco and Boots.
£5.49, hriherbalmedicine.co.uk

As the warmer months draw closer, you may want to lighten your daily make-up routine or go bare-faced
**GREEN PEOPLE**
Keep your skin safe from the sun with Green People’s Day Solution SPF15 moisturiser. Formulated with UV filters derived from edelweiss extract, titanium dioxide and cinnamon, this gentle skin defence cream provides broad-spectrum UVA and UVB protection, helping to prevent premature ageing. Plus, it’s packed with essential fatty acids and antioxidants, to leave your face moisturised and rebalanced.
£21, greenpeople.co.uk

**PURE & LIGHT**
Boost your complexion with Pure & Light Organic’s award-winning Essential Face Cream, packed with 27 active organic ingredients and vitamins. This staple product has the ability to intelligently adapt to all skin types and conditions to simplify your beauty routine. Not to mention it makes it an ideal gift, too.
£34, pureandlightorganic.eu

**e’LIFEXIR**
Put a spring in your step with e’lifexir’s Natural Beauty body range designed to protect and rejuvenate, resulting in softer, smoother skin. The seven different creams help target specific areas of concern, so whether you are looking to reduce stretch marks or enhance your natural assets, you’re sure to find one to suit your individual needs.
£15.99, hollandandbarrett.com

**BAO SKINCARE**
This intensive overnight boosting treatment works in sync with your skin’s natural nightly repair mode, meaning you’ll wake to a luminous, dewy and radiant glow. The pure skin-loving organic oils help to regenerate the top layer of your complexion, while also repairing, hydrating and renewing deep down. With a relaxing, night-time scent that helps encourage calmness too, you’ll be drifting off to catch plenty of beauty sleep in no time.
£34, baoskincare.co.uk

**SKINADE**
Want to boost your skincare for visible results? Skinade is the UK’s leading professional skincare drink and is engineered for the skin with a highly-effective formulation, which aims to improve skin tone, increase hydration and reduce fine lines and wrinkles. Seeing is believing!
£105 for a 30 day supply, skinade.com
EASY WAYS TO GO GREEN

An eco-friendly lifestyle can be simple with these fool-proof habits that'll undoubtedly benefit the planet.

THIS MONTH DISCOVER HOW TO:

• Beat food waste and eat more ethically on page 114
• Upcycle like a pro on page 116
• Shop smarter, as we uncover the cost of fast fashion on page 118
• Choose sustainable beauty buys on page 120
BE LESS WASTEFUL IN JUST 24 HOURS

Eat more, waste less in just one day, with these easy hacks to a more sustainable way of consuming food

The phrase ‘bitten off more than you can chew’ rings a rather unsavoury truth when it comes to food waste. In fact, some of the following statistics could make you think twice about how we dispose of our unwanted consumables. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation claims that roughly one third of the edible parts of food produced for human consumption gets lost or wasted globally, which is about 1.3 billion tonnes per year. In addition to this, an area larger than China is used to grow food that is never eaten. Confusion over food expiration dates, oversized portions, and a dislike for ugly or wonky vegetables all contribute to this problem. So, how can we break out of these bad habits? “As consumers, we need to remember that every purchase we make, whether it reinforces the status quo – or is a little step towards making a bigger change in the world,” says Emilia Vanpoperinghe, Oddbox co-founder (oddbox.co.uk). “The problem is, the impact food waste has on the environment is not yet fully appreciated – we believe that if more people understood it, they would make better choices every day and the whole industry would be forced to change.” If you want to do your bit, here’s how you can make a difference in just 24 hours.

9AM HAVE A FRUITY START TO THE DAY

Fruit and vegetables have endless benefits for both your health and the planet. Firstly, make sure you opt for loose varieties that are locally sourced. Ditch the unnecessary plastic that supermarkets coat them in, as fruits, like oranges and bananas, have their own natural protective peels. Use a brown paper bag that can be recycled in all other cases. Also, if you notice your bananas starting to turn brown and overripe, or if your berries are going soft – throw them into a blender, not the bin. Making smoothies with fruit or vegetables that have turned a little mushy, is an easy way to ensure they’re still being eaten. Finally, remember that fruits and vegetables can easily be repurposed as compost, as food waste is biodegradable. All you need to do is make a pit in your garden and put your waste in this, instead of a bin.

