

ASK DR DAWN

Our top TV GP is here to solve your health problems



BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Slimming drug Alli became available without prescription in the UK in April and has proved very popular with around 200,000 purchases in a few months. It reduces the absorption of fat from your diet and can be bought by adults with a BMI of 28 or above after consultation with a pharmacist.

However, recent reports of an investigation by American health officials into a possible link with liver disease could dent Alli's sales. To put things into perspective, 30 of the 32 cases of liver disease reported in the last nine years were in patients taking the stronger prescription-only form (Xenical) and, as the manufacturers say, there's no proven link. But if you're taking either drug and are concerned, talk to your GP.



Katy Hill swears by Lipobind, one of the over-the-counter alternatives to Alli

IS DYSLEXIA GENETIC?

Q I'm dyslexic and I'm worried that my three-year-old son may be following in my footsteps. Does dyslexia run in families?

Corinna, Manchester

A DAWN SAYS: Dyslexia is more common in children with relatives who suffer from it, but everyone involved in education is much more switched on these days so even if your son is dyslexic, things will be much easier for him at school than it was for you. All children show occasional dyslexic tendencies and it can be difficult to make the diagnosis at three, but signs to look out for are confusing words of direction, such as up and down or in and out; substituting words incorrectly, such as 'lampshade' for 'lamppost'; or having difficulty learning nursery rhymes or clapping a rhythm. Sufferers also tend to find dressing themselves difficult and can be clumsy. If your son has several of these traits, then ask your GP about getting him assessed by a psychologist. For more information, visit bdadyslexia.org.uk.

WORRIED ABOUT PIERCING

Q I want to get my tummy button pierced, but a couple of my friends have had infections after having theirs done. How can I make sure I don't have that problem?

Alison, Kew

A DAWN SAYS: You'll need to clean the area daily with an antiseptic solution such as chlorhexidine gluconate, which you can buy at the chemist, and avoid wearing anything tight around your waistband until the piercing has healed. It does also seem that higher quality jewellery has less problems with infections, so spending a little more at the outset may well be a good investment.

- 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 86611 (UK only)

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, plus network charges. SP: Eckoh (UK) Ltd. Dr Dawn regrets that she cannot respond to every query in person

3 of the best...

DRY SKIN BOOSTERS



£6.74
Holland & Barrett

Clinical trials have shown that Efamol Pure Evening Primrose Oil can help relieve skin problems.



£6.89
Moss Pharmacies

Allergenic Hair Gentle Medicated Shampoo soothes dry scalp conditions such as eczema and dermatitis.



Avene Thermal Water spray is full of balanced minerals that won't sting or burn and is known to work wonders on troubled skin.

£3
Boots