

AUSTRALIA Reader's Digest

**RD
TALKS**
OUR STORIES
AS PODCASTS

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

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and Healing*

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What You Need to Know About BLADDER CANCER

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My Best Friend SCAMMED ME

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I have been using the bar for coloured hair and my husband is using the original. Total converts from the first wash! - Alysha Day (fb)



My natural curls have been brought out, full and bouncy. I don't need to use a conditioner either. - Nadiyah R. (fb)



I was skeptical but now I won't ever go back to 'traditional' shampoo & conditioner again. All I need is one bar of this. - Cherie F (fb)



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THE WHAT FACE



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EDITOR'S NOTE

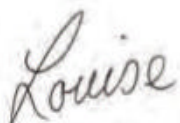
Stay Well, Stay Positive

FRIENDSHIP IS A GIFT, and one that we all treasure. Trusting and confiding in each other is what binds friendships together, but when those foundations are threatened, it can rock an individual to their core. In 'Scammed By My Best Friend' (page 108), we witness how low one scammer was prepared to go for financial gain.

Olivia Newton-John (page 32) is a name synonymous with good times and happy tunes. But she'd be the first to acknowledge that her personal life has faced some tough challenges, particularly in terms of her health. Despite a diagnosis of breast cancer nearly 30 years ago, and then its return as stage 4 in her back in 2017, Olivia remains positive and is committed to a low-toxic, all-natural lifestyle.

This month's issue offers an interesting read for everyone. For adventure lovers, we explore the magnificent coast of Northern Ireland ('In the Land of the Giants', page 116), and marvel at the bravery and determination of a man who survived almost 29 hours in Indonesian waters ('Lost Overboard', page 124). Health-wise, we take an in-depth look at bladder cancer and how to recognise the early signs (page 64), and examine the nutritional value of matching certain foods together ('Dynamic Duos', page 92). We also show how easy it is to extend the use of ordinary household items by putting them to work in extraordinary new ways (page 38).

These stories and more are specially selected for you. Happy reading!



LOUISE WATERSON
Editor-in-Chief



AUSTRALIA Reader's Digest

Vol. 201
No. 1195
August 2021

EDITORIAL

Editor-in-Chief Louise Waterson
Managing Editor Zoë Meunier
Chief Subeditor Melanie Egan
Art Director Hugh Hanson
Senior Art Designer Adele Burley
Art Designer Annie Li
Senior Editor Diane Godley
Associate Editor Victoria Polzot

DIGITAL

Head of Digital Content Greg Barton

ADVERTISING

**Group Advertising
& Retail Sales Director** Sheron White
Account Manager Darlene Delaney
Advertising Support Manager Rebecca Zhang

● All ADVERTISING and RETAIL INQUIRIES

Sheron White
Mobile Phone 0421 897 140
Email sheron.white@readersdigest.com.au

PUBLISHED UNDER LICENCE BY DIRECT PUBLISHING PTY LTD

● SUBSCRIPTION and CUSTOMER INQUIRIES ONLY

Online www.readersdigest.com.au
Phone 1300 300 030 Fax (02) 9004 4830
Email sales@readersdigest.com.au
Mail Reader's Digest Magazine, PO Box 6458,
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PRINTED BY OVATO LIMITED, 8 PRIDDLE ST, WARWICK FARM, NSW 2170, FOR DIRECT
PUBLISHING PTY LTD, 431 WARRINGAH ROAD, FRENCHS FOREST, NSW 2086. © 2021
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LETTERS

Reader's Comments And Opinions

Where Are We Headed?

I have just finished reading 'Saving the Moon' (May) and I can't believe what I read. Looking at the overall picture, humans wanting to explore and set up civilisations out in the universe, not to mention establishing mining companies on the Moon, makes me wonder, *where are we heading?* Again, it's all about money. Wanting to establish mining companies to bring minerals back to our planet is beyond belief.

Instead of spending millions of dollars on exploratory programmes, we should be looking at securing our world; many countries are gearing themselves for more wars



and others are impoverished. Instead of wasting money investigating how to live beyond our world, we should be exploring ways for every country to live in peace and plan how to ensure that everyone has sufficient food.