11AM WISE UP TO FOOD EXPIRY DATES

A use-by date on your food is about safety and refers to the day in which you should safely eat a product before it could harm your health. These are seen on foods that go off quickly, such as meat products. A best-before date, on the other hand, refers to the quality of an item. The food will be safe to eat after this date, but it may not be at its best. For example, the flavour and texture might not be as good.

12PM HAVE LEFTOVERS FOR LUNCH

There are an abundance of dishes that can be made with a little imagination and the remaining foods in your fridge, as Rosalind Rathouse, who runs classes in how to avoid food waste at The Cookery School on Little Portland Street (cookeryschool.co.uk), points out. “I make a great ‘bottom of the fridge’ soup using leftovers. The secret is to always brown onions or leeks in olive oil (garlic can be added too, if desired) as they give a lovely flavour to anything. Then throw in cut up veg and salad leftovers, as well as any herbs, and cook until tender. Blitz, and season well. Seasoning is so important as it makes the difference between a droll bowl of soup and a tasty one. For a treat, roast leftover bread, cubed and tossed in olive oil and add the croutons to the soup, just before serving.”
**2PM BEFRIEND YOUR FREEZER**

“Freeze anything that you will not eat the same day,” recommends Rosalind. “When you take this dish out a few weeks later, it feels like a treat as you don’t have to cook and you have a ready-made meal. If you are only freezing leftover herbs, it’s good to know you have them in stock when you have been unable to find fresh ones on that particular day. I keep frozen parsley as a stock item in my freezer, but I only use it for cooking purposes.”

**4PM SUBSCRIBE TO A WONKY SHAPE BOX**

“Supermarkets dictate to growers what to produce, based on customers’ expectations,” says Emilie. “They have very strict requirements about product appearance, so they look good on the shelves. They believe consumers expect each pack of tomatoes, apples and courgettes to look exactly the same and shop with their eyes. In order to meet supermarket demand of the perfect produce, as well as ensure there is never a shortage, the growers have to hugely over-produce. This way, there’s always an abundance of perfectly good, and fresh fruits and veg with wonky or surplus produce often ending up in landfill, or left in the field and having a negative impact on our environment. But, there is another way. “At Oddbox, we rescue the perfectly tasty, wonky produce and deliver it to our customers every week. Each of our boxes actually reduces food waste, so together, we can make a huge impact.”

**6PM CHANGE THE WAY YOU COOK DINNER**

Bought too much during your weekly shop? No worries! Head chef, Benn Hodges at EatFirst (eatfirst.com) has some imaginative ways to use excess ingredients.

“Ferment and pickle kale stalks and broccoli stems for use as pickle in special dishes. Use the trimming from your veggies to create a delicious natural vegetable stock. Simply bring to the boil and leave to steep overnight in the fridge. Turn the tomato trim from the top of your tomatoes into delicious tomato and chilli jam. Finally, dehydrate mushroom peelings and use it in furikake rice seasoning.”

**7-8PM DO YOUR FOOD SHOP**

“Supermarkets will reduce food prices early in the day, sometimes the night before, at around 25 percent off the retail price,” explains blogger, Laura Gaga (reductionraider1.wordpress.com). “These discounts will increase throughout the day and final reductions can be between 75-90 percent, with the hours of seven to eight in the evening being the optimal time to grab a bargain. Get into the habit of checking the reduced sections irrespective of which store you are in, including petrol stations or mini supermarkets. There is usually an allocated crate in the fruit and veg, dairy, meat and bakery aisles. Look out for dry goods too — usually products with damaged packaging, or when a store needs to clear a line, will be discounted.”

