

# Ask the EXPERTS

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



**Q** I'm fed up of doing squats but really want to tone my bum. What other exercises are good for this area?

**A** **Personal trainer Louise Condon, (jumpnjuice.co.uk) says:** Here are a few of my favourite glute exercises to build a peachy bottom that are super easy and can be done at home.

- **The glute bridge.** Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet on the floor hip width apart. Keeping your shoulders on the floor and your feet firmly on the ground, lift up your bottom, squeezing it tight at the top. Then lower your bottom back down to the floor and repeat 20 to 30 times. To make this more difficult, add a hand weight, bottle of water (or even a small child!) and rest them on your hips while you do this move.
- **The step up** is great for building the booty. Find a step, stair or chair and place one foot on it. Push up through that foot, straightening the leg and lifting the other foot off the floor. Tap the second foot next to the first then lower back down to the floor leaving the first foot on the step. Do this 15 times on one leg, then repeat on the other.
- **Reverse lunge.** From standing, step one leg behind you and drop the back knee down towards the floor while also bending through your front leg (making sure the knees don't come in front of the toes). Keep your back straight, your abs pulled in and your chest up. Push off the front foot bringing your back leg up parallel with your front foot. Repeat on the other side. Aim for 15 reps in total on each side (to add resistance grab some hand weights, a bottle of water or a small child again).

**Q** What are the best foods to eat on the go to keep me energised?

**A** **Nutritionist Mary Cotter, graduate of CNM College of Naturopathic Medicine (naturopathy-uk.com), says:** A handful of raw nuts is a perfect high-energy, protein-rich snack to inject an instant boost to flagging energy levels as healthy fats help promote satiety and reduce cravings. Eat one cupped handful with one piece of fruit for balanced blood sugar.

Iron-rich green smoothies can also boost the production of energy. To make your own, blend a banana, a handful of spinach, 1 tbsp of unsweetened almond butter and ¼ tsp of cinnamon for a deliciously creamy, energising drink.

Alternatively, you could make your own portable energy balls. Simply mash unsweetened peanut butter with 1 tbsp of ground mixed seeds, 1 tbsp of chia seeds, desiccated coconut and honey and roll into mini spheres for a healthier alternative to confectionery mid-afternoon!

Finally pack your own nut and seed trail mix. Swap raisins for dried apricots for a lower sugar option as this will help keep your energy on an even keel.

Got a question you'd like to put to our experts? Drop us a line at [letters@yourfinesstoday.com](mailto:letters@yourfinesstoday.com)