

Best Health Editor
 Janet Horwood

Everyone's Talking About...

Honey

Best for: Extra energy — a spoonful before exercise will help you to keep going for longer — and for wound-healing, due to its natural antibacterial properties. Dressings using Manuka honey often speed up the healing of difficult wounds, such as leg ulcers.

The low-down: The latest honey product is made by bees fed on herbs such as alfalfa, bay leaf, sage, angelica, hydrangea and Indian fig — which can all help soothe digestive discomfort, such as indigestion, IBS symptoms and constipation.

Look for: GastroMel, £25 for a 120g jar, from good health stores.



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Well-being Feet your best With Health Editor Janet Horwood



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The Natural Solution

THE PROBLEM	THE SOLUTION	WHAT'S IN IT	HOW IT WORKS
SENSITIVE SKIN When your skin is dry or you suffer from eczema.	Just Soap Oats & Honey Deed Sea Salts, £6.25 for 350g; www.justsoap.com.	Organic oats, goat's milk and honey.	Organic oats soothe sensitive skin, honey moisturises and vitamin A, B6, B12 and B in goat's milk reduce drying and flaking of the skin.

Health On My Shelf

Paula Radcliffe is the current women's marathon world record holder. Her book, How To Run, is published by Simon & Schuster (£14.99).

What's in your medicine cabinet?
 Antibiotic ointment for all the scrapes and scratches I get, especially when I'm training in the desert and get too close to a cactus!

What's good in your fridge?
 Lemons, pears, peaches, nectarines and apples — I'm an apple juice fiend. And almond and rice milk, because I'm intolerant to lactose and dairy. I start the day with fresh lemon juice and coffee, and then have a bowl of porridge with water instead of milk.

What's your favourite exercise?
 Running! I am very lucky that it's my job, it's what I do for stress relief and chilling out. When I run, I get off into my own little world and won't even think about where I'm going.

When are you happiest?
 When I'm running or with the children.

How do you relax?
 If I train hard, I always have an afternoon nap, write down with a good book, or play with the children for an hour or so.

Mouth Ulcers?
Try this... A good diet

According to the latest research, nearly four in ten of us have an outbreak of mouth ulcers at least twice a year. They are a sign of being run-down and under stress, but can also be caused by accidentally biting the side of your mouth. Some foods can trigger mouth ulcers, so avoid anything that's too hot or spicy, or may irritate the ulcers, such as citrus or toast. Some nutritionists recommend reducing your intake of sugar, vinegars and pickles, and any foods that you know trigger your ulcers — these could include peanuts, chocolate or coffee. If you smoke, stop or at least try to cut down.

Reduce stress

There is evidence that stress and lack of good-quality sleep can trigger mouth ulcers, so try to avoid getting overtired and find ways to relax that work for you — whether that means mindful meditation, a daily walk or breathing exercises. Try *Relax: The Art of Mindful Living* by Tony Wrigglesworth (Virgin Books, £5.99) for ten simple steps to instant calm. From bookshops, or download from iTunes.

Topical treatments

There are lots of ways to soothe mouth ulcers. Try mouth sores — either with a mild salt-water solution (a teaspoon of salt dissolved in a glass of cooled boiled water) or add a few drops of tea tree oil to a glass of warm water. Some modern gel-based silver treatments form a thin skin over the ulcer for temporary relief. Try The SP Mouth Ulcer Patch from Boots Pharmaceuticals (£6.13 for six patches), a thin self-gel disc that adheres to the mouth ulcer to cover and protect it for a few hours, helping it to heal naturally.

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HEALTH

WHAT A BUZZ

If you wish you had the energy of the bumblebees that are buzzing around at this time of year, then EnergyMel might be worth a shot. The makers of this rather pricey enriched honey, which contains herbs such as ginseng, say that it can help prevent chronic fatigue, speed up the healing process and give you a shot of energy within 30 minutes.

EnergyMel,
 £25 for
 120g. [www.
 revital.co.uk](http://www.revital.co.uk)
 and [www.
 victoriahealth.com](http://www.victoriahealth.com)



Lava at first sight

Shell out for a treatment that will leave you relaxed and beautified

EDITED BY GABY SOUTAR

Before I visited the lovely Aspen Spa in Edinburgh, for their new Lava Shell Thermal Facial, I was feeling slightly nervous. The thought of a relaxing treatment wouldn't normally give me the jitters. However, I've experienced a lava shell body massage before, and although it's a wonderful treatment, the shells do get rather hot.

I was anticipating having to waver out of this place with a bright red visage. I couldn't have been more wrong. The therapist and owner of this salon, Carl, explained that the "shells" she uses for this

new treatment have actually been made from a thick casing of pectin, which helps to regulate the warmth that emanates from their centres (a refreshing combination of massage and skin-appraisal).

They're also much smaller than the natural shells versions that are used for the body massage, so they work more efficiently on the contours of your face.

After Carl's reassurance, I was ready to rock on.

The "30-minute treatment starts

with your toes being immersed in warm water that contains minerals including magnesium and iodine, which are supposed to help de-stress and de-toxin.

Then it's time to hop up onto the cosy treatment bed, where Carl removed every scrap of my make-up with a chamomile-based cleanser. My skin was then treated to a surprisingly gentle scrub that contained grains of sand (a la the scalded-related theme), before I was approached with a lotion hand-washed towel.

