

# Health & wellbeing

Great advice to keep you happy and healthy

## Q. I've signed up for a walking challenge in aid of charity. How can I be sure my footwear doesn't let me down?



Podiatrist Trevor Prior, foot care expert with Vionic shoes, is here to help.

Walking is a good way to stay fit, and it's great you're doing it for a charitable cause.

Wearing correctly fitted, supportive footwear is essential on any long walk to reduce potential stress or discomfort and the risk of long-term

complaints such as knee pain and plantar fasciitis.

To be sure your footwear doesn't let you down, I would check your current walking shoes.

All footwear will eventually lose its support cushioning, whilst the sole and heel wear down unevenly, making it more likely for discomfort to arise.

I recommend wearing a pair of shoes that are lightweight and lace up, but this does depend on the distance and terrain, where a sturdier shoe may be more supportive.

Vionic shoes offer a great range of active footwear.



## In The News

### Heart Trial Brings Hope

Scientists at Sheffield University are trialling a rapid anti-clotting medication (called selatrogrel) which can be given as a single injection to patients at early stages of a heart attack.

The drug starts working within 15 minutes, which is far faster than the oral drugs currently used and is particularly useful for patients who require emergency surgery to insert a heart artery stent.



## First-aid Box Essentials



It's good to make sure your first-aid kit is topped up with plasters and bandages and routinely check it contains the following in case of emergencies:

- Sterile gauze dressings
- Triangular bandage/sling
- Finger dressings and dressings for burns
- Safety pins
- Sterile eye pads
- Eye wash and eye bath
- Wipes and adhesive tape
- Tweezers and scissors



## Health Bite

**Look out for beetroot ketchup (£1.99 by Foraging Fox from larger supermarkets) which uses beetroot instead of tomatoes to create a tangy sauce.**

**Beetroot is a good source of the compound nitrate, which is thought to help naturally lower blood pressure, and of antioxidants which protect cells from damage.**

**The ketchup contains half the calories and sugar of major brands and a third less salt.**



Keep your heart healthy

## Good Fats, Bad Fats



Our Health Writer, Colleen Shannon, asks if all dietary fats are created equal.

If you want to eat a healthy diet, whether to lose weight or just to take good care of your body, these days it is not easy deciding how to go about it. There is so much advice out there. Sometimes it is complicated, and it is often contradictory.

One of the topics where it is really difficult to tease out the latest science is fat intake.

We hear that a low-fat diet is best. Then we hear that fat is actually good for you, so it's not hard to see why there is often confusion.

You will always get sound and practical information from a registered dietician. That is why I asked Chloe Hall, Spokesperson for the British Dietetic Association and Community Dietician, to tell us more.

First of all, she explained that our bodies do require some dietary fat for good nutrition. Fats are needed as part of the structure of our cells.

They are also a source of energy and they carry particular vitamins and help the body use them.

Fats are more energy-dense than protein and carbohydrates, so too much fat can lead to weight gain.

There are also two main types of dietary fat: unsaturated and saturated. You may have heard these called "good fat" and "bad fat".

Too much saturated fat can

increase our risk of heart disease.

It is found in foods such as fatty meats, butter, cream, cheese, ghee and products like cakes and biscuits.

We should try to reduce our intake of saturated fat and replace some of it with unsaturated fats. By doing this, we may be able to lower our cholesterol levels and reduce our risk of heart disease.

Unsaturated fats are split into two groups: monounsaturated and polyunsaturated.

Monounsaturated fats, found in foods such as olive or rapeseed oil, some nuts and avocados, are particularly heart-healthy. That is because they can help to maintain our "good cholesterol" while reducing our levels of "bad cholesterol".

Omega-3 fats, found mainly in oily fish, are also important to include in our diet. They contain essential fatty acids that your body can't make by itself. One benefit is that they are involved in healthy heart function.

It's interesting to know that omega-3 fats also play a role in the development of the child's brain during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

If you don't eat fish, then these fats can be found in rapeseed or linseed oil, walnuts and pumpkin seeds, as well as fortified foods.

The British Dietetic Association has a range of useful fact sheets, called food facts. Several of these talk about fats and there are also fact sheets on cholesterol, heart health, weight loss and fad diets.

You will find them at [www.bda.uk.com](http://www.bda.uk.com). If you are not online at home, staff can help you find health information on the computers at your local library. ■

## Good To Be Big-headed

The size of your head could be one indicator of your dementia risk, with studies showing that people with smaller heads are at greater risk than those who take a larger hat size.

One theory is that good brain development in early childhood helps boost brain size and provides a brain-cell buffer for later life, plus a larger head offers room for the brain to build up "cognitive reserve" which can help protect against dementia in later life.



## Oral Care For Ulcers

Mouth ulcers can be caused by a variety of food and drink, including chocolate, cheese, cider and coffee, so if you're prone to ulcers it's a good idea to avoid sugary or acidic foods.

Lack of sleep can also increase stress and anxiety levels which can trigger mouth ulcers, but Gengigel (available as a spray, gel or mouth rinse) provides a gentle layer of hyaluronic acid to provide relief.

Gengigel Oral Spray is £6.50, their oral gel £8 and mouth rinse £10, all from Boots.

