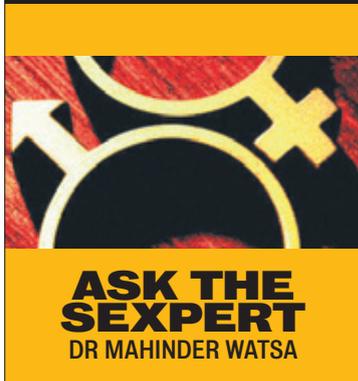




HEALTH TIP: Guava leaves have anti-bacterial characteristics which help fighting infections



Strawberries contain ellagic acid and flavonoids which improve heart health through their antioxidant effects



1 I am a 23-year-old man. Of late, I have been facing a problem while having sex. The upper skin of my penis doesn't open up, and when I pull it, I experience a lot of pain. I am really worried that this will affect my relationship with my girlfriend. Which ointment should I apply? You have a tight foreskin. Visit a surgeon to decide whether it will loosen by gently moving up and down, or if you need a simple operation.

2 I am 33 and have had a healthy life throughout. My private part is larger as compared to the average size of other men. Don't want to divulge in size parameters. My wife is very social and has spoken to a few women in the society about our sex life and my private part size. One of the woman has already encountered sexual relationship with me and others are creating pressure. I don't want to carry on like this and am thinking of changing residence but I am unsuccessful. What should I do? Do not lose the good feelings you have with your wife. Say no to others.

SEND YOUR QUERIES TO
 Ask the Sexpert, Mumbai Mirror, Times Of India Building, Dr D N Road, Mumbai 400001 or email at drwatsa@timesgroup.com. Contact Dr Watsa, send an email to mcwatsa@hotmail.com

Dr Watsa does not personally endorse any particular pharmacological brand



SHARAN organises pop-ups to promote a plant-based organic diet

DIET TO REVERSE DAMAGE

How eating the right kind of food could reverse chronic conditions

Anindita Paul
mirrorfeedback@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @MumbaiMirror

There's no denying it — the world is sicker today than it has ever been before. As per the *Global Burden of Disease Study* published in *The Lancet*, only one in 20 people are experiencing no health problems, and more than a third of the world's population suffers from more than five ailments at any point of time. According to Dr Nandita Shah, almost all these diseases can be traced back to

one common factor — the food we eat. She explains, "Human beings are increasingly eating foods that aren't intended for them. Over the years, we have become conditioned into eating certain types of food that are heavily advertised or that our parents feed us, without understanding whether or not they are what our bodies really need. In doing so, we ignore our body's natural instincts." Dr Shah is the founder of SHARAN or Sanctuary for Health and Reconnection to Animals and Nature, an Andheri-based organisation dedicated to spreading awareness about

holistic health and an ecologically sustainable compassionate lifestyle. The goal of the organisation, as Dr Shah describes it, is to "reverse diseases by developing in people a complete understanding based on scientific and evidential medicine about what foods we should eat." Dr Shah has worked with numerous individuals suffering from chronic and often debilitating conditions, including diabetes, heart disease and autoimmune disorders. By transforming their diet, she says she has also succeeded in bringing about lasting impact on these individuals' overall health and wellbeing.



GIVING GYAN
Bachi Karkaria

There are agony aunts, and then there is Bachi... She'll sort you out

You can write to **Bachi Karkaria** at givinggyan@timesgroup.com

Dear Bachi,
 I'm a 23-year-old woman. A year ago, I started talking to a colleague after which I started developing feelings for him. He is 32 years old and unmarried. He doesn't believe in marriage but almost treats me like his girlfriend. I feel a lot of love for him. Recently, we happened to kiss too. However, I have a boyfriend, whom I'm dating for the past three years. Now, I am getting confused between these two men. Is it that I'm just bored of my relationship that I've started liking my colleague? I've no complaints from my boyfriend. In fact, our families know about us. But something makes me feel

more attracted to my colleague. I want to get rid of this perplexity. Please help.

