

Our top TV GP is here to solve your health problems

ASK DR DAWN



BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Suzanne Shaw recently revealed that she suffers from ME, which she thinks was brought on by stress after her ex-fiancé Darren Day walked out on her three years ago. No one yet knows what causes Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, but a popular theory is that the symptoms – extreme fatigue and poor concentration – are triggered by a viral infection. Long-term stress often coincides with lack of sleep and a poor diet, which suppresses the immune system and makes you more prone to infection. It's difficult to prove whether stress itself causes ME, but it's easy to see that it could play its role – which should serve as a warning for us all to pay more attention to our stress levels.



Suzanne Shaw thinks high stress levels led to ME

Photos: Newspics Ltd

IS NOSE PICKING HARMFUL?

Q *My boyfriend* picks his nose and eats it. Apart from being completely gross, do you think it could be doing him any harm? Surely it can't be good for him!
Rosie, Hampshire

A DAWN SAYS: Your boyfriend's habit is unattractive, but not unhealthy. We produce around 2ltr of mucus from the lining of our nose and sinuses every day – it's designed to trap bacteria and viruses and prevent them from passing into the lungs where they could cause infection. The mucus is then swallowed and broken down by the strong acid in our stomachs. All your boyfriend's doing is swallowing mucus trapped with dirt and micro-organisms via his mouth rather than from the back of his nose.

I GET HEADACHES DURING SEX

Q *I keep getting* headaches during sex – seriously! – and I'm getting really worried about it. What's going on?
Louise, Wigan

A DAWN SAYS: Around one in 100 people suffers with what we call benign coital headache, which starts as you reach orgasm and lasts for 15-20 minutes. Coital headache is more common in men than women and anyone who gets migraines is also at increased risk. The good news is that the headaches usually get better after a while without any treatment. In the meantime Ibuprofen, taken before you're likely to have intercourse, may help. It would also be worth seeing your GP to have your blood pressure checked, as coital headaches can be associated with high blood pressure.

3 of the best... STOMACH SLIMMERS

The Hoodia cactus – the main ingredient of Hoodia Mint – contains the P57 molecule, which convinces the brain that the stomach is full.



£13.25 for a week's supply, Holland & Barrett

Taken after food, Lipobind is a natural supplement that aims to remove undigested fats from the body – without unpleasant side effects.

£24.95 for 60 tablets, Tesco



Cynara Artichoke helps improve the digestion of fatty foods and stops you feeling sick after overindulging. Perfect for the festive season!

£9.95 for 30 capsules, Boots



- ✓ Want to lose weight?
 - ✓ Not sleeping?
 - ✓ No time to get to a GP?
- That's me! I want Dr Dawn's help**

How do I get in touch?
TEXT: text* NOWDOC a space and your problem to UK 86611 or IRL 53305
EMAIL: send a private message to drdawn@ipcmedia.com
WRITE: Dr Dawn, Now, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU

*Maximum 160 characters. Texts are charged at 25p each in the UK, 30c each in Ireland, plus network charges. SP: Eckoh (UK) Ltd. Dr Dawn regrets that she cannot respond to every query in person