**10PM DOWNLOAD AN APP**

Suddenly remembered you’re out for dinner tomorrow and won’t get a chance to use up those last few carrots? Download Olio and donate them instead. “Olio is a food sharing app where users can advertise food that they no longer want, for whatever reason — moving home, or a change of dietary requirements,” says Laura. All you need to do is take a photo of your unwanted food, then share on the platform and people can message to take it off your hands. “Businesses, such as Deliciously Ella and Pret a Manger also distribute food which would otherwise be wasted.”

**NATURAL HEALTH 117**
WAYS TO TRY UPCYCLING

Lighten your impact on the Earth, boost your wellbeing and revamp your home all at once

Redecorating your home can be costly, not least for your wallet, but for the environment, too. In fact, it’s estimated that every year in the UK we throw out around 1.6 million tonnes of furniture and bulky waste, most of which is then buried in landfill or burnt in an incinerator, according to the RSA Great Recovery: Rearranging the Furniture report. But perhaps the old saying – one man’s trash is another man’s treasure – provides a solution to this growing waste problem. Why throw something away, when you could just revamp it? Enter upcycling – the practise of transforming an item with new materials for better environmental value. Unlike recycling, upcycling does not break down the materials, but refashions them to make a new product. Plus, you’ll be surprised by the wellbeing benefits that come as a bonus. Here are six ways to try it for yourself.

1 OFF THE WALL
If you have excess wallpaper left over from a recent decorating project, refrain from chucking it out, as there is an abundance of crafty projects that you can undertake to spruce up your home decor. “One of the easiest ways to upcycle with wallpaper is by creating your own framed artwork,” advises Calum Henderson from I Love Wallpaper (ilovewallpaper.co.uk). “If you have empty photo frames lying around, why not create a chic piece of wall decor with the remaining pieces. You could also transform a boring set of shelves with leftover wallpaper too. Simply attach strips of wallpaper to the backs of the shelves to give this furniture a fun makeover. This project works really well with bold, cartoon-style wallpaper and bright, block colours.” Plus, research suggests that colours can trigger neurological responses in the brain, releasing dopamine, the feel-good hormone, which can improve mood and heighten your attention span.

2 GO WITH THE GRAIN
Furnish your home with reclaimed wooden furniture. This refers to wood that comes from any source besides that of a newly felled tree. For example, a discarded pallet could be transformed into a table or bookcase. And don’t worry if you’re not confident enough to go into DIY mode yourself, as many places sell reclaimed wooden furnishings. Not only will this stop the timber going to waste but according to studies carried out in Norway, Japan, Canada and Austria, wood seems to have a positive effect on our emotional states. Research shows that environments with wooden structures can cause a drop in blood pressure and pulse and have a calming effect. Talk about two birds, one stone.

3 PAINT THE TOWN GREEN
Colour scheme no longer matching? No worries. “One of the most popular ways to transform a piece of much-loved furniture, is to give it a fresh lick of paint,” says Jane Crick, owner and designer of Blue Jigsaw (bluejigsaw.com) and Portobello Interiors (portobellointeriors.co.uk). “It’s easy to do yourself, and can completely transform the look and style.” But, make sure you opt for the toxin-free kind. The World Health Organisation says that professional decorators are 40 percent more likely to contract lung cancer as conventional paints can contain formaldehyde, heavy metals and volatile organic compounds (chemicals that easily become vapours or gases). Look out for plant-based, water-based paints and avoid those using titanium dioxide. Notable brands include Aglaia (aglaiapaint.co.uk), Biofa (biofa.co.uk) and Ecos (ecosorganicpaints.co.uk) for a more natural option.

