

HOW CAN I STAY FIT FOR LIFE?

That's the question on our lips this issue. So we've gathered an extra special *healthy* panel to answer all things exercise, movement and nutrition, for wherever you are on your fitness journey

→ THE HEALTHY PANEL

PIP BLACK is the co-founder of FRAME, a lifestyle and fitness brand. For more inspiration, visit moveyourframe.com or follow @moveyourframe on Instagram.

KIM PEARSON is a nutritionist and weight loss specialist with over 10 years of clinical experience (kim-pearson.com).

ASHLEY VERMA is a celebrity trainer and founder of DEFINE London (define.london).

LUCY MACDONALD is a chartered physiotherapist and runs Octopus Clinic in London. Her website has a library of exercise videos to do at work, at home or in the gym (octopusclinic.com).

Got a burning fitness question? Email healthy@therivergroup.co.uk with 'Fitclinic' as the subject line.



If I were to invest in one piece of fitness equipment to see me through life, which would you recommend?

(A) Pip says: 'A set of resistance bands. They are the most versatile, compact, budget-friendly and dynamic piece of equipment, and can be stored and taken anywhere. Plus, you can do almost any kind of workout with them, and you can modify the intensity of workouts simply by changing your grip on the band. So they're equally useful if you're in your 20s and looking to smash out a HIIT session, or a little older and would prefer a lower-impact exercise – you can adjust so that you add a much lighter

resistance to some simple but effective workouts. Resistance bands can also be used for stretching. One great move for anyone looking to loosen up shoulder and back muscles is to stand with feet hip-width apart, roll your shoulders back and down and take the band in your hands, leaving a shoulder-width gap between the fists. Keeping your arms straight, lift them overhead and as far back as feels comfortable while feeling the benefits of a nice stretch then bring them back to the front. Repeat 10 times.'

HOW SHOULD MY NUTRITION CHANGE AROUND MENOPAUSE?

(A) Kim says: 'Around the menopause oestrogen levels start to decline. Oestrogen helps protect bones, so as our natural levels decline it's more important than ever to consume optimal amounts of bone supportive nutrients. Ensure you are getting enough calcium, magnesium, vitamin D, vitamin K and boron. This means eating plenty of green veg and ensuring regular, safe sun exposure. It's important to make sure your diet is optimised to support a healthy weight and good energy level. To do this, minimise your intake of sugar and refined, 'white' carbohydrates while basing your meals on a wide variety of vegetables, sources of protein and healthy fats.'



I HAVE A SEDENTARY JOB. WHAT EXERCISES CAN I DO AT MY DESK?

(A) Lucy says: 'Even if you are stuck at your desk, you can do exercises to improve physical and mental health. Breathing exercises can reduce pain, increase oxygenation to the brain, encourage relaxation and can be done without your colleagues even noticing. Start by focusing on where your breathing is coming from and then slightly lengthen your outward breath. Then see if you can get the inward breath down to the bottom of your lungs where better gas exchange takes place. Do this for at least two minutes. To prevent getting a stiff back while sitting, twist your body to the left to grab the back of your chair with your right hand and give your mid-back a gentle stretch, then do the same with the other hand, and repeat 10 times. Finally, getting up and sitting down repetitively has the same benefits as squats in the gym – do 30 repetitions mid-morning and the same mid-afternoon.'

IF YOU ONLY HAVE TIME TO DO ONE MOVE, WHAT SHOULD IT BE?

(A) Ashley says: 'There are so many great "quick fix" workouts to do if time is not on your side. I love lunges as they get into every little nook and crook in the body. Good form is so important – I make

sure my upper body is straight with shoulders back, that my knee is tracking directly over my ankle, and my legs are both bent at 90 degrees. I typically add arm pulls, change the beat in the drop downs, squeeze the inner thighs in to really get the body burning and the heart rate lifting. I aim to do three minutes on each side to really reap the body blast.'



DOES DIET REALLY IMPACT YOUR JOINTS AS YOU AGE? AND WHAT SHOULD YOU EAT?

(A) Kim says: 'It's more a case of age impacting your joints. But there are dietary adjustments you can make to support healthier joints at any age. Include anti-inflammatory foods such as berries, tomatoes, broccoli, ginger and turmeric, and cut down on fried and processed foods, trans fats and other inflammation triggers. Nutrients linked positively with cartilage and joint health include glucosamine, chondroitin sulphate, hyaluronic acid and sulphur compounds (found in fruits, vegetables and grains). Maintaining a healthy weight is also important as carrying excess weight can put added stress on the joints.'

HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD I DEDICATE TO RECOVERY – AND SHOULD THIS INCREASE WITH AGE?

(A) Ashley says: 'Recovery is just as important as the workout, so make sure you're giving it ample time. Just listen to your body. If it needs extra

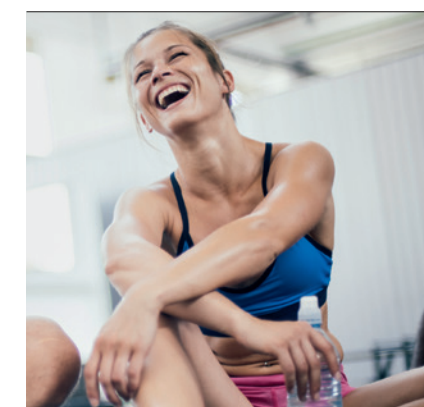
stretching and rest then oblige it. The older we get, the more important it is to keep moving, but whether you're in your 70s or your 20s, stretching will not only help with muscle recovery but also with joint pain. It can also help to alleviate swelling, benefit circulation and help with full body mobility.'



I'VE ONLY GOT TIME TO GET TO ONE CLASS A WEEK. WHAT SHOULD I PRIORITISE?

(A) Pip says: 'At FRAME, we believe that the best workout is the one you turn up to. Choose something you know you'll enjoy and be completely honest with yourself about what you can and want to commit to, and what fits in with your lifestyle. If you're in your twenties and have lots of energy and time, you might want to do a high-intensity class like

Boxfit, FRAME cardio or dance cardio. If, like me, you have small children and are running a business so free time is scarce, you might choose an hour of Pilates to work on strength and mobility, and in weeks when you feel more energised, up your game with a more sweaty and high-intensity class. The key is to choose what feels right for you and be realistic as to what you can stick to – we are not in the business of making ourselves feel bad, so don't set yourself up for failure by choosing a class that you won't enjoy.'



Compiled by Hattie Parish. Photographs iStock, Shutterstock