

EASY Living

MAY 2009 £3.20

Health

THIS MONTH WE'RE...

- ★ Feeling motivated to work out with Pocket Fit Exercise Playing Cards, £7.99. Each card has instructions and images for different exercises. Visit pocketfit.co.uk.
- ★ Checking out the wide range of chic sportswear for pregnant women at sportybump.co.uk.



L'EAU DOWN

Water just got more fun – screw these Delo Booster Caps, £7 for four, onto any half-litre water bottle and shake to release a cocktail of 100 per cent herbal essences. Choose from Energy, Sexy, Sun, De-stress or Slim versions. Visit drinkdelo.com.

Obesity is catching

BEHIND THE HEADLINES...

THE REPORTS: A common cold virus which anyone can catch could lead to obesity as it causes a chain reaction which prompts fat cells to replicate.

THE SCIENCE: US scientists found that 20 per cent of obese patients had encountered the cold virus (specifically Adenovirus-36) at some point and were significantly heavier than those who hadn't. Another study showed that obese people were nearly three times more likely to have the virus and that those who weren't obese but had come into contact with the virus were also heavier than average.

THE REAL DEAL: It's most likely that we encounter the virus when we are small children and only remain infected for two to three months so by the time obesity is apparent the virus isn't catching. Other factors, such as lack of exercise and eating too much of the wrong things, have, as you might expect, more of an impact on your chances of being overweight.

3 OF THE BEST...

Hand sanitisers

1 **Frais Everyday**, £6.50, combines essential oils with sugar cane alcohol, and claims to kill cold, tuberculosis and bird flu germs. Available at cultbeauty.co.uk.

2 **Surya Brazil Organic Moisturizing Hand**

Sanitizer, £3.50, comes with Eco-cert's seal of approval. Available at liberty.co.uk.

3 **Quash Moisturising Hand Sanitizer**, £3.49, hydrates as well as eradicates nasties with bacteria-busting manuka honey. Available at Superdrug.



ASK THE EXPERTS

"Can common household chemicals impair fertility?"



Yes, says Dr Chunyuan Fei, public health expert at UCLA. "We found high levels of perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs) in mothers were associated with taking longer to become pregnant, which indicated these chemicals may reduce fecundity. We know they affect hormonal function, but we're not clear how. Because of their widespread use, such exposure levels are common in developed countries – cleaning agents, floor polish, textiles, leather, carpets and non-stick pans can all contain these chemicals, which aren't always listed on the labels."



Yes, says Tony Rutherford, chair of the British Fertility Society. "A recent study shows a tenuous link in the delay to conception in women with the highest levels of two commonly used chemicals. The finding that higher maternal plasma levels of PFCs, which are found in many consumer products, may be linked to reduced fecundity is an interesting and important finding. It certainly warrants more detailed research, particularly in those trying for a family. We need to remain vigilant to potential environmental factors that may impact on fertility."



Yes, says Zita West, fertility expert. "It's difficult to take a down-to-earth approach with so many worrying headlines often giving conflicting advice. Fertility is multi-factorial but research is showing that environmental endocrine chemicals are hormone disruptors which can potentially interfere with fertility. Be aware of strong-smelling chemicals, such as oven cleaners and bleaches, use gloves and ventilate the room as they're potent in small spaces. Also, don't reheat food in plastic containers and use paper wrapping. However, you can't wrap yourself in cotton wool – you have to live."