— Double Troubled Dear Double Troubled,
 You are in the classic conundrum: trapped between the dullness of a now-taken-for-granted relationship and the shiny new attractions of infatuation. How it all pans out is anyone's guess because the course of love not only 'ne'er runs smooth' but also rides roughshod over logic. However, let's see if common sense works. On one side, you have a boyfriend who you dated quite happily for three years, against whom you have 'no complaints' and neither do both

sets of problems. On the other, is this new fellow who has set your pulse racing, but who's dragging his feet over any reciprocity. Add to that the fact that office romances are per se fraught with two major problems. One, the proximity may accelerate matters and make you believe that this is something special, but this could be illusory. Two, it always gets messy: makes it difficult to work together professionally and raises the hackles of colleagues and superiors. This is true even when both parties share the same intensity of feelings, which alas is not the case with your singular problem. So really what choice

do you have? Answer clear. Khel khatam.

However there's a big BUT caused by an IF. Even if there's no future in the new (not-yet) relationship, if it has thrown a serious shadow over your present one, then you must give a serious rethink to Guy No 1, his strengths, his unsatisfactory aspects, and the depth of your feelings. If you think you'll tire of Mr Correct, sooner or later anyway, then a course correction is called for. Taking the easy route seldom takes you to the destination you wanted. Hey girl, you're only 23. You're allowed to change your mind if you seriously believe you should.

TYPE II DIABETES



Medical professionals often treat Type II diabetes by trying regulating blood glucose levels. They curb the amount of sugar and carbohydrates that patients are allowed to eat. This approach, Dr Shah believes is largely superficial as it does not treat the underlying cause. "The cause is insulin resistance, which occurs when fat accumulates inside muscle cells. Even thin people can have fat inside their muscle cells, and can hence become diabetic." Eating animal-based foods can cause this fat to build up in muscle cells. Dr Shah explains, "Such fats are especially unhealthy as they are not combined with fibre, as is the case with plant-based fats such as coconuts, peanuts and sesame." Over time, these fatty deposits in the muscle cause insulin resistance.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

AUTOIMMUNE DISORDERS

Autoimmune disorders include Type I diabetes, multi sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, and leukoderma or vitiligo. These occur when the body produces antibodies — blood proteins produced to counter specific antigens that the body recognizes as alien — in response to its own cells. “Such a response is quite atypical of the

human body. The human body is well equipped to heal itself. However, when foreign proteins enter the body, in the form of animal-based foods, vaccinations and blood transfusions, the cells of these proteins can be quite similar to the cells of our body. For instance, the cells of milk are similar to the cells of our pancreas. When our body produces

antibodies for the milk cells, they also affect our pancreatic cells. Eliminating animal-based products can hence go a long way in preventing and even reversing autoimmune disorders.” However, she warns that these conditions can take longer than others to heal, since complete reversal will only occur when the antibodies go out of circulation.



Dr Nandita Shah has worked with numerous individuals suffering from chronic and often debilitating conditions. By transforming their diet, she says she has succeeded in bringing about lasting impact on these individuals’ overall health and wellbeing

HEART DISEASE

Thickened blood injures the arterial walls. The body tries to ‘cement’ these injuries with cholesterol, and this is a process that begins when we are very young. Over time, this cholesterol combines with fats, calcium and other substances in the blood to form plaque. As the plaque builds up and hardens in the arteries, our blood vessels begin to narrow. Unfortunately, owing to the human body’s resilience, we often don’t feel the symptoms until our arteries are 70 per cent blocked,” she says.

Plaque can also break away from larger arteries and flow into smaller arteries, blocking the latter. The location of the blocked artery will determine the impact on the body — for instance, such a blockage in the heart will give rise to heart attacks, while blockages in the brain will lead to a stroke. While modern medicine treats these conditions with blood thinners and vasodilators, Dr Shah says, “Thinner blood can also dissolve some of the cholesterol lining the arteries, and open them up.” Plant-based fats that combine fibre with fats are better suited to the body since the fibre prevents the fat from clogging up the blood stream.



HORMONAL CONDITIONS

Dr Shah believes that thyroid disorders, polycystic ovarian disease and even infertility are rooted in hormone disruptors. These disruptors, she says, come from multiple sources, chief of which is our diet. “A worryingly large percentage of the food and medicines we consume contain hormones. Milk and meat products contain large amounts of adrenaline, which is produced when the animal becomes stressed. Grass-fed animals also consume large amounts of hormones owing to modern agricultural practices. Even if animals do not ingest any external hormones, the meat and milk will still contain the natural hormones produced by the animal, which often disagrees with our body’s natural processes.”

She recommends paying attention to our overall lifestyle. “Personal care products such as shampoos, soaps, lotions and makeup contain large amounts of potentially toxic chemicals. A common rule I prescribe for personal care items is to only use those items on your body that you would feel comfortable putting into your mouth.” The right dietary and lifestyle changes, she adds, can reverse all hormonal conditions, even infertility.

