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Delicious dairy-free recipes, exercise tips and motivation, top giveaway prizes, readers' health questions answered, plus all the latest news from the world of natural health and wellbeing

Your health

Q & A



You asked: "I'm worried about making the transition from lockdown back to normal life. Do you have any tips?"



JOAN HAINES AND JACCI WRIGHT ANSWER: "Here are some ideas to help give your energy a kickstart and to manage your personal energy levels as we emerge from lockdown and Covid:

Physical energy: The myth about our physical energy is that we can work continuously without stopping for long periods of time. That is actually a quick recipe for burnout! To increase your physical energy, try to work in 90-minute intervals with 15-minute breaks. Aim to go to bed a little earlier, reduce alcohol and do a little exercise several times a day.

Emotional energy: How you feel affects how you perform. Promote calm with deep breathing and regularly express appreciation. Creating anticipation and excitement is an important way of boosting emotional energy, so when you are able to, arrange to spend time with someone you really enjoy on a regular basis.

Mental energy: Renewing the energy that fuels our ability to focus and be creative can be done by letting the work go completely. Make your first task of the day the most challenging and get focused by switching off distractions – phones, emails etc. Go for a walk or listen to music – just let it all go. When you come back you will be ready to focus again.

Spiritual energy: What you do really matters. Although this is headed as spiritual it relates to our own higher purpose. The reality is that balance comes when we care for ourselves as well as serve others. As you emerge from your lockdown situation allocate time to thinking about what is important in your life. Find the activities that make you feel great and do them more often.

■ Joan Haines and Jacci Wright are both transformational coaches from Shared Inspiration and are based in Yorkshire. For more information, visit www.sharedinspiration.co.uk



You asked: "I have been suffering with acid indigestion lately. How can I tackle it naturally?"



MICHELLE SANCHEZ ANSWERS: "Acid indigestion, also known as heartburn, can be caused by a number of factors, including hiatus hernia, *Helicobacter pylori* (a bacteria found in the stomach), pregnancy, obesity, medications like aspirin, smoking and stress. Eating acidic and inflammatory foods such as spicy foods, red meat, garlic, onions, citrus, dairy, chocolate and tomatoes can increase stomach acid production and irritate the stomach lining, therefore exacerbating symptoms.

The best way to figure out what foods are making your heartburn worse is to keep a food diary. Write down everything you're eating and any symptoms that occur. Avoid trigger foods, coffee, tea, alcohol and carbonated drinks to reduce your acid load and prevent symptoms. Instead, opt for alkalising foods like leafy green vegetables, cauliflower, broccoli, root vegetables and legumes. Eat slowly and chew your food properly as this helps break down the food particles so they can be better digested. Don't eat large, heavy meals before bedtime; allow two hours for your body to digest the food before lying down.

Drink one teaspoon of raw organic apple cider vinegar in water 15 minutes before meals to help stimulate your digestive juices and neutralise stomach acid. It's an effective remedy for heartburn and reflux and it also helps to alkalise the body.

Gentian, dandelion root and burdock are herbs that contain bitter compounds to increase stomach acid production and the secretion of pepsin (a digestive enzyme), both of which are needed for healthy digestion. Bitters need to be taken as a liquid tincture, not as a capsule."

■ Michelle Sanchez is a Naturopath, Nutritionist and Herbalist. CNM is the No.1 Training Provider in Natural Therapies such as Nutrition, Herbal Medicine, Acupuncture, Homeopathy, Natural Chef and Health Coach. Train online or in class. Call 01342 777 747 or visit cnmcourses.com



You asked: "How common is it for people to suffer with joint-related problems like arthritis? Can collagen supplements help?"



KEITH ALLUM ANSWERS:

"Joint, bone and muscle issues are very common. Our 21st century lifestyle – particularly bad diet and lack of exercise – is a huge reason why more of us suffer from the likes of osteoarthritis which is caused by wear and tear and/or trauma.

While arthritis is traditionally more common in older people, there is a worrying rise in the 40/50 age range with regard to replacement joint surgery. Adopting a controlled, balanced diet, managing weight and introducing regular, moderate exercise all help, and taking a collagen supplement is also a proven way forward.

Collagen keeps connective tissue flexible, enables bones and cartilage to bear weight and is the most abundant protein in our bodies. We all start out with the same amount of collagen, but that can change from as young as 25. Levels diminish by about 1.5 per cent every year and joints stiffen. By 45, collagen will reduce by up to 30 per cent. Consequently, bone-on-bone contact can cause discomfort and arthritis pain.

A number of foods help to support the creation of collagen. Kale, spinach and asparagus strengthen the body's ability to manufacture collagen and to utilise the protein effectively. Red fruits and vegetables can also top up collagen levels. As for supplements, always look for those with a high collagen content. Quality is key and be prepared to persevere as results can take a little time."

■ Keith Allum is the Managing Director at ArthroVite Ltd, the company responsible for introducing collagen hydrolysate to the UK back in 1995. www.arthrovite.com 0800 0181 282.

Email your questions to liz@jfnproductions.co.uk

You can also write in with your queries: *Your Healthy Living* Q&A, JFN Productions, Unit G2, Blois Meadow Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead, CB9 7BN.

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