MIKE HILTON

Making the Most of Life

Thank you to Garry Maddox for sharing his challenge ('Surviving My Shocking Diagnosis', May). My wonderful dad Neil Cox, who is almost 85, just started immunotherapy for cancer. Garry's story inspired Mum, Dad

and me so much. Each month I fly up from Melbourne when Dad has his session to drive him there and pick him up. The in-between time, Mum and I go somewhere nice instead of waiting at home worrying about how Dad may react in his session. Dad has embraced

Let us know if you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 8 for how to join the discussion.

mindfulness and kale – two extra reasons we find laughter in amongst these months. PAULINE COX

A Long Love Affair

Back in 1980 when I was in Year 8, I had my first crush on Reader’s Digest. I accompanied my father to a bookshop to buy textbooks and there it was – attractively placed at the counter. It was love at first sight. I have never missed reading an issue since. Short inspirational pieces like ‘My Most Unlikely Friend’ (May) have made me a better human being. Such stories give hope, make you empathetic, and show the bright side of humankind. If there had been no Reader’s Digest in my life, it would have been a lacklustre affair. It’s my regular mentor. Thank you, Reader’s Digest! SIBGHATULLAH KHAN

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The best letter each month will win a Pilot Capless Fountain Pen, valued at over \$200. The Capless is the perfect combination of luxury and ingenious technology, featuring a one-of-a-kind retractable fountain pen nib, durable metal body, beautiful rhodium accents and a 14K gold nib. Congratulations to this month’s winner, Pauline Cox.



HAIRS LOOKING AT YOU, KID

We asked you think up a clever caption for this photo.

He’ll be ‘bowled’ over with his new cut.

GABRIELLA HOLLOWAY

Oh no. Not the Beatles cut – that is so last century!

KERRIL COOPER

Despite some economical cuts, he was failing to see the fringe benefits.

LIZZIE MCLACHLAN

This new hairstyle is called ‘The Corona’.

TROY SIMPSON

Congratulations to this month’s winner, Lizzie McLachlan.



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win

\$100. To enter, email

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or see details on page 8.

Medical Matters

When an important article, such as 'The New Truth Behind Cholesterol' (June) is published, I feel that the author's credentials should be included. I realise that Reader's Digest is not a scholarly magazine, but I feel that not enough supporting facts were given in the article and maybe in a couple of instances one might dispute what was written and ask for proof. Just a thought. Thank you anyway for a very useful and entertaining magazine.

DR MICHAEL ALLAM

Editor's Note: Thank you for your generous comment and for raising this important point. To clarify, our health articles are written in a style to help our readers grasp complex issues, with the details fact-checked for reliability and accuracy to the highest standards, a long-standing policy at Reader's Digest. The author, Bonnie Munday, is an experienced consumer health journalist, who spoke to accredited experts including cardiologists and authors of peer-reviewed research in medical journals.

Extras With Experience

Servicemen and women pay a heavy price for their active duty. Now some can use their training creatively in the entertainment industry, 'Extras with a Difference' (May). We need more such outlets. EULALIE HOLMAN



