

On course for a natural cure

FOR YEARS, Catherine Nash held down a high-pressured job in IT which involved her criss-crossing the country by car.

She knew the stress, constant travelling and coffees and snacks at motorway service stations were taking their toll on her health. But she had no idea just how much.

She already suffered badly from digestion problems, but she finally vowed to change her lifestyle when she was in her late 20s and a gynaecologist told her she was only 50 per cent fertile.

Convinced that long and tiring working hours, poor diet and lack of exercise were conspiring with the painful womb condition endometriosis to threaten her fertility, and frustrated at the failure of other treatments to alleviate her agonising cramps, Catherine began seeking natural cures.

Within months of consulting a naturopath and trying a vegan-style diet, herbal remedies and colonic irrigation as part of a nutrition and treatment regime, she noticed a reduction in her pain and improvements in her general

by Mary Morgan

health. That experience inspired her to abandon her punishing job as an IT manager and become a naturopath herself.

After studying part-time for a diploma with the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM), she set up her own practice in Rochester, Kent, and says she was inundated with demand. Within a year, she gave birth to her first child.

'The naturopath's attitude was so different from that of the specialists I went to see. She was positive and encouraging and spoke of the beginning of my recovery,' says Catherine, now 40.

'I decided this was what I wanted to do. The quality of the teaching at CNM was superb, and I soon made up the course fees after starting my practice, Thyme To Heal. I chose to specialise in fertility.'

Catherine is taking a break to raise her two children, Michael, five, and David, three, but applies naturopathic principles to her family's health.

CNM offers a range of courses, for example in herbal medicine and

acupuncture, but one of the most popular is the diploma in naturopathic nutrition. This emphasises the role of organic and whole foods in alleviating common ailments.

Qualified nutritional therapists are in demand in a range of settings, including community healthcare and private health clubs.

PART or full-time study is possible at CNM's Central London college, while weekend courses are available at various locations in Britain to cater for those who need to fit study around work commitments.

Naturopathy is just one of many possible careers in the health and fitness sector.

Elizabeth Dutton, 46, of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, became a weight-loss coach after hearing about Real-Goals Weightloss Coaching.

She trained with Real-Goals to gain a new skill and was also able to help a long-time friend with chronic fatigue syndrome, whose illness had led to significant weight gain.

'The Real-Goals programme is



Healthier and fulfilled: Catherine Nash with David, three

unique and is nothing to do with dieting,' she says.

'It begins by taking the person back to the time when they began having a weight issue — illness, pregnancy, divorce or whatever — and working through it.'

Clients are given personalised advice on healthy eating, exercise and their own diet to promote a loss in weight that is slow, safe and permanent. They also enjoy ongoing support while they adjust to their new lifestyle.

The course consists of five home-study modules — which can be completed within eight to 12 weeks — covering aspects of human biology and the principles of Real-Goals weight loss, and a two-day intensive practical workshop.

The other side of the healthy living coin is fitness, and intensive courses can help would-be personal trainers or fitness instructors start earning money within a few weeks.

YMCA Fit (Fitness Industry Training) offers a wide variety of courses throughout the year, including personal trainer and gym instructor awards.

■ *FOR more on the College of Naturopathic Medicine, log on to naturopathy-uk.com or call 01342 410 505.*

For weight loss coaching, log on to slimwithreal-goals.co.uk or call 01530 270351.

For YMCA Fit courses, log on to ymcafit.org.uk or call 020 7343 1830.