

Natural health



Look after your body and wellbeing naturally with **Jan Purser's** essential monthly guide to alternative medicine, health and nutrition.

Should I take ... propolis?

Why would I need it? Propolis is the substance that bees collect from tree bark and leaf buds to seal their beehive openings, cracks and holes. They also use it as a sterile lining for the comb cells. It has wonderful healing benefits due to its antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties, and has been used for centuries as a salve to heal wounds. Propolis may help if you have a virus, gum disease, an upper respiratory tract infection, gastrointestinal infection, poor immune function, a fungal infection, or a minor scratch, wound or pimples.

How much? The average dose is 500 to 1000mg in capsule form twice a day or five to 10 drops tincture in water one to three times a day. For topical treatment apply tincture or ointment several times a day.

Anything I should know? Some people are allergic to bees and bee products, so start taking propolis in small doses in case you're one of them. Stop taking it if you start wheezing and sneezing, or develop hives, an itchy mouth or throat, or flushed skin. For topical treatments, test it on a small patch of skin first.



Not happy?

Ask Jan

Q What does "feed a cold, starve a fever" mean? Should I eat normally when I have a cold or not?

Cathy Beech, via email

A This is a quirky old wives' tale that has become confused over the years. It's thought to mean that you should eat a lot to fight off a cold but resist food when you have a fever. However, the best thing to do when you're sick is listen to your body. Even if your appetite is low, try to eat nutritious food and drink plenty of fluids, preferably warm drinks such as herbal tea. Add some chopped sage, chilli, ginger and garlic to your herbal tea to help your body fight the cold. When you have a fever, typically your appetite is poor so again, try to eat healthily and drink lots. For children with a cold or fever, give them lots of fluids and healthy unprocessed foods according to their appetite.

Cardio versus cancer

Here's yet another reason to get off the couch and start exercising – women who are overweight, sedentary and have higher levels of insulin are at greater risk of developing breast cancer. A recent US study of overweight breast cancer survivors found that those who started a regular cardio exercise program had lower glucose levels and body fat measurements, as well as a much lower risk of developing the disease again. Those who didn't do any regular exercise showed no improvements. So the message for all women is get up and get moving!

Jan Purser Dip.Nutr., DRT, is a naturopathic nutrition consultant, remedial therapist and public speaker. If you have any questions on diet, natural health or nutrition, write to Natural Solutions, PO Box 3, South Fremantle WA 6162, or email ns@foodbodyandhealth.com.au We regret Jan is unable to personally answer letters.

quick cure

Relief for tired eyes

These three simple acupressure techniques can relieve tired eyes after a long day at the computer or books.



1 Press your thumbs firmly into the dents in the bone beneath your inner eyebrows. Hold for two minutes with your eyes closed.



2 Keeping your eyes closed, press a fingertip into the spot on your forehead between your eyebrows. Hold for one minute.



3 Press two fingers of each hand into the fleshy spots at the outer corners of your eyes. Hold for two minutes. Slowly open your eyes.