After all this prep, Carl picked up the super smooth and luscious warm shells, and began to massage them over my face, with the help of a rich cocconut oil. This felt amazingly soothing, especially when she worked the shells across my forehead, neck and shoulders.

And they're especially good

looks for popping the jelly knots

along the top of your scalp.

The next stage involved a thick face and eye mask of Dead Sea mud, which was removed before an application of energising glycerine. Every element of the treatment seemed to be accompanied by neck or shoulder massage, so I felt

completely relaxed by the end of the 70 minutes.

After the massage treatment was over, my skin wasn't pink at all. In fact, it was glowing, just as if I'd taken a



brushing with down by the sea-bore.

LEE SANDALL

Aspen, 3 Lady Road, Edinburgh (0131-4674707, www.aspenbeauty.com).

Fab facts for a beautiful life

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 revital.co.uk](http://www.revital.co.uk) and [www.
 victoriahealth.com](http://www.victoriahealth.com)

BEAUTY

TWICE AS NICE

We're suckers for the Body Shop's classic Body Butter. So we were delighted to experience the latest additions to this range - the Body Butter Duo. Each of the four varieties, which include Floral Acai (Guacolda), Sweet Acai, Vanilla and Macadamia, feature oils that are divided into two compartments: one of which contains a cream for normal areas of skin, with the other featuring a richer version for pesky dry patches. Body Butter Duo, £18.50 each. The Body Shop, www.thebodyshop.co.uk

FITNESS

MARTIAL HEARTS



According to a recent report in the Archives of Internal Medicine, Tai Chi can be of benefit to patients with chronic heart failure. Researchers studied a group of patients suffering from this disease, and found that those who took part in two sessions of the meditative martial art per week reported a marked improvement in their quality of life. For those unable to do more intensive activity, the exercise seems to be perfect. www.taiichfinder.co.uk

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The Natural Solution

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DIGESTIVE TROUBLES Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), indigestion and acid reflux.	GastroMel, £25 for a 120ml jar, from health stores. 	Propolis, alfalfa, bay leaf, sage, angelica, hydrangea, Indian fig. 	Propolis has an antibiotic effect and is also believed to help relax tight muscles, effectively relieving constipation.



Well-being

Feel your best with Health Editor Janet Horwood



Everyone's Talking About...

Jersey Royal potatoes
What's so special? They've been unique to the island of Jersey for 130 years — and the season's only from April to June. Best fun: Being low in calories, fat free and, when served with their skins on, a great source of fibre.
The low-down: Jersey Royals have more vitamin C than most other potatoes, as well as being an excellent source of vitamins B6 and minerals, copper, zinc and potassium.
Look for Jersey Royal Company Pearl Potatoes, £1.99 for 500g, from major supermarkets, including Asda, Tesco, Waitrose and Morrisons.

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Health On My Shelf

Claudia Leach, nutritionist and weight-loss expert at www.phylosid.com (or call 020 3170 7970).

What's in your medicine cabinet?
I make my own immune-boosting combination of astragalus, echinacea, manuka honey, thyme and bilberry — two teaspoons a day keep me healthy.

What's good in your fridge?
Fresh berries for my morning porridge; lemons, parsley, chillies and fresh fish fillets. I make a fat-free dressing, blending cider vinegar, lemon, parsley, garlic and chili, to mix with fresh pasta and add grilled fish.

What's your favourite exercise?
Walking. I try to walk for 30 minutes a day. I hate the gym — it's far too heavy on the joints. And before my morning shower, I do some basic stretches.

Have you ever had to diet?
I lived in Bahrain for three years and piled on the pounds. I went on a diet, so I know what it means to have to lose weight.

What do you do to unwind?
I listen to the radio — Radio 4 or Classic FM — and read newspapers or magazines.





Incontinence Problems?

Try this...
Pelvic-floor exercises

Strong pelvic-floor muscles help reduce stress urinary incontinence — which can happen when you cough, sneeze or jump. Find the right muscles by trying to stop the flow of urine when you are on the toilet. Every day, lift those muscles for a count of ten, hold for ten and relax for ten. Repeat ten times. Then do faster contractions — lifting the muscles quickly, holding for just a second, relaxing for a second, then repeat ten times. This will help the pelvic floor to cope with sudden pressure.

Try: Stomach sure, which sends gentle electrical impulses to the pelvic-floor muscle, 50x45, only from www.incontinencecare.co.uk, www.incontinencecare.co.uk, www.incontinencecare.co.uk — and from other leading retailers.

Drink plenty

Drinking enough water is vital to manage and even to avoid incontinence — if you're dehydrated this can cause constipation and further incontinence. Research shows that drinking four to six mugs of tea a day is as good as drinking a litre of water.

Extra magnesium

Studies have shown that magnesium could relieve urge incontinence (when you have a sudden, urgent need for the loo), because it reduces bladder muscle spasms and allows the bladder to empty completely. Try including magnesium-rich foods such as whole grains, fish, and green, leafy vegetables in your diet.

Try: Metabolics Magnesium Hydromed, £24.45 for 90 capsules, from the Water Centre stores nationwide (call 020 8752 8460, or visit www.watercentre.com). Don't take magnesium supplements if you have kidney problems.

If you have any concerns about your health, visit your GP

Woman's Weekly 29



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