



# ASK THE EXPERTS

Don't suffer in silence – our wellbeing wonder-team of experts is on hand to answer your health questions

*I'm a bit nervous about going upside down in yoga. Have you got any advice on getting started and what some of the benefits of inversions are?*

**Chris Magee**, head of yoga at Another\_Space ([anotherspace.london](http://anotherspace.london)), says:

“Fear around inversions is very common and most of the time it comes from a lack of knowledge more than a lack of ability to do the pose. The biggest tip is to not skip the fundamental prep postures – the dolphin pose, for example, helps to develop shoulder strength and openness for headstands and forearm stands, while chaturangas enable a good technique for tripod headstands and arm balances.

“Inversions are hugely beneficial when it comes to reversing the body's blood flow – easing the strain on the heart and flushing blood from the legs, which takes pressure off the calves (often referred to as the second heart as they have to work hard to pump blood back up your body when we are standing). These postures are challenging, but also incredibly fun to do. Remember the benefit isn't coming from making the shape, but rather from you applying yourself, facing your fears and meeting your challenges head on. Inversions (literally) change your perspective on life. Enjoy the journey.”

*Is tofu really good for you?*

**Jon Hawkins**, health and fitness adviser at Discount Supplements ([discount-supplements.co.uk](http://discount-supplements.co.uk)) says:

“With the rise of meatless Mondays and veganism taking centre place on menus, cooking shows and supermarket aisles, tofu has never seemed more popular. Made from curdled soy milk, tofu (sometimes known as bean curd) is a fantastic source of protein, containing all eight essential amino acids, as well as being rich in iron. It is also a great source of vitamins and minerals such as magnesium, copper, selenium.

“Tofu is well known for containing isoflavones, being the richest source of all known foods and these are used to combat cancer, PMS and menopausal symptoms. It is also packed with calcium, handy for increasing bone density and preventing injury.

“Tofu has a negative shadow that tends to be associated with it regarding health, but providing it's organic and non-GMO, it can be one of the healthiest, most nutritious additions to your diet. Many consider fermented soy (such as miso or tempeh) to be superior to tofu as it is often less processed. It's great for overall health as it contains protein and fibre, as well as being high in the vitamin K2 which maintains bone health, supports blood flow to the brain and helps in keeping your arteries flexible and healthy.”

*Are there any easy acupressure techniques I can try at home?*

**Tracey Underhill-Law**, course leader in acupuncture at College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM)

([naturopathy-uk.com](http://naturopathy-uk.com)), says:

“For safety and effectiveness always see a qualified practitioner, however, some simple DIY techniques can help bring relief.

“Many people suffer from eye strain during a working day: ease tension by putting gentle but firm pressure for a few moments on points known as UB2. If you drew a horizontal line through the middle of your natural eyebrow line, this point would be on that line just above the inner corner of the eye where the upper and lower lids meet. Hold the pressure for a minute or two until you feel warmth or tingling. Continuing with small circular action for a couple of minutes afterwards helps address stagnation and promote blood flow.

“The same two-part technique can be applied for clearing a blocked nose, focusing on an acupressure point called Li20 which is located on either side of the nostrils, in the lines that run from the nostrils down to the corners of the mouth.”