

FOODSENSE Natural goodness in the raw

Nutritional therapist Beata Rachowiecka has worked in many private clinics in and around London, including Harley Street, written for local publications and lectured to a variety of interest groups and organisations as well as running her private practice Focus Nutrition + based in Berkshire, website: (www.focusnutritionplus.co.uk), tel: 01753 814228.



SPRING IS upon us, and as we go through the seasons a healthy body feels the natural rhythms and is ever ready to realign itself to nature.

In these days of modern refrigeration and accessibility of all foods at any time of the year, it is not always easy to know what to eat and when to ensure the best quality of the produce. That said, as spring is all about renewal and regeneration in the natural kingdom, our bodies crave the nutrient-packed raw foods that nature provides at this time of year.

The very definition of raw foods is very broad: it comprises anything that has not been heat treated, extracts of the raw foods such as juices, as well as sprouts and shoots of the seeds, beans and lentils, or even fish and meats.

Whilst many people feel the emerging

warmth of springtime, not everyone can tolerate a sudden switch to a 100 per cent raw food diet. This is because their enzymatic content is so rich that it can wreak havoc to a tired or distressed digestive system, especially if there is a history of gut-related complaints. Thus a gradual introduction of some raw produce is the key.

Raw foods can be incorporated into daily menus easily by either juicing them, grating or slicing for a side salad or snack, or eating as whole chunks, with or without dips. Since Warwick University researchers have concluded we all need seven, not five, portions of fruit and veg a day for optimum health, we need to have them to hand in order to implement this guidance.

Try preparing a few boxes of raw veg, some fruit, nuts and fish or meat as nibbles

first thing to eat in or take with you to work. Organic is best since all foods need to amplify their anti-oxidant phenolic compounds to defend against any pests.

Free range or grass-fed is also worth paying for, since nutrient density is greater in these. Remember to wash and/or soak in a bowl of water with two tablespoons of vinegar (or wine) to flush out toxic residues – some can remain on the skin or in the tissues of even ecologically grown/reared produce.

Raw foods come as nature intended with phytonutrients, essential fatty acids, macro and micro-nutrients – all of which are fantastic for the body. Trying new things and rotating them is a trick worth remembering, be it hemp or chia seeds, beetroot juice, sauerkraut, macademia nuts, raw fish or grass-fed meat.

Yoga class

Gail Willis continues her series of simple hatha yoga moves

YOGA INSTRUCTOR Gail Willis has recruited her mother Janet Rogers to help demonstrate yoga exercises in *Choice* every month.

In each picture Janet, who is 78, illustrates the basic position for each exercise - the easiest one for the beginner. Gail illustrates the maximum position for each exercise.

You should start following Janet's position and try to increase gradually towards Gail's advanced level.

"Only build up to a level that you are comfortable with," says Gail, who is a full-time yoga instructor in Kettering. "With some exercises you will be able to do the maximum level

of stretch, but with others you will achieve only the basic move. It doesn't matter - even the easiest will be good for you and make you feel good."

Find out more

- To contact Gail, tel: 01536 515311, mobile: 07762 575118
- To find a yoga class where you live, ask at your local library, county council offices, tourist information centre, sports centre, a local school or anywhere that runs evening classes.

Yoga for digestive difficulties - The Twist

Janet demonstrates sitting with her left leg out straight, and her right leg bent.

Place your right hand on your right knee, with the left hand behind your bottom, sitting tall. Exhale and twist the upper body and head as far left as you can and hold for five to 20 seconds.

Slowly come back to face the front. Now take your right leg out straight, left leg bent, left hand on left knee, right hand

behind and twist right as far as you can comfortably go.

For a more challenging version, Gail takes her right leg over her straight left leg, her left hand hugs her right knee and her right hand is behind her bottom. Sitting tall she twists right.

Hold for five to 20 seconds. Repeat on the other side, with left leg over the right straight leg, right hand on right knee, left hand behind and twist left.



Next month: **Yoga for digestive difficulties (The Mountain)**