



More nutritional tips from Elaine Wiseman

Many of us or our family members are now working from home more at kitchen tables and in chairs not designed to be sat in all day. This, coupled with a lack of regular movement, can exacerbate any old niggling injuries or aches and strains, so I thought I'd share my tips on helping to manage joint pain through diet.

Bear with me – this one is a bit messy – but I know of people with arthritis who have reported that this simple tip has improved their symptoms, and it's also a good detox idea!

Lemon peel contains lots of vitamins and healing properties: grate the peel of an unwaxed lemon and put in ice cube trays before placing in the freezer. You can pop these in a cup of warm water each morning and drink on an empty stomach for maximum effect.

Gin and sultanas: my nan and mother-in-law always said this helped with their joints and arthritis and you've probably heard of this tip before. Soak sultanas in gin (best to use a cheap gin but will leave that up to the individual!). Once the sultanas have swollen in size (I would soak for a good week for the best results) take a teaspoon of the gin soaked sultanas a day. Believe it or not, juniper is excellent for joints as they have anti-inflammatory properties, but please use in moderation! This mixture is known to alleviate pain in joints.

[Here's a useful article](#) to help posture when working from home – well worth a quick read. Thanks to Amy Pullinger for finding this.



Winning at daily life...

Social media is awash with images of over-achieving friends, family and 'celebrities' making the most of lockdown to take up a new skill or hobby, which is admirable but at times a little grating! Sitting back and taking things a day at a time for many of us is enough, and I've personally learnt that the key is to take everything at your own pace, trying not to draw comparison, and celebrating your own small victories. I was however inspired by a friend to have a dabble in some 'mindful creation' – basically a chimp's guide to art which involves nothing more than sitting down with a blank sheet of paper, some paints, pencils or crayons and 'just creating' without any thought for the end product. Take half an hour and give yourself permission to just do something that feels good; splatting paint on a page, doodling, scribbling, release your inner child and have a go – the end product is not of importance. I'm sharing mine with you to demonstrate just that! Visit www.mindfulartstudio.com for more examples and guidance – happy doodling!

Who managed to spot Elon Musk's SpaceX pass across the night sky this week? Take a moment to look up...with no planes there have been some truly incredible skies...

Mindfulness through movement



Tai Chi is gentle Chinese martial art of slow meditative physical exercise, designed for relaxation, balance and health. It combines mental concentration, slow breathing and dance-like movements to increase life force energy as well as building upper and lower body flexibility. It has been practised for centuries in Eastern countries and, due to its mood boosting benefits and proven positive impact on overall psychological wellbeing, it's grown in popularity over the last few years. It's the perfect exercise to start in social isolation as it requires the smallest amount of space, no equipment and practising just seven minutes a day can really make a difference.

Here are some links to some easy exercises to get you started:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXPXJwjyGgM

www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGA6HGGMtkQ



Wellbeing and the importance of exercise and fitness by Andy Holter

The great benefit of exercise is that not only does it have a positive impact on our physical and mental health but it's also a fantastic opportunity to take in the wonders of the great outdoors (within current guidelines!). The sound of the sea, the beauty of the blue sky and the warmth of the sun, are all wonders we often fail to take notice of whilst exercising, but all help to boost mood. Taking time to walk to work, or a brief evening stroll to clear your head at the end of a long day will have a positive effect on our endorphins and serotonin levels which are released during exercise. Exercise can be a scary word, especially for those of you who have perhaps not engaged with it before, but remember that it is never too late to learn or try something new and it doesn't have to mean high impact. The improvement in your positive well-being will rapidly make you appreciate the value of building exercise into your daily routine.

Some of the benefits of exercise include:

1. Increases life expectancy
2. Reduces the risk of a stroke
3. Lowers the risk of heart disease
4. Lowers the risks or slows down the onset of dementia
5. Increasing self-esteem
6. Boosts energy levels
7. Helps to manage weight
8. Elevates mood
9. Enhances quality of sleep
10. Reduces the risk of suffering from depression

You can reap these benefits for as little as approximately 22 minutes moderate exercise per day.

Most importantly – remember to enjoy yourself, don't see it as a chore.

To enjoy exercise and maintain motivation, you could play your favourite music, listen to a radio programme or podcast you enjoy or exercise with friends (virtually) to turn it into a more sociable pursuit. There has never been a better time to dig out those trainers and give it a go.

Want to learn more -have a listen to the Andy's recording in the Wellbeing File in Academy on Sharepoint.

By popular request

Despite a current scarcity of flour, many of us have taken to baking in our free time, for relaxation and comfort. On last week's call, our very own resident star baker Michelle Thorn was deluged with requests for some of her sweet treats, which due to lockdown she's sadly unable to fulfil. Instead we've gone one better and asked her to share her go to cake recipe for you all to have a stab at recreating at home. Photos please!

Basic Victoria sponge

225g margarine
225g caster sugar
225g self raising flour
4 medium eggs
Vanilla extract

Method: Beat margarine, sugar and vanilla extract until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time to prevent mixture curdling. Sift in flour and beat until all combined. Divide mixture between two 9" sponge tins and bake at 180 fan assisted for 20–22 mins until it springs back.

My top tip: If you want to mix it up a little is to add cocoa for a chocolate cake or coffee for coffee and walnut. You can add ice cream sauce to the butter icing – it makes a delicious twist. You can even try a strawberry cake with Percy Pig icing as M&S have a special sauce!

