



Top tips: For kids, one portion is roughly a handful. Frozen and canned fruit and veg count too - it's quick and cheap to boil some frozen peas

Children of the revolution

New Year's resolutions faltered? Then try the Great Swapathon

This month is all about the Great Swapathon - a new and innovative Change4Life campaign that aims to get everyone swapping their unhealthy habits for healthier ones. We know that January is a time when people are especially willing to make lifestyle changes - making lists of New Year's resolutions. But we also know many of these good intentions falter, because

BY MARTIN MORGAN



Change4Life. It's a nationwide movement which aims to help us all, but especially our kids, eat well, move more and live longer. Active Cumbria's marketing and communications officer, Emma Martin, said: "We hope the Great Swapathon will really get people thinking about their lifestyle and the swaps they could make."

Join the healthy living revolution Change4Life aims to persuade families to change their lifestyles. It's a big challenge but we know it can be achieved if they get help and support from lots of different, trusted sources. After all, a few years ago recycling was something only really environmentally-conscious people did. And now it's a national habit.

If you can support Change4Life by passing on information to families you work with, you can play a part in this lifestyle revolution.

8 small changes 4 a healthier future Change4Life isn't about telling families what to do. It's about providing parents with lots of tips and ideas so that they can choose the ways that will work best for their family. There are eight 'changes' that parents need to make to help give their kids a healthier future. Here's a quick introduction to each one, together with a tip to

pass on to parents:

■ **Sugar swaps:** Swapping sugary snacks and drinks for ones that have no added sugar can make a significant difference to kids' calorie intake.

Example tip: Suggest to parents that they switch from giving their kids sugary drinks to giving them drinks with no added sugar such as water, unsweetened fruit juice or even sugar-free fizzy drinks.

■ **Me size meals:** Even though they're growing, kids need to eat the right amount for their age - not too little and not too much.

Example tip: Explain to parents the importance of giving kids a portion that matches their size, not the same amount of food as themselves.

■ **Meal time:** It's important for kids to have regular, proper meals to help them establish better eating habits.

Example tip: Encourage parents to make sure their kids eat breakfast - low sugar cereals, toast or fruit are a great way to kick-start their day.

■ **Snack check:** Many snacks are full of things that are bad for us, so it's important to keep an eye on how many less healthy snacks kids are having.

Example tip: Suggest to parents that they keep count: many people are surprised how many sweets, crisps and biscuits their kids get through.

■ **Five-A-Day:** It's easier than people often think to give kids five portions of fruit and

vegetables a day. For kids, one portion is roughly a handful.

Example tip: Frozen and canned fruit and veg count too - it's quick and cheap to boil some frozen peas or open a can of sweetcorn; ■ **Cut back fat:** We all know that too much fat is bad for us, but it's not always easy to tell where it's lurking.

Example tip: By grilling or baking food in the oven rather than frying it, parents can cut the fat content by as much as half; ■ **60 active minutes:** Kids need to do at least 60 minutes of activity a day to help them stay happy and healthy.

Example tip: It doesn't have to be organised sport - running around, going to the playground or just walking instead of taking the car all count;

■ **Up and about:** Spending too long in front of the TV, computer or video games can mean we don't burn off enough energy and store up fat in our bodies.

Example tip: Setting a daily time limit for sitting still (eg 'two hours maximum') is a good way for parents to keep their kids active.

■ You can find lots more tips and ideas, plus other ways that you can get involved, at www.nhs.uk/change4life (click on 'partners and supporters') or by calling 0300 1233434. Calls to 03 numbers should cost no more than geographic 01 or 02 UK-wide calls, and may be part of inclusive minutes.

Burn calories, and shape your body

By Carol Westmorland champion cyclist and Pilates instructor



Now into my eleventh year of teaching, I still find Pilates unique. It never ceases to impress. I see, on a daily basis, the surprise on the faces of new clients. Surprise that the body they wander around with all day isn't quite the fine specimen they thought it was. This is not to say they are disappointed; quite the opposite. They are excited to begin a journey that will result in their body changing over the following weeks and months to become stronger, more agile and above all else younger.

To quote Joseph Pilates 'Physical fitness is the first requisite of happiness. In order to achieve happiness, it is imperative to gain mastery of your body. If at the age of 30 you are stiff and out of shape, you are old. If at 60 you are supple and strong then you are young'.

I first introduced a Pilates regimen into my weekly workout to rehabilitate a broken arm following a cycling accident on ice back in 1998.

Having spent many years in the fitness industry and having qualified to teach dance in 1994 I wrongly assumed that my body was strong and agile.

As a competitive cyclist I had enormous lung capacity - my rib cage is around 3 inches wider than my two sisters - but I had, it seemed, neglected some rather essential bits of my body. Namely the stabilising or accessory muscles. No more. I have never



Carol Westmorland: 'Pilates really does sculpt the body - giving the look that you have lost weight'

looked back.

The business with my arm left me frustrated and in need of some 'self-help'.

I vividly remember sitting in front of a long mirror in my home bemused.

