

Spring zing!

Charmaine Yabsley shows you how to put a bounce in your step this spring with these great ideas from the best holistic health experts.

1. Smooth your skin

"In spring, everyone is madly trying to prep their skin for the warmer months ahead," says Hamish Buckley, co-founder of Bean Body. "If you've got psoriasis, eczema, acne, or dry, flaky skin, coconut oil is your saviour: it's hydrating and soothing, and if it's paired with caffeine, as in our Bean Body Coconut Coffee Scrub, it improves skin tone and resilience."

2. Perk up your energy

"Given the nature of our 24/7 lives, feeling tired and lethargic is all too common," says clinical nutritionist Jess Sepel. "My favourite tips for boosting energy are: practise yoga two to three times a week; spend 30 minutes in nature every day; go to bed by 9.30 p.m. most nights; get acupuncture regularly; cook more nutrient-dense meals, such as soups and vegetable roasts; avoid alcohol during the week; avoid refined

sugar and make yummy JSHealth treats instead; ensure every meal contains greens, good fats, and protein; and on weekends, do as little as possible.

3. Pick a herb

"There is a group of Oriental tonic herbs, called Jing herbs, that are prized for restoring the foundation of energy in our body," says herbalist Mason Taylor. "Jing refers to the core energy that lives in our kidneys which balances hormone health, energy levels, mood, and stamina. If we burn the candle at both ends, this energy can 'leak', and without it we end up exhausted. The top Jing herbs are He Shou Wu, eucommia bark, and cordyceps, or try our JING blend."

4. Try yin yoga

"Yin yoga balances your energy and nourishes your qi, which is the foundational energy recognised in Oriental medicine," says yin yoga teacher Tahnee

McCrossin. “A combination of Taoist and Indian yoga practices, it focuses on the lower body and asks you to hold poses for a lot longer than in a regular yoga class - sometimes for up to five minutes. By including lots of hip-openers, spinal stretches and twists, yin yoga frees stuck energy and restores energy reserves, builds mindfulness, increases tissue flexibility and strength, and nurtures and enhances your life force.

5. Mind your minerals

“Magnesium is the fourth most abundant mineral in our bodies,” says naturopath Chantelle Bell. “In every single cell in our body we have an enzyme called ATP that is responsible for energy production, but it needs magnesium to activate it. Make sure your diet is loaded with magnesium-rich foods: spinach, pumpkin and sunflower seeds, cashews, almonds, legumes, beans, avocado, brown rice, and buckwheat.”

6. Enjoy spring leaves

“Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) is perfect for supporting the body’s seasonal transition from winter to spring, when your body needs help to eliminate stored metabolic waste” says naturopath

Nicola Miethke. “The bitterness of the root and the leaves’ diuretic properties gently awaken and cleanse the liver and kidneys, while improving digestion and elimination of toxins. Add the raw or lightly steamed leaves to salads, or try drinking dandelion root tea.”

7. Cut your carbs

“This may sound counter-intuitive as we’re taught that carbs are energy food,” says dietitian Vicky Kuriel. “The problem is, the energy boost is fleeting. Fat, on the other hand, is a fuel source that’s just sitting there waiting to be used! By significantly cutting your carbohydrate intake, your body’s insulin levels will reduce, allowing you to access and use fat as a fuel source. This not only boosts energy and mood, you’ll also begin to lose weight and vastly improve your hunger control.”

{ Nettle tea supports the immune response and kidney and liver detoxification; it also reduces hayfever symptoms.



* Meet our experts



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Sam Wood is the founder of 28 by Sam Wood and the 28 App. www.28bysamwood.com

8. Sleep right

"Great quality sleep is vital to your energy levels," says health coach Kirsten Scott. "In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), we believe that you should be asleep by 11 p.m. every night, as the time between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m. is when the gall bladder is most active, and this begins the detox process. If you are waking during the night, soak your feet in a hot tub of water before bed: this brings heat from the top of the head (which keeps your mind active), down to your feet."

9. Kickstart your adrenals

"Adrenal fatigue is the constant tiredness which results from living in a state of prolonged stress," says nutritionist Tracie Connor. "The adrenal glands produce essential hormones, including cortisol which regulates fluid retention, body weight, sleep cycles, concentration, and sex drive. A diet rich in healthy fats, fresh vegetables, berries, probiotics and seafood will restore adrenal balance; so will avoiding stimulating and inflammatory foods like alcohol, caffeine, sugar, sweeteners, processed foods, and vegetable oils. The herbs withania, licorice root, phellodendron, and magnolia bark all improve the stress response, mild anxiety and cortisol levels, as does an adequate intake of vitamins B5 and B6, found in eggs, wild salmon, shiitake mushrooms, pistachios and sunflower seeds."