4 REVIVE AND REFRESH
“If you’re bored of your interiors and fancy a change of style, you can give a room an instant update by re-upholstering some furniture,” advises Jane. “It’s the perfect way to revive a much loved piece without compromising on the comfort and style of the original design. You can re-upholster pretty much any soft furnishings – cushions, foot stools or headboards – the list is endless!” You’re essentially keeping the bones of the furniture, but updating the appearance with fresh fabric. There are plenty of DIY guides online that take you through the entire process of re-upholstering and always remember to photograph the chair before starting as this acts as a handy reference when you’re redecorating it. “Remember that, if you have any intentions of selling your re-upholstered piece, you have to ensure that it complies with fire regulations set down by the British standard,” adds Jane. Repetitive creative tasks like the aforementioned create a result and when you succeed at finishing something, no matter what it is, your brain is flooded once again with the chemical dopamine, which helps energise and motivate.
5 RE-USE EXISTING ITEMS
It’s time to get smart with your belongings; some can be more useful than you think. “Don’t throw your old curtain rods to the curb as there are a lot of practical ways to repurpose unnecessary window treatments for almost every room in your home,” explains Demi Stanley, who is part of the handyman crew at Fantastic Services in Manchester (fantasticservices.com). “These clever DIY solutions start in the kitchen – hang a pot rack to a kitchen backsplash from an old rod and brackets. Then add hooks to store your kitchenware away from the countertop. Alternatively, you could get creative in the garden by cutting the wood rod into several pieces and attaching hooks to hold the weight of small watering cans or buckets. Finally, you could re-use the rods in your bedroom by creating a storage solution for your hats, scarves, bags, or clothes in a similar way.” By tidying away old items with these clever hacks, you’re working to the principles of feng shui which is the flow and movement of energy within a space. Living in a cluttered environment can prevent this energy from flowing freely, stop clarity of thought, and weigh you down emotionally. By re-using items as storage, you’re creating a happy and healthy living area!

6 HARNESS PLANT POWER
We love a house plant here at NH! Not only are they great for your physical and mental wellbeing – with improved mood, better indoor air quality and reduced blood pressure among their credentials – but they can be planted in pretty much anything that isn’t a pot. Cans, old crockery, mason jars, wine crates and even corks can all experience a new lease of life by housing succulents and flowers alike. Not only will you save an old item from being thrown out, but you’ll also prevent the need to purchase new pots, all while giving your home a unique touch, too.
HOW DID FASHION BECOME SO DISPOSABLE?
Fast fashion is largely to blame. “This term refers to the trend of manufacturing clothing with breakneck speed, at incredibly low prices,” explains Veena Dookoo, director of Rocket Charities Ethical Fundraising Merchandise (rocketcharities.co.uk). “Although fast fashion is most commonly used amongst high street retailers, sadly we sometimes tend to see a similar approach in charity fundraising merchandise as well, as some charities are under pressure to raise money quickly. Unfortunately, this has a negative impact on the planet and often leads to poor working conditions for people in developing countries, who are involved in the manufacturing process.” Thanks to the rise of online shopping too, the nature of click and buy makes fashion purchases instant, adding to the quick pace of the industry. It’s no wonder the environment can’t keep up. Another key issue is the ratio of wearing to wasting, which tips largely in favour of the latter. In the UK, we buy 38 million garments a week and dispose of 11 million. “That’s a lot of landfill,” says Alice Wilby, a sustainable stylist, who teaches a short course on eco-friendly fashion at Central St Martins (University of Arts London). “When you consider that 64 percent of the fabric we wear globally is made of synthetics that will most likely never biodegrade, we are
scarcity. Cotton production in Uzbekistan has drained the Aral Sea, reducing an area the size of Ireland to a small pond. And, synthetic material doesn’t fare any better. We extract precious fossil fuels to make it, creating 40 percent of the industry’s carbon footprint as a result. When they’re washed, synthetics release millions of microfibers into our waterways, ultimately ending up in the sea, eaten by fish and then in turn, by us. And when made into cheap clothing, which is then disposed of after a few wears, synthetic clothing ends up in landfill, unable to biodegrade and further polluting the planet.” Luckily, a shift in attitudes has already started – in 2018, a third of consumers bought clothing once a month, down from 37 percent in 2016, according to research from Mintel. This may not be huge, but it’s a start nonetheless.