Why could I not manage to sort this one out myself (at the time my arm was stuck at a 90 degree angle and no amount of manipulation was making it budge). Pilates was unheard of. A very small article, about one paragraph, appeared in my monthly fitness journal. I read it and thought 'this is it' - my Eureka moment.

My arm needed slow encouragement. I could use it to cycle (tri-bars are wonderful) but I began to compensate for its lack of movement by leaning in from my shoulder. My shoulder began to sit forward. Without Pilates I

would not have been aware of this. I began to get to know my body in a way I had never taken time to before. I was able to work at realigning my posture.

People started to notice a difference in my physique. I became evangelical about Pilates which led me to teach. I looked longer and leaner - I am now 5ft 6in and I promise I started at 5ft 4in! Pilates is a sensible approach to movement. It is rather like giving your body a MOT every time you attend class. There is opportunity for discussion and laughter and there is always the opportunity to think.

A six-month long study published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* confirmed that weight loss is based on calories. Your calorie intake needs to be less than your calories exerted.

Of course it is possible to consume fewer calories than you are exerting and not exercise, but why put yourself through such an unpleasant experience? It is an extremely unhealthy way to live and can be unsafe. You will feel permanently cold and lethargic.

Exercising has too many benefits to ignore. Divided into two different groups aerobic exercise is moderate and performed for a long duration of time.

Anaerobic exercise is used to build power and/or muscle mass. These muscles generally have a greater performance under a short high intensity situation and:

- Tone muscles in the body;
- Improves overall circulation;
- Reduces Blood Pressure;
- Boosts your immune system;

- Improves overall circulation;
 - Makes you feel good!
- A study, using several hundred people weighing around 145 pounds, was devised to find the calories burned during one hour of various forms of exercise. The results were as follows:
- Cycling (outdoor) 512;
 - Cycling (stationary) 448;
 - Jogging (5 mph) 512;
 - Walking (3.5 mph) 243;
 - Pilates - between 241 and 421 - depending on the work you put in.

I get many clients who say "I want to change my shape". I also have many who wish to improve their quality of life. I love having clients of differing shapes and sizes who come to Pilates for many different reasons:

- Relaxation;
- Improving posture;
- Creating muscle tone;
- Relieving back and joint pain;
- Increasing joint mobility and control;
- Increasing flexibility;
- Improving sports performance;
- Out of season conditioning;
- Pilates changes the shape of your body - clothes fit differently;
- Pilates tightens your waistline;
- Pilates builds muscle without bulk and improves posture - making you seem taller and slimmer;
- Pilates tones all of your muscles because each exercise is a complete body workout.

So Pilates really does sculpt the body - giving the look that you have lost weight. Everyone can gain an advantage from practicing Pilates - you simply need an open mind and a willingness to understand your body and make time to give it the care and attention it deserves.

The day I was almost defeated - by Catbells!

I'VE never been a fan of Catbells. I've written some negative stuff about it over the years, describing it as "overrated" and "not worth the effort".

Most of this is a reaction against the tendency for some writers and broadcasters to make it out to be the best viewpoint in the Lake District - and one of the easiest to reach. It's neither.

But it can, as a result of this misinformation, lay claim to at least one accolade - that of being one of the busiest fells. Look up at Catbells on any summer weekend and you'll see a long line of people strung out along its

Guidebook writer Vivienne Crow shares her love of the great outdoors



forecast was for a cold, bright day so, despite feeling a bit washed-out from a stomach bug I'd had the week before, I set off feeling quite positive about Catbells.

As I drove along the A66 towards Keswick though, the blue sky gradually began to fill in. Nearing the parking area, a light drizzle started falling. I looked up at Catbells. "Well, at least it's not in cloud," I said to myself. Famous took its revenge.

I'd decided to give it another go for the walking column I write in the *News & Star's* sister weekly newspapers. It was the middle of the week in January so the crowds would be long gone. The

column before the cloud descended and the day became truly miserable. My legs felt like lead - I wasn't as far on the road to recovery as I thought - but I laboured on.

A couple of hundred yards below the summit is a section of rock that has been polished by walkers' boots over the years. Today, its normally slippery surface was also covered in a combination of mud and slushy snow. I made it up the first step, but the second was just a little too much for my weak legs. I somehow managed, as I clambered up on my knees, to turn round and end up sitting on

the rock, facing back down the hill with my legs dangling in space. Unable to stand, I then had to resort to shuffling up the slimy rock backwards on my bottom, using my arms to propel myself. Not a recommended fell technique.

The descent, a little later, was more pleasant and the sun even began to appear, but I remained vigilant - I was convinced the fell was out to get me. As I made my way through an area of old mine workings, I half-expected an ancient mine shaft to open up and swallow me. I can think of better places to end my days than in the bowels of bloody Catbells!

GET MORE ACTIVE

like BRENDA

Her exercise class allows Brenda to de-stress from a busy week at work and counts towards her **3X30** mins

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For more ideas on getting more physically active including fitness classes visit...

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