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LOOK!**
family
circle

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Christmas
food ideas
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Is this
your
Lucky
Number?

Boost your immune system

A strong immune system will fight infection, and vitamin C is the vitamin to take. A and E come a close second, so invest in a good supplement that contains all three plus garlic, which is one of the best immunity-boosting herbs around. We recommend Kwai Garlic A, C and E (£5.95 for 30 tablets, from Boots). And if you're feeling fluey, try Revitonil (£5.49 for 80 tablets, from Boots), which contains eucalyptus, peppermint, cloves and echinacea to fight flu symptoms. Take six a day until your symptoms improve.

Fight fatigue the natural way

You may remember Bio-Strath, which was a forerunner of most herbal drinks. Well, it's having a rejuvenation and now contains a heady mixture of halm, basil and chamomile to help boost your immunity and restore much of your vitality when you're feeling too tired to even think straight. Available from Holland and Barrett stores, Bio-Strath costs £11.45 for 250ml.

Prepare for a hangover

Dehydration is the biggest hangover headache, so keep your water levels up before, during and after a night out drinking, and replenish your vitamin C levels with tablets or fruit juice. If you're prone to the occasional overindulgence, try taking a supplement called Cellfood, which helps rehydrate and detoxify the body and replaces micro-nutrients lost after

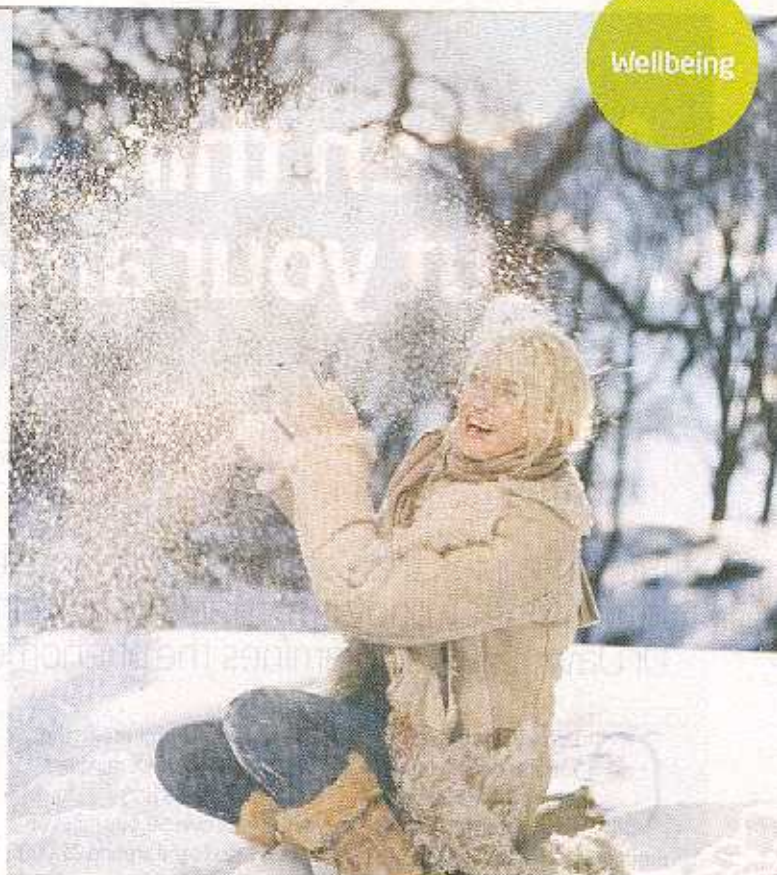
excess alcohol. Cellfood Concentrate (£19.99 for 30ml) is available by mail order by calling 0870 240 8272, or try www.cellfooddirect.com. Or keep a pack of Cynara Milk Thistle nearby (£7.99 for 30 one-a-day tablets, from Boots) to help detoxify the liver.

Use teabags on cold sores

Cold sores often have the habit of appearing at the worst possible moment, and almost always when you're stressed out. Try dabbing a warm, soaked teabag on the offending sore – the tannic acid in the tea is a natural anaesthetic. To help ease the pain and prevent any scarring, apply ice wrapped in a towel when a sore first appears.

Take chicken soup for flu!

In fight cold and flu it's essential to increase your fluid intake. Water, fruit juice and herbal teas will help to rehydrate, and hot honey and lemon soothes sore throats. Homemade soups, particularly chicken, speeds up the production of nasal mucus, fighting infection. Spicy food is good, too – the antiviral and bacterial properties in some spices ease aches and pains.



Keep healthy and happy this winter!

If we were cars, we'd need to book in for an MOT after the Christmas onslaught. Here's how to repair the damage

Wrap up warm

Rushing out from a hot house into the cold and back in again can bring on chilblains and exacerbate Raynaud's syndrome – a circulatory disorder that leaves feet and hands excessively cold. Padma 28 – a herbal formulation – can ease both conditions (£24.95 for 120 tablets, from Holland & Barrett and selected Tesco stores). For more info, call 0161 483 1235, or visit www.padma28.co.uk.

Try an Indian head massage

Constant worrying may lead to tension headaches or migraines. If you feel one coming on, take a painkiller and slow down. If your stress levels remain high, book a course of Indian head massages. It's a great tension-reliever and can help boost your immune system.

Treat your feet

Foot pain can be the difference between a good shopping trip and a really bad one. An arch-foot support cushions your feet and absorbs the impact – Powerstep costs £22.99 from Superdrug and Lloyds Pharmacies. Carnation Silversocks (£5.99) can help prevent blisters and chilblains, and Carnation Tip Toes (£4.99) protect the balls of your feet if you're wearing high heels. Both are available from pharmacies. For more info, call Carnation Footcare on 0800 018 7117, or visit www.carnationfootcare.co.uk. Then, after your shopping trip, enjoy a lovely foot bath by adding a few drops of lavender oil to a bowl of hot water. Powdered mustard works wonders to soothe the feet, too.

Exercise often and sleep well

Don't stint on either in the run up to Christmas. If you have difficulty sleeping, Night Time Milk (99p for 70ml, from larger branches of Sainsbury's), which contains higher levels of melatonin – a natural nightcap – can help. Call 0800 328 8062 for more info.

Be kind to your gut!

You're less likely to experience the discomfort of bloating and indigestion if you take a probiotic drink or yoghurt daily. Or, better still, try mega-probiotic Garden of Life Primal Defense (£29.50 for 90 caplets; call 01428 642266, or visit www.chrisbar.com). And if you're going to overeat, step up your exercise regime to burn off those calories.