THREE WAYS TO DO YOUR BIT:
1. Shop with ethical brands
“With terms like ethical, sustainable, conscious, responsible, transparent, and organic often being used interchangeably, it can be confusing to know how you can shop ethically,” says Flora Davidson co-founder of Supplycompass (supplycompass.com). “Certifications such as Fairtrade and Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) are good indicators of social compliance, so it’s handy to look out for those. Apps like GoGo and GoodOnYou help you find sustainable and ethical businesses and show brands according to their ethical ratings. Having an understanding of the raw materials helps as well; fabrics considered to be amongst the most sustainable are linen, recycled PET and organic cotton. Some key brands to look out for are: Stella McCartney, Finisterre, Patagonia, People Tree, Reformation, Kowtow, Know the Origin and Veja. Reformation’s goal is zero-waste and they have created the RelScale to monitor their carbon footprint and they work with a range of recycled fabrics. Know the Origin are committed to a 100 percent transparent production process, presenting information on every manufacturer and supplier they work with – something we are working to change in the industry, to make global supply chains transparent and trusted.”

2. Get into the habit of questioning companies
“It is only from an informed point of view that the public can make a difference,” says Vecna. “You should look for fundraising merchandise that has certifications on the labels that indicate ethical manufacturing in the supply chain, and be prepared to pay more. Prices that look too good to be true, often are. You must ask yourself, is the price that I am paying for this product a fair price for the work that has been involved in making it?”

3. Buy second-hand
“There is an amazing wealth of second-hand clothing out there,” says Alice. “Second-hand clothing already has an existing carbon footprint, so environmentally it’s very ethical to buy pre-owned items.” Brands such as Xupes, who are a pre-owned luxury goods retailer specialising in designer watches, handbags and jewellery, help support this cause. “We work hard to educate on the benefits of investing in quality design that will last for decades, over purchasing a cheap throwaway item that will end up in landfill,” says Joseph McKenzie, co-founder of Xupes (xupes.com). “Buying pre-owned not only makes financial sense, but it also provides access to vintage designs that aren’t available from retailers any more. Add in the sustainability factor and we think it’s a proposition that really resonates with a lot of people. It’s also about encouraging people to re-sell their unwanted fashion items to create a cycle of buying and selling pre-owned, which in turn, will lead to reduced waste.”

QUICK TIPS TO MAKE YOUR WARDROBE WORK HARDER
Always try repairing your garments before throwing them out. Brands such as Patagonia and Nudie Jeans offer a repair service. If you don’t know how to mend a seam or sew on a button, look on YouTube, or take it to a tailor.
Make the effort to recycle your clothes. Depop is a great buying and selling app for your clothing. You can make a little bit of money, whilst also helping to lower your environmental footprint.
Rent items for events like birthdays or weddings to avoid buying more. There are loads of rental companies that offer amazing emerging, as well as established designers and sustainable brands, too.
1 BOTANICALS NOURISH CLEANS MELT, £26, BOTANICALS.CO.UK
All Botanicals products are 100 percent natural and fully biodegradable packaged in glass jars and bottles wherever possible.

8 FEMINESSE MENSTRUAL CUP, £17.99, FEMINESSE.CO.UK
Swapping to a menstrual cup means you’re preventing the waste of more than 2,400 tampons.

9 ORGANICALLY EPIC BAMBOO TOOTHBRUSH, £5.99, ORGANICALLYEPIC.UK
The average person uses 300 toothbrushes in their life – avoid this by switching to bamboo.

10 PHB ETHICAL BEAUTY SUPERFOOD FACIAL OIL, £36, PHBETHICALBEAUTY.CO.UK
This facial oil that is contained in a glass bottle, with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified outer box packaging.

2 LANI TROPICAL COCONUT FACE POLISH, £17.99, LOVELANI.COM
Not only do these bottles come in bright pops of colour but they are plastic-free too, with ingredients that are 100 percent vegan and don’t cost the Earth a penny either.