OBESITY

Recent World Health Organization statistics reveal that nearly a third of the world is overweight or obese. Childhood obesity is far more prevalent today than ever before. Dr Shah believes that obesity is caused by eating too little. “Most of nutrients, and taste, contained in vegetables and grains

is contained just under the skin. Processes such as peeling and husking eliminate these nutrients. And so, foods such as sugar, oil, white flour and white bread are stripped of nutrients. Consuming these foods over a period of time makes our bodies chronically starved of nutrients. We then eat more in an attempt to compensate for these nutrients. As a result, we

overeat and are undernourished,” she says.

At SHARAN, participants are taught to adopt a whole, plant-based organic diet, and also taught to cook without oil. By eating high quality foods that satisfy the body, participants enjoy sustainable weight loss, while also witnessing substantial improvements in their overall health and wellbeing.

STARTING SLOW

While adopting all the changes recommended by Sharan may seem a little intimidating, Dr Shah recommends taking it slow and approaching a dietary shift with small, but firm steps. For starters, you can:

- ELIMINATE PACKAGED FOODS, OILS, TEA AND COFFEE
- ELIMINATE ANIMAL-BASED PRODUCTS INCLUDING ALL FORMS OF DAIRY
- EAT ORGANIC FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
- EAT WHOLE FOOD. THIS INCLUDES WHOLE GRAINS AND WHOLE, UNPEELED VEGETABLES
- ELIMINATE OILS AND CONSUME MORE FIBRE-BASED FATS SUCH AS PEANUTS, SEEDS AND COCONUTS.

Hair raising concern

Why women should never ignore those little strands growing on their chin

Although most women don’t grow beards, spindly chin hair can be a common occurrence. Often, this is normal, and a product of age or hormone imbalance during pregnancy, for example. Dr Dendy Engelman says a few hair on the chin are just part of the deal for most women. They may well be unwanted, but usually they’re only visible if you look closely in the mirror anyway.

But sometimes it can be an indicator of a health problem. It’s when more than the occasional stray strand pops up that could be a sign of hirsutism, which is a condition that sees women grow stiffer, darker body hair in atypical spots. Hirsutism isn’t dangerous. But it’s the sign that something else might be amiss.

Here are the facts and what to look out for.

Genetics

Excess chin hair might just be genetic. If your grandmother has a few stray hairs, you too might experience the same in later life. If you’ve ever noticed chin hair on your grandma or mother, then you might notice the same thing on your own chin at around the same age.

Unbalanced hormones

Hormones are often the culprit behind your body doing abnormal things. Chin hair included. It might be an overabundance of male sex hormones, called androgens.

Age

That’s you being a grandmother again. If you get to 70, 80, 90, be prepared for the possibility. They might arrive earlier, during menopause, due to the fact women start producing less estrogen.

Polycystic ovary syndrome

This is a more serious thing.

Shortened to PCOS, the condition can have a profound impact on reproductive health and hormones. Chin hair alone isn’t a sign, but twinned with symptoms such as irregular periods, trouble losing weight, infertility, and sometimes ovarian cysts, means that going to the doctor is a good idea.

Cushing syndrome

Excess chin hair can sometimes be linked to something called Cushing syndrome, according to the National Adrenal Diseases Foundation, which is triggered by too much of the stress hormone cortisol. Either your adrenal glands are producing too much on their own, or their production is being accelerated by certain arthritis or asthma medications. Stretch marks, weight gain, and even type 2 diabetes might also be linked. Talk to your doctor if need be. Congenital adrenal hyperplasia Some chin hair might be caused by congenital adrenal hyperplasia, which is a condition typically diagnosed at birth. It’s extremely rare — and, probably, you’d know if you had it. It’s another reason for chin hair, however.

Pregnancy or birth control

Yes, pregnancy, which has a massive impact on women’s bodies. Some unusual or excessive chin hair growth is nothing to be worried about in expectant mothers. It’s usually temporary.

How to get rid of unwanted chin hair?

Whether a sign of something potentially harmful or not, you might want to get rid of the chin hair. The easiest way to remove it is by simply plucking it, bleaching it, or waxing. A longer-term might be laser remove. Talking to your doctor might help you prevent it rather than must seek out a ‘cure’.

— Daily Mirror

