

THIS is the month to...



1 BREATHE LIFE INTO IT
Every time you take public transport, walk or drive to work, follow this unique exercise designed by Bowen Technique yoga and breath work expert Caroline Kremer:

- Breathe in through your nose, allow your mouth to open wide, letting your jaw go slack.
- Let the air out gently with no force or sound – lighter than if trying to mist up a mirror – making sure your lungs are completely empty.
- Allow your body to let go, and breathe naturally for three minutes. Repeat three times and notice how your lungs inflate more deeply, filling with air, producing a feeling of lightness and deep relaxation. carolinekremer.com

2 **Vitamin D-Day**
Latest stats suggest 50 per cent of the UK population is vitamin D-deficient – but sunbathing without protection is not the answer. 'UV exposure damages the DNA in skin cells – if skin is protected with SPF it can repair itself, but if not, subsequent exposure will simply create irreparable damage,' says Candice Gardner from the International Dermal Institute. Yvonne McMeel, resident nutritionist at Urban Retreat, Harrods, says it's better to eat and supplement the vitamin D you need. 'The best sources are mushrooms, eggs, fortified spreads, yogurts and cereals, while oily fish, such as salmon, herring, mackerel and sardines are also good.' For a boost, add a drop of Biocare Bio-Mulsion D, £8.95/10ml (biocare.co.uk), daily to water.

4 **Food for thought**
It's so much easier to eat well in summer, so grab the opportunity to start a cook-from-scratch regime. New book *Healing Foods* by Neal's Yard Remedies (Dorling Kindersley, £16.99) takes it one step further by listing which foods help with common ailments. It's beautifully photographed, well laid out, full of information and simple to use. We love 'A Day of Good Digestion' with a full day's meals and notes on how certain ingredients maximise absorption and elimination.

3 **THE NEW 11AM RULE**
We're not suggesting you ditch your morning coffee but shifting it to 11am, instead of first thing, will make a big difference. 'Blood sugar levels are low when you get up in the morning, so you need to rehydrate first. If you don't, you'll set off a rollercoaster of energy highs and lows that will last all day,' says nutritional physiologist Rick Hay. Once you've had some water and eaten breakfast, your blood sugar levels are stable enough to deal with caffeine – so go ahead and enjoy!

5 **ONCE BITTEN...**
A study from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine recently found that DEET is not as effective at keeping mosquitoes at bay just three hours after application as it is when first applied. So can we rely on repellent? Yes, if you're travelling to a malarial area, you should still pack it – as well as a mosquito net, cover-up clothing and anything advised by your GP. For those who are mosquito magnets, even in non-malarial climes, consider essential oils such as eucalyptus and citronella to ward off bites. Try Incognito Anti-mosquito Spray, £10.45/100ml (baldwins.co.uk) or Lovely Lanolips Herbal Treatment Body Oil, £9.95/60ml (victoriahealth.com). ■