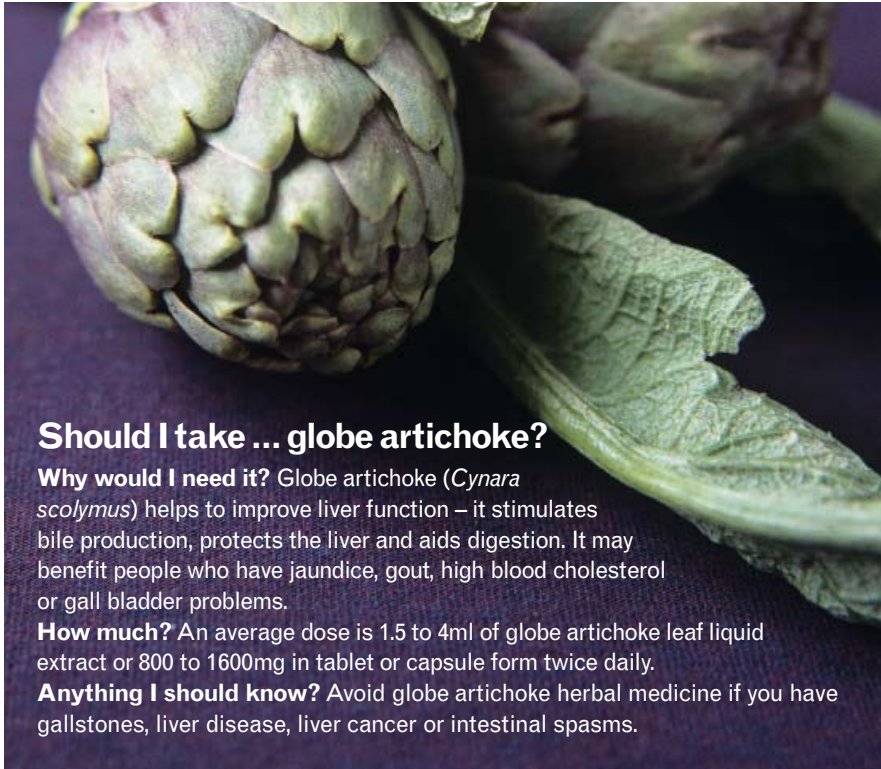


# Natural health



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



## Should I take ... globe artichoke?

**Why would I need it?** Globe artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*) helps to improve liver function – it stimulates bile production, protects the liver and aids digestion. It may benefit people who have jaundice, gout, high blood cholesterol or gall bladder problems.

**How much?** An average dose is 1.5 to 4ml of globe artichoke leaf liquid extract or 800 to 1600mg in tablet or capsule form twice daily.

**Anything I should know?** Avoid globe artichoke herbal medicine if you have gallstones, liver disease, liver cancer or intestinal spasms.

## Not happy?

Ask Jan

**Q How can I manage stress and anxiety this Christmas?**

Lyn P, via email.

**A** There are a few things you can do to lessen stress. Try these to start.

- Limit coffee or other caffeinated drinks to one per day as they exacerbate stress.
- Take a multivitamin rich in B vitamins to stimulate mood-enhancing hormones.
- Swap sugary snacks for a piece of fresh fruit, a small handful of nuts or low-fat yoghurt. These foods help keep blood glucose levels in balance.

If you still feel depleted, talk to your naturopath about herbs to support your adrenal system, such as withania, licorice, Korean ginseng and passionflower. Bach flower essences that can help when you're anxious are elm, oak and white chestnut. Don't overdo alcohol at pre-Christmas parties, either – it only adds to your fatigue.

**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.**



## Choc new findings

We know dark chocolate contains anti-oxidants, but there's more reason to rejoice. Overweight participants in a US study were given either a bar of dark chocolate or a drink containing cocoa powder, or identical products minus the cocoa powder. The drink and the chocolate bar containing cocoa powder lowered blood pressure and improved heart function.

Source: *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, July 2008

## Tired feet remedy

If you've been Christmas shopping all day and have tired aching feet, try this easy reflexology technique to give yourself some relief.

quick cure



**1** To relax your feet, working on one foot at a time, use your thumbs to firmly massage from your ankle to your toes. Press and rub firmly along the top of your foot, then along the sole to the tips of your toes.



**2** Once you've relaxed your foot, press the tip of your thumb into the sole of your foot as shown. This is the solar plexus zone – working this point helps you relax and unwind. Use on-off pressure for one minute.