



## ASK THE EXPERTS

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

*How can I improve my gut health?*

**Eva Killeen**, director of the Natural Chef Course at the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) ([naturopathy-uk.com](http://naturopathy-uk.com)) says:

“Prebiotics and probiotics are the key to good gut health. Prebiotics are an indigestible form of fibre found in fruits, vegetables and starches, and are linked to promoting the growth of helpful bacteria in your gut. The best sources of prebiotics come from raw and cooked onions, raw garlic, cabbage, dandelion tea, asparagus, artichokes and leeks.

“Probiotics are good bacteria, just like those naturally found in your gut. These active cultures help to change or repopulate the intestines to balance gut flora. Although supplementation is a popular choice, it is possible to consume probiotics through diet. The best sources of this come from apple cider vinegar, fermented miso, coconut kefir, kombucha, sauerkraut and kimchi.

“It is important to remember that a diet filled with fresh, organic wholefoods will always be best for good gut health. Sugar, caffeine, alcohol and processed foods can aggravate the gut and should be reduced.”

*How can I keep my hair looking fresh and hydrated in the summer season?*

**Dr Sharon Wong**, consultant dermatologist ([drsharonwong.com](http://drsharonwong.com)), says:

“There are many ways you can stop your hair from suffering during the warmer months. Air drying your hair as much as possible and taking advantage of the warm weather to dry naturally is an invaluable break from the heated equipment we use far too often. Summer is the best time to allow your hair to recover from heat styling.

“Try to ensure you wash your hair straight after going to the beach or pool – leaving chlorine and salt water on it can make it even more dry and prone to frizz. When spending a day in the sun, protect your mane from the harsh UV rays, which can not only dry it out but also bleach the colour and damage naturally occurring protein. You are best to wear a hat or use a protective product such as Philip Kingsley's swim cap (£17.02, [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)) which contains natural ingredients to provide protection, and it only washes out when you next shampoo.

“Invest in a leave-on hair oil and apply from mid-length down to the tips where the dryness is worst. Natural oils such as argan and coconut oil suit most hair types. You should also tie long hair into a loose braid before sleep to reduce knotting. You'll be left with a beautiful natural waviness in your hair the following morning.”

*Hot weather wrecks havoc on my skin – what can I do to help?*

**Dr Jonquille Chantrey**, cosmetic surgeon and global beauty lecturer ([drjonquille.co.uk](http://drjonquille.co.uk)) says:

“To minimise breakouts, cleansing is vital. Although sunshine can often help to clear up spots it can also exacerbate the condition. Sebum production increases in warm weather, and then pores can become blocked and spots can arise. I would always recommend you use a good exfoliating cleanser which can help to minimise oil production and keep pores clear.

“To add to this increase in oil production, the skin is often bombarded by products that we may not use in the cooler months such as fake tan and sun screens. They can block the pores and cause breakouts.

“If you are lucky enough to go abroad, most hotels have air conditioning which, although cooling, can offer a stark comparison between the extreme heat of a Mediterranean beach. The two extremes in temperature can play havoc with our skin. This can lead to dehydration, where the skin looks dry and irritated with visible fine lines. In this case, I would recommend proper skin cleansing before retiring to bed, combined with plenty of fluids.”