

# ASK *the* EXPERTS

Our panel of health experts answer your burning questions...



**Q** “Are there any supplements I can take to help boost my immunity against winter bugs?”

**GEMMA HURDITCH**,  
naturopath at CNM College  
of Naturopathic Medicine  
([naturopathy-uk.com](http://naturopathy-uk.com)), says:

“There’s a whole host of supplements aimed at boosting immunity. For general health, I would certainly recommend taking a vitamin D supplement – D3 is believed to be absorbed the best. Various probiotics have also shown efficacy in reducing frequency and duration of illness, both respiratory and gastrointestinal. I find that medicinal mushrooms, such as reishi and shiitake, are also great for giving an added boost. Oregano oil, olive leaf extract and good old fashioned garlic and horseradish can keep you feeling fighting fit. Be sure to help nature along by regularly washing your hands, eating plenty of vitamin C-rich peppers, citrus and green leafy vegetables, and keep processed food to a minimum.”

**Q** “I suffer with constipation because of my IBS – would probiotics be helpful for this?”

**JENNY LOGAN**, technical  
training manager at Natures Aid  
([naturesaid.co.uk](http://naturesaid.co.uk)), says:

“Probiotics have long been used to support digestion and IBS, often with varying results. In recent years, we’ve discovered that different strains of good bacteria have different roles to play in our health and wellbeing. A wealth of research has been carried out in this area and has helped us to identify specific good bacteria for different conditions. Three strains have been highlighted as particularly useful for IBS-C (irritable bowel syndrome with

constipation). Trials carried out over a six-week period used these three bacteria mixed into a prebiotic fibre called fructooligosaccharide (FOS). Subjects reported improvements in inflammation, bloating, abdominal pain, constipation, cramps and flatulence. Because of this, I always look to use this combination of good bacteria and FOS for any client suffering with IBS-C. I often choose to combine it with magnesium, as I believe this helps to support healthy muscle contractions in the bowel.”

**Q** “I want to start ballet classes, but I’m in my 50s and scared it will be embarrassing. How can I get over this?”

**RACHEL WITHERS**,  
founder of BalletBeFit  
([balletbefit.co.uk](http://balletbefit.co.uk)), says:

“I can assure you that I hear this type of question all the time. In fact, most of the new students in my classes struggle with insecurities about their weight or age before their first class. They’re afraid that they’ll show up and everybody else will have a perfect body and move like a ballerina. This just isn’t the case. When my clients have tried it once, they see that the classes are full of normal women just having fun. Nobody’s perfect and that’s what makes us human. That’s why we invite people to experience BalletBeFit — we’re all just looking to better ourselves and improve our health. If you feel it’s a little bit intimidating to start ballet classes, I highly recommend that you check out our new BalletBeFit TV channel. Here, you can see what we do and who we are from the comfort of your own home. When you’ve seen that the rooms are full of like minded women of similar abilities, you’ll be sure to get a massive confidence boost.”