

# Feel great in 2013

Words: Natasha Cook Photos: SuperStock, Getty. Always consult your GP before taking any supplements

If you only make one resolution, what should it be? Our experts share the habits they swear by



**E**very single January, most of us decide to become fitter and healthier, but often feel like a failure by February. So what's the secret of success?

'First, forget everything that's gone before,' says *Woman's Own's* Dr Radha Modgil. 'And, second, don't assume it will be hard work. Significant health changes can be both quick and simple, it's all about your approach.'

**FOCUS YOUR MIND** You're not going to transform your entire body overnight. Instead, decide which one thing will make the biggest difference. When that habit is in hand, then choose another.

**RESIST TEMPTATION** It's actually a misconception that when it strikes – be it to eat another cake or miss your exercise class – the urge will keep increasing. Temptation is like a wave – it peaks then it falls.

**EXERCISE YOUR WILLPOWER** It's like a muscle. The more you stick to your habit, even when you're tired, cold or fed up, the more natural it will become.

## Habit 1 *Get up slowly*

'People often complain of waking up with stiff joints,' says Mushtaque Ishaque, a spinal consultant surgeon at BMI The Priory Hospital, Birmingham. 'So, every morning, do a warm-up in bed. Before you get up, pull your knees to your chest and gently rock from side to side and up and down. This will loosen joints and help you start the day in the right way.'



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## Habit 2 *Create a meal planner*

'People often tell me they don't have time to eat healthily, but there are lots of quick, nourishing meal ideas,' says leading nutritionist Dr Marilyn Glenville ([marilynglenville.com](http://marilynglenville.com)).

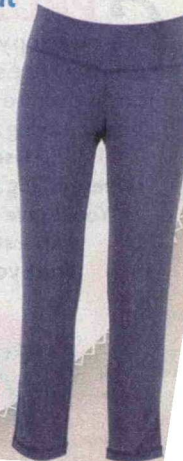
'It sounds obvious, but making a meal planner is the key to avoiding grabbing whatever's in the fridge or the vending machine. Take nuts, raisins, a banana or crackers to snack on at work. For lunch, have a jacket potato with tuna and salad. For dinner, I often bake a piece of salmon with sweet potatoes and while that's cooking I steam some broccoli. Another quick meal is a stir-fry with lots of veg, or brown basmati rice with tofu and vegetables. You can still have treats. Use the 80/20 rule – eating healthily for 80 per cent of the time with 20 per cent off for good behaviour!'



## Habit 3 *Get moving*

'Exercise should be thought of as medicine as it helps us cope with whatever life throws at us,' says Dr Radha. 'It not only boosts our physical health but reduces stress and lifts our mood. Start slowly and build it up. Walk instead of

driving, take the stairs, or do a Zumba class with friends. Work your way up to the recommended 150 minutes of aerobic exercise (where you get your heart rate up) per week.' For good-value fitness clothes with sensible sizing, try the new range from USA Pro. This T-shirt and these three-quarter leggings are just £12.99 each, from [usapro.co.uk](http://usapro.co.uk).



## Habit 4 *Give up grudges*



**'Nothing saps energy like futile quarrels or regrets,' says Harley Street psychotherapist Christine Webber (christinewebber.com).**

'You may feel like you're the one who always makes amends, but it's better to be the bigger person. And you're not

accepting all the blame. Simply write a letter or text saying, "We used to be such good friends and I miss that. I wondered if you'd like to talk about it so we can move on?" Sometimes people will ignore your attempts but often they'll be relieved you've set the ball rolling and say, "No, I was unreasonable." Either way, you've done your best and can move forward.'

## Habit 5 *Support your body*

**'If you're run-down, taking the homeopathic remedy 12 Tissue Salts will help your body get back to full working order,' says Rachael Leffman, a homeopath at Nelsons Pharmacy (nelsonsparmacy.com).**

'It supports the absorption of the 12 salts that we use in our bodies (e.g., calcium, magnesium and sodium) and so brings balance – evening out excesses and deficiencies. This can then mean that you're supporting your body more in its work, giving it the chance to be more efficient. Although it's always wise to see your GP, 12 Tissue Salts can often help the body to deal with things like period pains, stomach cramps, fatigue and headaches.' Nelsons Homeopathic Pharmacy 12 Tissue Salts, £12.50 for 25g, is available on mail order by calling 020 7079 1288.



## Habit 6 *Have a technology curfew*

**'People don't have on/off switches – we're more like dimmer lights,' says sleep guru Sammy Margo (sammyargo.com). 'You can't dash about all day, fall into bed and then wonder why you don't sleep well. Instead, have a technology cut-off point at 9pm. The artificial light emitted from laptops, mobiles and even TV affects the production of the hormone melatonin, which is the key to enjoying the kind of deep restorative sleep that makes you look good and feel great. Use the hour before bedtime to have a warm bath, hot milky drink and listen to music or an audiobook.'**

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