

Your health Q&A

Q You asked: "I am going on holiday with my family this summer and want to make sure that we are all protected from the sun. What is the difference between natural and conventional sun care products? Are they suitable for young children?"



Pat Hume answers: "Natural sunscreens are most definitely suitable for the tender skin of young children and of course adults as well! Natural and organic sunscreens sit on top of the skin and reflect the sun's rays like a mirror and are made

using natural minerals such as titanium dioxide and zinc oxide giving the best sun protection for your skin. After application the sunscreen becomes effective immediately – there is no need to wait for 20 minutes. Natural sun care products also contain other natural and organic ingredients which give a caring and moisturising effect on the skin. Natural sunscreens also protect from the damaging UVA rays which cause skin ageing and UVB which is the cause of sunburn. The difference between natural and conventional sunscreen is that conventional sunscreens use chemicals like oxybenzone, which absorbs the sun's rays and is absorbed into your skin – which is the reason for the 20-minute wait. Also other chemical, synthetic sun filters are used such as octyl methoxycinnamate and phenylbenzimidazole. What would you choose? I know what I would choose."

● Pat Hume is Pravera's customer advisor. Pravera Ltd distribute **lavera**, Primavera, Alma Win, Monte Bianco, Sodasan, Florascent and Organyc. Visit www.pravera.co.uk

Reader Linda won this month's prize: a Lavera Sun Milk SPF 30 and a Baby and Child Sun Cream SPF 30, worth a total of £23.90



@ Email your questions to liz.parry@jhnproductions.co.uk

You can also write in with your queries: Your Healthy Living Q&A, Unit 2, Three Hills Farm, Ashdon Road, Bartlow, Cambridgeshire, CB21 4EN.

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Q You asked: "I am interested in the idea of following a raw food diet but I can't imagine giving up cooked food completely. Can you give me any tips?"



Elizabeth Montgomery answers: "The benefits of eating food in its natural raw state are numerous. This is because when food is cooked above 47.78°C (118°F) it destroys an array of key nutrients essential for health. There is widespread scientific evidence suggesting that a minimum of 30 per cent of vitamins and minerals are lost during most cooking processes.

Eating foods in their raw state ensures that they are packed full of phytonutrients and age-defying antioxidants. They are also full of enzymes which are vital for numerous metabolic functions including digestion, energy production, transporting nutrients into the cells and slowing down the ageing process. Here are some tips:

- Start the day with a green vegetable juice or smoothie. Juicing helps to 'pre-digest' vegetables and ensures that the nutrients are absorbed directly into the system.
- Think big, colourful rainbow spectrum salads at lunchtime with a handful of raw pumpkin seeds or sprouted legumes for additional protein and trace minerals.
- Focus on adding in raw rather than taking away cooked food. This is a much more realistic approach ensuring that raw foods become a regular part of the diet. Try having a salad before a cooked meal, or swapping crisps for celery and houmous. The trick is to be creative while still enjoying your food."

● Elizabeth Montgomery is a holistic nutritional therapist. For more information, visit www.holisticnutrition.co.uk

Q You asked: "I have a terrible habit of getting really irritable and angry whenever I get hungry. I keep snapping at my husband and children and I feel awful afterwards. What can I do to keep this under control?"



Saira Salmon answers: "Hungry and irritable? In the new terminology that makes you hangry. It also makes you one of the many people who suffer from blood sugar imbalances which see your moods go from nice Dr Jekyll to snarling Mr Hyde, as your blood sugar dips below the critical.

Eating something fast usually rights things quickly – the only problem is, in your 'hangry' state you make all the wrong choices – cakes, biscuits, chocolate bars. Anything to get blood sugar levels up quickly, causing a surge of sugar into the blood stream, followed a little later on by another crash.

So what can you do if you recognise this picture? Number one is to have breakfast every day – but not a cereal-based breakfast, rather something sustaining – eggs maybe, or porridge. The rule then is to eat little and often, before your blood sugar levels start to dip. Good quality food is key. Opt for low glycaemic carbohydrates, fibre and nutrient-rich fruit and vegetables and small portions of protein and fats. Add in things like nuts and seeds, avocados, smoked salmon, berry fruits, cottage cheese and eggs. Refined and processed foods need to be avoided, as do stimulants such as coffee, alcohol and fizzy drinks."

● Saira Salmon is a nutritionist working with New Gen Direct. Visit www.newgendirect.com