

Ask the EXPERTS

We put your fitness, health
and nutrition questions to our
panel of experts...



Q “What are the best
at-home exercises to
tone your abs?”
Mollie Green, Liverpool

A Chris Warton, co-owner and director of the
Better Body Group says:

“While it’s important to remember that the quickest route to a leaner midriff is a carefully controlled diet, there are some excellent home exercises to help add some definition once your body fat percentage starts to drop. Here are my two favourites:

1 Plank variations

Isometric exercises like the front plank are excellent for targeting the whole of your trunk. Start with normal front planks for 30-second sets then work up to 60 to 90 seconds. If you are doing a front plank correctly you shouldn’t be able to hold it for over three to four minutes. The trick is to clench your buttocks and pull your forearms back towards your feet. This will create much more tension with the added bonus of working your chest, glues and lats.

2 Ab cycles

Recent research suggests that the ab cycle engages the most abdominal musculature of all floor exercises. Simply lie flat on your back with your fingertips behind your head. Now raise one leg and bring your knee to touch the opposite elbow. Repeat with alternate leg in a cycling motion for 30 to 60 seconds.”

Q “Is it true that one
week of painkillers can
increase the chances of
a heart attack?”
Kayleigh Thomas, Newcastle

A Naturopath Gemma Hurditch, lecturer
at the College of Naturopathic
Medicine(naturopathy-uk.com), says:

“Recent research has suggested that use of common NSAID painkillers such as ibuprofen is associated with an increased risk of a heart attack. It did not conclude as to whether the drugs or the conditions being medicated were responsible for the increase, but risk peaks in the first seven to 30 days of use and is enhanced with higher doses. Troublingly, using these tablets for respiratory infection such as a cold puts us at even higher risk. In fact, just having a cold increases cardiovascular risk, so it would be prudent to help ward off illness by eating an unprocessed, organic diet and taking sensible exercise. Where possible, choose anti-inflammatory pain relief from nature – foods such as turmeric, ginger, cloves, oily fish, brightly coloured vegetables and berries. Reduce inflammatory dietary agents such as vegetable seed oils, dairy and grain-fed meats. For pain management acupuncture and herbal medicine can also provide welcome relief.”

Got a question you’d like to put to our experts? Drop us a line at letters@yourfinesstoday.com