

Your health &A



You asked: "My son has been diagnosed with coeliac disease. I want to ensure that he has fun at friends' birthday parties without worrying about food. What do you recommend?"



GEMMA HURDITCH ANSWERS: "Gluten is so prolific in our diets, and particularly in party food, that it is unrealistic to expect there to be a great deal of choice for your son without you providing it. We cannot recommend the gluten-free versions of foods such as biscuits and cakes because they are generally highly processed, devoid of nutrients and very high in sugar; plus the rice flour in these products is increasing our arsenic consumption. Your son could choose (or make with your help) a few special treats so he feels less left out of the party food. Could he take with him a special party food lunch box that has all the treats he can safely have? Provide a few extras in case friends want to try what he is eating. However, as nowadays more and more children appear to have some form of allergy or intolerance to food, your son may not feel too left out, after all! When it's your turn to host, you could make it all coeliac-friendly, using a coloured plate system where, for example, all of the foods that are gluten-free are on green plates, and the foods he must avoid are on red."

■ Naturopath Gemma Hurditch lectures for CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine). CNM trains students for successful careers in a range of natural therapies in class and online. Visit www.naturopathy-uk.com

You asked: "What are the most common causes of poor sleep or sleep disturbance?"



KEELEY BERRY ANSWERS: "In our increasingly 'always on' culture, we can all be guilty of a little too much screen time. Blue light technology is one of the most common causes of disturbed sleep and even struggling to wind down in preparation for slumber. Switching off your phone and other tech at least an hour before bed will give you a better chance at a restful night's sleep. Many people can often overlook nutrients – and deficiencies – as a common cause for poor sleep, too. For example, low levels of magnesium in the body have been known to impact on our sleep cycles. Magnesium is a natural relaxant and can counter stress by stimulating the GABA receptors in your brain. When your GABA levels are low, your brain can get stuck in the 'on' position and it becomes difficult to switch off. Our modern lifestyles make it tricky to maintain healthy magnesium levels through diet alone, meaning that for many people it's important to supplement. When it comes to combating disturbed sleep, supplementing magnesium transdermally (through the skin) – such as taking a magnesium-rich bath – is a great way to soothe the mind and muscles."

■ Keeley Berry is a nutritional expert and NPDP Executive at BetterYou. Visit www.betteryou.com

You asked: "What is Coenzyme Q10, who can benefit from it and why do we need it?"



JAYNE WILSON ANSWERS: "Coenzyme Q10 is a vitamin-like substance that is found in all of the body's cells but in especially high concentrations in organs that have a high metabolic rate, for example the heart, liver and kidney. Although it is produced in the body, levels of Coenzyme Q10 decrease with age. Coenzyme Q10 comes in two forms: ubiquinol and ubiquinone. Ubiquinol is the most abundant form in the body. Ubiquinol and ubiquinone come from the words 'ubiquity' and 'ubiquitous' which derive from the Greek term for being 'everywhere at once'. Coenzyme Q10 is naturally present in foods such as organ meats (for example liver and kidneys) and also in oily fish like mackerel and sardines as well as beef, soy oil and peanuts. Coenzyme Q10 is fat-soluble, so it is better absorbed when taken with a meal that contains oil or fat."

■ Jayne Wilson is a wellbeing expert for www.wassen.com

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