

Foodsense Peak performance



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.

HAVE YOU ever found yourself at a party where everyone admits to their lifestyle indiscretions and goes on a guilt trip listing the many 'breaches' of good eating habits? What follows is a list of symptoms they suffer from with an inevitable final admission that they are not happy with their low physical and mental energy levels.

Energy and performance are a function of many processes in the body, biochemical, physiological, and hormonal, as well as mental, emotional, social and spiritual. The more balanced the body is by means of diet, exercise and work-life balance, not to mention your ability to relax, the better the outcome. So how can you get your body to reward you with its peak performance on a regular basis?

The place to start is to be aware of what is happening to you right now. Are you in pain, bloated, depressed or under a considerable

amount of stress, be it temporary or long-term? Once you define your situation, write it down and see what is your priority.

Break it down into smaller steps. For example, if it's inflammation, what may be causing it? Is it the foods you eat too often, excess alcohol, sugar, cigarettes, fried or high fat foods, or something you suspect you may be reacting to but continue to eat.

Aim to avoid the potential culprits for four days and see how you feel. Make notes on the severity and frequency of your symptoms and see what has improved.

Are you moving around enough and getting enough fresh air? Are you taking the right dose of your medication or experiencing its side effects?

If nothing changes, look again. What is your mental state like: Are you worried, upset, under pressure, undecided, feeling blue or shocked by

something that has happened to you a while back? Do you hold grudges, feel the anger of a past event, or hold onto the memory of someone you lost? Acknowledge it to yourself and think of how you can move on - it is by holding onto the energy of these past events that our current performance gets depleted.

Of course the memory of your loved ones can still be cherished but on another level, you may need to make some changes in your life.

You may want to help yourself by talking to a friend about the problems you experience. It may be easier for an outsider to help you spot something that may be robbing you of energy.

But you can never go wrong by eating more green vegetables on a daily basis: extra magnesium can help improve energy distribution, empower the brain and the body and boost your performance to its peak without the need for hormones.

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 79, 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.

Standing lunge

This move is aimed at strengthening your legs.

In the lunge stance you must keep your whole body and head lifted. Also, keep the weight evenly distributed between both feet. Following Janet, take one leg back into the lunge position, you're your navel in and, like Janet, just lift your back heel off the floor, checking you are upright and weight balanced between both feet.

Hold, breathing all the time, for five to ten seconds. Swap legs over and this can be repeated three more times.

Gail sets up exactly the same but then takes it further by bending both knees a little bit at a time until you feel a stretch on the front of your lunged leg. Do not push the bottom back and lean forward.

Keep upright with your bottom tucked under so your tail bone is pointing to the floor. You can build up the length of time holding and repetitions. Never let the hold get too uncomfortable. Always repeat on the other leg.



Next month: Calf Stretch