

# The best health advice EVER!

Shoe shopping, long lunches and buying cute handbags were just some of the words of wisdom when *Company* asked 11 leading experts for their ultimate health tip

## 1 THE DENTIST

Dr Michael Carling runs Carling Dental in Harley Street, London (020 7580 3168)

### TIP: CHEW SUGAR-FREE GUM

Carrying around a toothbrush wherever you go isn't practical, so having a pack of sugar-free gum in your handbag can be a useful trick at times when brushing your teeth is impractical. Chewing gum straight after a meal can reduce your risk of tooth decay, as it stimulates saliva flow, which helps to wash food debris away from your teeth. This minimises the risk of bacteria build-up, which produces the acid that attacks the surface of the teeth causing dental decay. But don't chew for too long. The job is done in around ten minutes – chewing the gum for longer dries out your mouth and defeats the purpose.

## 2 THE PODIATRIST

Dipesh Raja is a podiatrist at the Peter Jones Footopia studio in London (020 7259 0845)

### TIP: BUY MORE SHOES

If your shoe collection puts Carrie Bradshaw's to shame, your tootsies will thank you for it, even if your bank manager doesn't. Wearing the same pair of shoes day after day is bad for your feet because your shoes don't get a chance to dry out properly and remain damp, causing nasty fungal infections, such as athlete's foot. Not alternating your shoe styles can lead to corns, callouses and bunions, and can even mean your feet start to take on the shape of your favourite shoes. It's worth spending money on decent pairs, too, so justify your expensive purchases by reminding yourself that soft, good quality leather is far better for your feet than cheaper, stiff leather.

## 3 THE CANCER EXPERT

Dr Lesley Walker is director of cancer information at Cancer Research UK ([www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org))

### TIP: TREAT YOUR CERVICAL SMEAR INVITATION AS PRIORITY MAIL

Attending cervical screening every three years is an important step to reduce your cancer risk. Cervical cancer can affect women of any age, so, when you receive an invitation for a smear, don't ignore it – the NHS programme has saved over 100,000 lives. You should get an invitation in your early to mid-twenties. The test is quick and painless, and helps doctors find changes in your cervix before they develop into cancer.

## 4 THE FITNESS INSTRUCTOR

Joanna Hall is a leading fitness expert ([www.joannahall.com](http://www.joannahall.com))

### TIP: GET A Pedometer

Walking is the best all-round form of exercise, but you need to check you're doing enough, so grab yourself a good pedometer (try [www.ukpedometers.com](http://www.ukpedometers.com)). The average person takes 4,000–6,000 steps a day but, with a bit of creative thought, you can easily start hitting that 10,000-step healthy target. Try pushing yourself a little harder, aiming to walk in bouts of at least ten minutes, fast enough that you get just out of breath. You'll be surprised what you can achieve – a power-walk window-shopping session will improve the stamina of your heart and lungs, as well as giving you a blast of visual retail therapy.

'With a bit of creative thought, you can easily start hitting that 10,000-step healthy target'



You heard it here first – owning lots of shoes is good for your health!

## 5 THE NUTRITIONIST

Ian Marber is nutrition consultant and director at London clinic The Food Doctor ([www.thefooddoctor.com](http://www.thefooddoctor.com))

**TIP: READ FOOD LABELS**

When you buy ready-made food, first check the ingredients to see what's in it. There are good and bad fats, but of the bad fats, one stands out as the worst – hydrogenated fats. Found in many ready-made cakes, chips, pastries, pies, chocolates, sweets and ice cream, these fats are popular with the processed-food industry because they're cheap and prolong shelf life, but they have no role in your body. They contribute to many conditions, including cardiovascular disease, so look at the label, and if it contains hydrogenated fats, or even partially hydrogenated, put it back on the shelf.