10. Try pilos antler

"Pilos antler has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for over 2,000 years," says author Peggy Weekes. "It invigorates kidney yang, which accelerates the body's natural restorative processes and increases energy and concentration, therefore boosting sexuality and fertility in both men and women. Pilos antler is a miracle supplement, proven to increase endurance, reduce joint pain and inflammation, beautify skin, enhance brain function, bolster immunity, improve kidney, liver, and nerve function, improve circulation, increase muscle mass and strength, reduce recovery time, and decrease body fat."

11. Go for a run

"We often hibernate over winter, spending less time outdoors and eating heavier meals," says endurance runner Ben Lucas. "When spring comes, get outdoors, enjoy the fresh air and get those endorphins pumping! Running is great for stress relief, it helps you sleep better, plus it burns calories and builds muscle. Need motivation to train? Sign up for a fun run or join a running group so you can add a social element to your training."

12. Add ankle weights

"These are one of my favourite ways to target the hamstrings, inner thighs and butt, all in one," says trainer Lizzie Bland. "To tone and lift the butt, it's important to activate and work all of the surrounding muscles like the hamstrings which run right up into the glutes. Walk around the house while you're doing housework for an extra burn, if you fancy!"

13. Fix your gut

"Poor gut health causes low energy levels, inflammation, and bad mood," says nutritionist Veronika Larisova. "The good news is that you can fix all this with collagen. Collagen is one of the most abundant proteins in the body, and a key structural component of connective tissues - muscles, bones, skin, blood vessels, digestive system, ligaments and tendons. Drink bone broth every day, take a hydrolysed collagen powder, or grab a collagen bar, like Chief Bar."

14. Prioritise prebiotics

"Prebiotics - the fuel for the probiotics that we naturally have inside of us - stimulate the release of mood-calming serotonin and reduce

stress signals to our brain,” says nutrition adviser Kate Landau. “My go-to prebiotics are green banana flour, lupin flour, BARLEYmax-based products, mung bean and other legume-based pastas, konjac root (shirita) noodles, and uncooked oats made into overnight oats, sprinkled with prebiotic-rich Uplift Food Daily Uplifter.”

15. Add your amino

“Amino acids are a must to give you a boost, providing your body with the ability to synthesise the non-essential amino acids, such as arginine,” says Dr Sara Palmer Hussey. “Supplementing with certain amino acids can, therefore, significantly improve overall health and wellbeing. Three amino acids in particular - arginine, glutamine and lysine - support the body’s natural release of the anti-ageing human growth hormone known as HGH. Falling HGH levels result in added body fat, reduced muscle tissue, slow healing, lack of elasticity in the skin, and reduced immune function.”

{ A University of Exeter study shows that people who run outdoors in nature report more energy and less anger and depression than when they run indoors on a treadmill.

16. Eat seasonal superfoods

“It’s easy to get caught up in the hype about the next big superfood, but many common fruits and vegetables are just as ‘super,’” says nutritionist Shannon Young. “Shopping for foods that are in season in spring, like strawberries, asparagus, leafy greens and Asian greens, will ensure they’re fresh and chock-full of nutrients.”

17. Overhaul your habits

“Spring is a great time psychologically to get rid of old habits and establish new ones that serve you better,” says trainer Amy King. “Some examples: Drink two litres of water a day; start your day with a cup of hot water and fresh squeeze of lemon juice to kickstart your digestive system; commit to at least three CORE+ classes per week; and ditch the inner critic - allow yourself to be happy!”

18. Get nettled

“Nettle leaf (*Urtica dioica*) is a traditional spring tonic,” says naturopath Norelle Hentschel. “Nettle stimulates systems that become depleted over winter, like digestion. It is high in protein, vitamins and minerals, particularly iron. Try a cup or two of nettle tea daily, or combine with dandelion and burdock root for the ultimate spring herbal tonic.”

19. Pile on protein

“A simple yet very effective way to boost energy is to eat more animal protein foods, especially at breakfast and lunch,” says medical herbalist Lorraine Pratley. “Animal protein is labelled as a ‘first-class protein’ in any nutrition textbook, meaning it contains larger amounts of protein in a form that is more easily assimilated by the human digestive system. It also contains the right proportions of all the amino acids, which are the building blocks of protein, including tyrosine, which is a precursor for adrenal hormones and thyroid hormone – the very things that make us feel energetic!”

20. Wake up well

“Each morning, as a part of your daily ritual, wake up your Central Meridian,” says natural therapist Marney Perna. “Cup your right hand and gently cover your pubic bone, then slowly bring your hand up your body to your lower chin, following your midline. When you reach your lower chin, flick away the stagnant energy while stating this affirmation: ‘My day is filled with abundant health and energy’. Repeat three times.”

21. Rise and shine

“When spring rolls around, I love to get up early and make the most of the warmer weather,” says trainer Sam Wood. “I squeeze in a quick HIIT session and then take my dog Hendrix for a long walk. The combination of exercise and fresh air gives me a terrific burst of energy that switches me on and sets me up for the day ahead.” ✨



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