3 ZAO DUO SHINE-UP, £23.50 WITH REFILLS AT £13, ZAOESSENCEOFNATURE.CO.UK
Zao’s new Duo Shine-Up is a double illuminator with pink and gold reflections that is plastic- and cruelty-free, as well as being made with 100 percent natural and organic ingredients.

4 BAREFACED BEAUTY MINERAL EYESHADOW, £10, BAREFACEDBEAUTY.CO.UK
All BareFaced packaging is recyclable and most of it (including their plastic jars) is made from post-consumer materials – brilliant!

5 ERE PEREZ AVOCADO WATERPROOF MASCARA, £22.50, LOVELULA.COM
Founder of the self-named brand, Ere Perez, believes we should be “thoughtful and considerate of other people; conscious of conserving the beauty of the planet” – we couldn’t agree more!

6 BETTERYOU’S VEGAN HEALTH ORAL SPRAY, £14.95, BETTERYOU.COM
Bottle made from 70 percent ocean waste plastic and 30 percent post-consumer recycled plastic – this is 100 percent recyclable.

7 LENA WILD HARMONY RESCUE MASK, £45, LENAWILD.CO
Lena Wild’s bottles are made of glass, their paper boxes and labels are 100 percent cotton and fully recyclable, plus they consider transportation footprint, too.

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THIS MONTH’S SELECTION OF FAB GIVEAWAYS

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This month, one lucky winner will receive a host of PRIORI Skincare products. PRIORI has introduced a range called TTC (triple turmeric complex) which is a complete selection of all-natural skincare products formulated to include proprietary adaptive technology. It’s formulated with exclusive high potent natural compounds of three kinds of colourless turmeric root extracts along with green tea, grape seed, and liquorice. The combination delivers powerful adaptive multi-functional activities for antioxidant, brightening and anti-inflammatory properties. That’s what we call natural high-tech beauty! For more information visit prioriskincare.co.uk

WIN a selection of Ecooking skincare products!

Ecooking has teamed up with us to offer you a collection of fab skincare products. The brand uses only 100 percent natural oils, combined with the highest quality peptides and vitamins. It believes strongly in transparency and honesty, so all of the ingredients are listed on each and every bottle. What’s more, it’s also 100 percent cruelty-free and sustainable. That gets top marks from us! The prize contains the brand’s bestselling products – the Day Cream, Night Cream, Peeling Mask, Super Serum, Multi Balm, Vitamin E Serum, Eye Cream and Cleansing Gel. For more information visit ecooking.com

WIN a pack of three Dr David Jack All You Need advanced skincare formulas!

If you want a healthy looking complexion, this pack of advanced skincare products should be just the ticket. Designed as a three-step programme, the topical set provides daily antioxidant support. The regime begins with a formula specifically designed to be applied at the start of the day; Good Morning! is a vitamin C-infused balm which goes on smoothly after a morning cleanse to balance the skin’s pH level. Follow this with All Day Long – an SPF50 tinted moisturiser providing protection from harmful UV damage. Finally, there’s Good Night! which encourages skin repair as you sleep. For more information visit integrativebeauty.co.uk

WIN a hamper of Coconut Merchant goodies!

Time to go loco for coco! This month we’ve teamed up with Coconut Merchant to offer five lucky winners a hamper of goodies. We’re a fan of Coconut Merchant because they are vegan friendly, free from nasties, and committed to supporting farmers and delivering ethically-sourced natural products. The hamper includes the brand’s award-winning coconut oil, coconut butter, coconut flour, coconut sugar and milk powder. Sounds coco-cool! For more information visit coconut-merchant.com

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This month
WE’VE BEEN...

Orla Loughran Hayes reviews the latest wellness and buying trends

Making Vegan Eating a Breeze
Fancy upping your vegan meals during the week? Check out the offerings from The Brook – everything they make is plant-based, frozen and shipped straight to your door still bursting with nutrients. Your food arrives fully prepared and cooked, so all you have to do is heat it and you can be guaranteed of a taste sensation. Nothing is bland, everything is delicious, and it can all be eaten with a clear conscience.