An SPF moisturiser will help protect skin against all sorts of UV nasties



**TIP: USE AN SPF MOISTURISER**

## 9 THE DERMATOLOGIST

Dr Emma Edmonds is a dermatologist at the British Skin Foundation (020 7383 0266)

**TIP: USE AN SPF MOISTURISER**

You might always apply sunscreen on holiday, but most ageing effects of the sun occur day to day. Up to 80% of the sun's damaging UV light gets through cloud, and exposure can happen in the shade and even while you are indoors. In a typical week, UV-radiation exposure can total nearly 20 hours – that's like a weekend at the beach without sunscreen. Help protect your skin from wrinkles, fine lines and skin cancer by choosing a face cream that contains both a moisturiser and a sunscreen. *Company* loves Clinique Weather Everything SPF15, £27, and Evian Original Hydrating Lotion SPF15, £7.49.



Give your eyes a break by leaving your desk at lunch

**TIP: BE A LADY WHO LUNCHES**

## 6 THE OPTICIAN

Dr Rob Hogan is Dolland & Aitchison's eye-health expert ([www.danda.co.uk](http://www.danda.co.uk))

**TIP: BE A LADY WHO LUNCHES**

If your job involves sitting in front of a computer all day, working through lunch could be bad for your sight, as well as your sanity. Too much time staring at a screen can lead to serious long-term effects, and make you so short-sighted you might need specs. Try to rest your eyes during the day (wander around the shops!), and avoid red, tired and gritty eyes by taking a mini-break every 20 minutes to allow them to re-moisturise and shift their focus. If you regularly get headaches, blurred vision and dry, irritated eyes, then you may be sitting too long in front of your computer and need your eyes examined. This needn't cost you a penny – under European law, your employer is obliged to pay for routine eye checks.

## 7 THE NATUROPATH

Stephanie Driver is senior naturopath at the Apotheke

20-20 Naturopathic Health & Wellness Centre in London (020 8995 2293)

**TIP: POP A PILL**

Alcohol reduces the liver's ability to detoxify your body. While there's no substitute for being sensible, you can help lessen the damage with a milk thistle supplement. Taken often, it's proven to help regenerate the liver. If a big night's on the cards, take 3 x 500mg milk thistle and a B-complex vitamin before you go out and when you get home.

## 8 THE NURSE

June Davison is a cardiac nurse at the British Heart Foundation

([www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk))

**TIP: KNOW YOUR PAST**

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is the UK's biggest killer. If close family members get it when young (under 65 for women and under 55 for men), you could be at higher risk and also be prone to high blood pressure and cholesterol. To lower the risk, don't smoke, eat a diet low in saturated fat and salt, and exercise often. Ask your GP to check your cholesterol and blood pressure.

## 10 THE PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Warwick McNeill is a chartered physiotherapist at Physioworks in Mayfair, London (020 7409 1539)

**TIP: DE-CLUTTER YOUR BAG**

Carrying a heavy bag can damage your posture. So, if you cart around everything but the kitchen sink, it's time for a clearout. A weighty or badly carried handbag drags your shoulder blades forward, making your head poke forward, and can ultimately cause muscles to over-lengthen. Lighten your load by emptying unnecessary items. Ideally, use a bag you can wear in various positions so you're not putting all the pressure in one spot, but if your favourite handbag only has a long strap, remember to alternate the shoulder you carry it on.

## 11 THE GYNAECOLOGIST

Peter Bowen-Simpkins is a consultant gynaecologist and a member of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists ([www.rcog.org.uk](http://www.rcog.org.uk))

**TIP: USE A CONDOM**

If you've had unprotected sex, you could have unknowingly caught a STI. Chlamydia, a bacteria-like micro-organism, is the most common cause of gynaecological problems in young women, and cases have increased by more than 75% in the past decade. You're particularly at risk if you have a number of partners. Fewer than half of all chlamydia infections have visible symptoms, but, left untreated, chlamydia can make you infertile. So always be careful when you have a new boyfriend and, if you're worried, go to your doctor for a test. ■