

ASK *the* EXPERTS

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



Q *What should I eat before a workout?*

FRIDA HARJU-WESTMAN, nutritionist for health app Lifesum (lifesum.com) says:

Wholegrain bread, pasta, and brown rice are great sources of long-term energy, as they provide your body with glycogen and fibre. But make sure you have these at least an hour before your workout to give the food time to digest. Also, for an extra boost, I recommend drinking coffee to help reduce the sensation of fatigue linked to physical activity.

It is best to avoid foods that will give you an upset stomach. Obviously each individual's tolerance to certain food types is different but, generally speaking, spicy foods and rich, creamy sauces can disrupt the digestive system or cause heartburn. Additionally try not to eat anything with a high salt content like crisps and fast food because they can dehydrate you causing intense thirst and tiredness during your workout.

STAR BUY

Barilla Wholewheat Pasta, £1.50, **Tesco**



Q *I feel stuck in a rut and bored with my job, how can I change my mindset?*

DR BHAVNA JAISWAL, chartered psychologist from The Nelumbo Consultancy (nelumboconsultancy.com) says:

Without any fresh challenges, remaining in the same job for a long time can leave you feeling demotivated and unable to muster the same level of energy and drive that you had on your first day at work. Tell-tale signs that you may be suffering from this include a lack of interest and energy, feeling stressed, down or a sense that you are unfulfilled. Here are some steps which can help you get out of the rut:

1. Accept your present position – try to be mindful so that you can

be more focused on your current stress. If you engage with the situation, rather than avoid it, you will be better able to work towards a solution.

- 2.** Set realistic goals which are aligned with your talents and move forward.
- 3.** An exercise programme including short walks, breathing exercises and a change in routine will also help to reduce your feelings of boredom.
- 4.** You can feel proud and appreciate yourself if you can see how much experience you have working in your field – that will boost your self-confidence.

Q *I hate the taste of fruit and veg, how can I incorporate more into my diet?*

Naturopath GEMMA HURDITCH, lecturer at CNM College of Naturopathic Medicine (naturopathy-uk.com), says:

Eating more veg and fruit improves our chances of a long, healthy life, lifts our mood and improves our waistline, so it's well worth the effort. Aim for four portions of veg for every one portion of fruit.

Home-made soups and smoothies are a delicious and easy way to pack in plenty of veg in one go and you can flavour them with herbs and spices – plus, leftover soup makes a warming winter breakfast. Squeeze more veg into your day by replacing pasta with spiralized courgette or sweet potato, use aubergine slices instead of pasta sheets in lasagne, make cauliflower rice, freeze bananas to make ice cream or shred Chinese cabbage to replace noodles.

You could also add a slice of lemon or orange to your herbal tea and make crudités of broccoli, cauliflower and cucumber for dipping into hummus. You'll soon enjoy the benefits of consuming more veg. One final tip – choose organic if you can.

LITTLE HELPERS

Veggie Bullet, £149.99, **highstreettv.com**

Berg Soup Maker, £139, **berginnovations.com**

Fullgreen Cauliflower Rice, £1.99, **fullgreen.com/uk**