There is a focus on ‘components’, with each individual item designed to be shared as part of a bigger meal – for example a noodle dish could make up the carb element of a meal for two, but I found them all perfect for lunch all by myself! Think dishes such as Sri Lankan Coconut Curry, or, unusually, ‘seafood stew’ which, if you weren’t in the know, could definitely pass for the real deal! From £48 per box, visit the-brook.co.uk

Decorating with Houseplants
If there’s one thing that can be said to be true for team NH, it’s that we are all house plant crazy! Honestly, you should see our desks – they’re spiralling with an array of leaves and ferns. And our houses are no different! So imagine our joy when Decorating with Plants by Baylor Chapman (Artisan) landed on our desks. This is a great guide for anyone who wants to take their plant addiction to the next level and incorporate their green friends into the interior design of their home. Baylor Chapman guides the reader room by room, explaining how to create looks which really work in your pad.

There is inspiration for every nook and cranny – got a dark and dingy corner you think no green life can live in? Try ivy – most varieties will happily dangle and decorate a dull area. Or how about creating a statement piece with a palm that touches the ceiling? There’s advice, too, for anyone who hates the dominance technology such as the TV has in the home – simply create a jungle of plants around your entertainment area to soften it. You’ll get handy tips on how to assess the light conditions in different areas, and tips and tricks for keeping your jungle thriving when you go on holiday. Plus, the more plants you have in your home, the better the air quality will be. What’s not to love?

Cooking Mindfully and Quickly
I’m a huge fan of recipe boxes and the way they take the labour out of making dinner on a weeknight. You don’t have to plan, you don’t even really have to think – you just pull out the ingredients and cook. But now Mindful Chef has gone even further with its 13-minute box meals which, as the name suggests, take you from hungry to dinner-ready in roughly 15 minutes. No hassle, no fuss, and a tasty and healthy meal in no time at all – what more could a busy girl want? There are options for veggie, vegans and meat-eaters alike, and meals include tasty choices such as roasted pesto salmon and Mediterranean-style lentils. There are 16 different meals to choose from each week, and prices start at £4 per person. Visit mindfulchef.com
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SAGITTARIUS  Nov 23 - Dec 22
Practical matters will take up your attention and your finances will benefit from a steady approach. Putting as much attention into staying fit, as you do towards chores will help to keep you buzzing along.

CAPRICORN  Dec 23 - Jan 20
A fun-loving and sociable few weeks will put the sparkle in your eye. You’ll be keen to play as hard as you work. Close partners will be firing on all cylinders after the 16th, so you’ll need to run to keep up.

AQUARIUS  Jan 21 - Feb 19
Taking time out for heart-to-heart chats at home will resolve any recent tensions. Your energy will be soaring and a busy social life beckons as well. Just try not to be too bossy with loved ones. After mid-month you’ll turn your mind to redecorating at home.

PISCES  Feb 20 - Mar 20
In a busy, varied schedule you’ll need to be on top of organisational details and check that what you say has been understood. There may be a heated mood at home, partly because you are taking other worries back with you and are perhaps blaming those close.

ARIES  Mar 21 - Apr 20
You’ll be considering how to put your birthday resolutions into practice. Money will be on your mind, partly because you’ll be tempted to spend and that means getting the budget in order. Persistence will pay off. As you race along, you’ll speak your mind directly.

GEMINI  May 21 - Jun 21
A stop-start few weeks will find you revving your engine, but you will be held back by circumstances. One close partner will be cheering you on, though their advice will, at times, veer towards the over optimistic. So double check that you aren’t being pushed too far, too fast.

CANCER  June 22 - July 23
More hands make light work, will be your motto. Invitations will pour in from all quarters, since your knack of making everyone feel at ease means you’ll be an amiable companion. One close partner may not seem too passionate or ecstatic, but they will be there for you when it matters.

LEO  Jul 24 - Aug 23
You’ll take the lead and get the respect of the people who matter. Friends will be supportive. Sticking to your good health resolutions will be important since go-go-going all the time can be draining. Your social life will bounce into a new phase from mid-month.

VIRGO  Aug 24 - Sept 23
You won’t want to be stuck in a rut doing the same-old, same-old, but you’ll be taking the odd risk to awaken your life. This is a time to think big, speak confidently and broaden your horizons. Later, joint efforts will zing along and you’ll be praised.

LIBRA  Sept 24 - Oct 22
You’ll be sorting out private dilemmas, financial and emotional, for the first three weeks. Be firm and patient. You will have yearnings for more adventure, but you’ll need to be practical about what’s possible. Lay your cards on the table as tactfully as you can and be persuasive.

SCORPIO  Oct 23 - Nov 22
Sharing, caring and co-operating will be the way to go. Socially you’ll be in demand, but will also need to be serious when faced with a few challenging situations. Being firm and flexible will see you to agreements. Later, one special partner will shower you with affection.

Marjorie Orr is one of the world’s leading astrologers, with more than 25 years’ experience. Her new book By the Light of a Lie (£7.99, Horne Publishing) is available to buy from amazon.co.uk. For a personal consultation with Marjorie visit, star4cast.com

For your personalised stars from Marjorie call 0905 072 3804 or speak to one of her psychics – call 0906 539 0201. Calls to 0905 cost 75p per min, 0906 cost £1.50 per min; from a BT landline/mobile costs will vary, 18 plus. All calls recorded for your protection and security.
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I winced to find that I was being held back by my need for approval and by withdrawing from people.

“I’m not usually wild about board games” — they bring back memories of childhood holidays playing endless rounds of Monopoly and Cluedo as the rain drummed on the roof of our rented beach hut. However, the Transformation Game has me hooked.

This ‘workshop in a box’ was developed at legendary spiritual centre Findhorn (findhorn.org), back in the 1970s. It started out as a bit of fun but the creators soon realised that the game was a powerful tool for self-development.

I was invited to play at London sanctuary, A Place to Heal, (aplacetohal.co.uk) and eagerly accepted. After all, this is the game that gave birth to the famous ‘Angel cards’ and ‘Blessings cards’. It has a reputation for creating change and also for its lengthy sessions – up in Scotland, you can play the game for four days, or even a week. However, this was just a taster session and planned to last a mere three hours.

Facilitator Jacqueline Redmond welcomed me and my three fellow players and we introduced ourselves over drinks and nibbles. Jacqueline explained that we needed to come to the game with a ‘playing focus’ – a question requiring answers or insights. “It could be about personal issues; about changing habits; about handling transitions or removing blocks,” she said. We took it in turns to share our intentions and it swiftly became clear this was miles away from Trivial Pursuit. There were tears before we even rolled the dice.

Each of us chose a small crystal as a counter and threw the dice to be ‘born’ into the game and onto our ‘life paths’ (our own section of the board). More throws of the dice let us pluck a series of cards (angel, insight and setback) which we tucked away in envelopes acting as our personal unconscious. Each time we landed on a square there was a choice to make or a card to pull out. The cards we drew were remarkably accurate – I winced to find that I was being held back by my need for approval and by withdrawing from people. Another card gently reproved me for getting uptight when my ego received a minor dent and I pulled away (horribly accurate).

The game is played at a slow pace, as each person ponders on how the cards apply to their question. It’s also very much a group activity as we gave our own thoughts and insights into what emerged for one another, under Jacqueline’s gentle guidance. “There are no winners in this game,” said Jacqueline. “The object is to shift your perspective; to show how to make changes in your life. You could call it a personal consulting tool, but it is not prophetic or mystical.”

It was totally engrossing and I could honestly have kept playing all night. By the end, we all had insights into our questions, and had formed a warm bond with one another. As we hugged and said our goodbyes, the question on all our minds was simply: “When can we play again?”

Jane is on Twitter and Instagram as @exmoorjane and on Facebook as @eJaneAlexander
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