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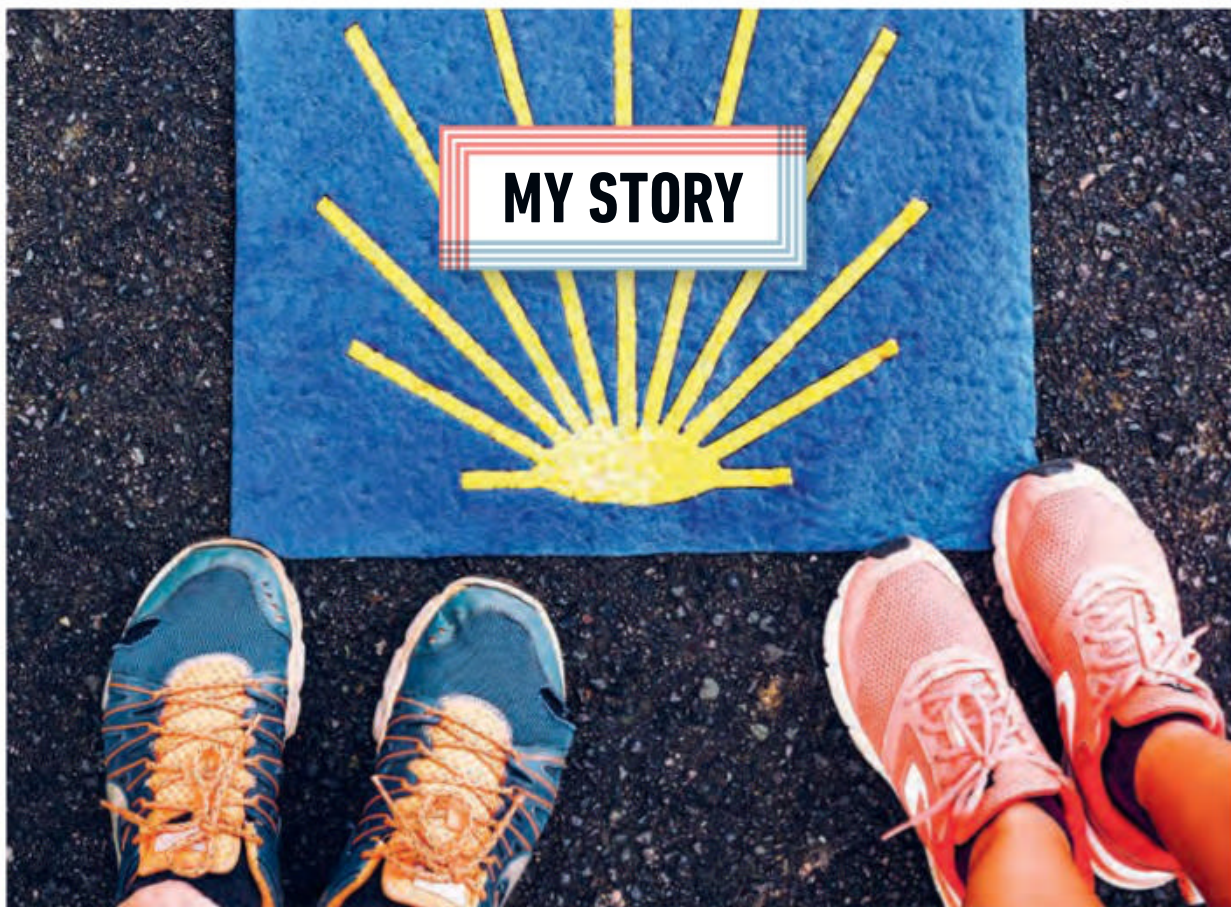
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The Longest Walk to the Altar

The journey of a lifetime began with the first few steps

BY Carmel Valencia-Indrawan

“**A**ND SO IT BEGINS,” I said to myself. We were a few minutes into our long walk, but getting to this first step had taken several years.

Six, to be exact.

In the summer of 2011, my friend Nino and I started talking

over lunch about the Camino de Santiago. Only a handful of friends seemed to know about the pilgrimage route, and I was surprised that he not only knew about it but, like me, also had it on his bucket list.

It took another six years before we finally found ourselves at the

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

foot of the famous yellow arrows in the spring of 2017. Over those years we had grown to be more than just friends, and we thought of this walk as one long date.

There is a network of routes to Camino de Santiago, created by pilgrims – or *peregrinos* – who have walked the path since the Middle Ages. Each starts at a different location in Spain, Portugal and France, and ends in the city of Santiago de Compostela in north-west Spain – where the remains of Saint James are kept in the Cathedral.

The journey has evolved beyond its religious significance from a thousand years ago. Today, every pilgrim walks or cycles the Camino for personal reasons.

Three things are typically found on a pilgrim: a backpack carrying their belongings, a scallop shell displayed as a nod to Saint James, and a Credencial, or pilgrim's passport, for stamps to mark the journey.

Nino and I began our walk in the Spanish city of León, 322 kilometres away. We had given ourselves two weeks to reach the Cathedral, covering around 20 kilometres a day.

Carmel Valencia-Indrawan, 38, lives in Manila and is a storyteller by profession. Since completing their pilgrimage in Spain, she and her husband have started a family tradition to do one incredible trekking adventure every year.

Over the next 14 days we crossed mountains and valleys, walked along highways and muddy trails, and through forests and desert in wind, rain and sunshine.

Spring had brought out more pilgrims on the walk, and the spirit of camaraderie was evident. We were all walking for different reasons, from different countries, and at different paces, but all on the same path.

Two words captured the feeling that we were never alone: *buen camino* (loosely translated as 'have a great experience on the Camino'), an encouragement exchanged between pilgrims and residents who greeted us along the way.

Each day, with the weight of a large backpack on my shoulders, I came to realise just what six hours of walking under the heat of a spring sun in Spain felt like. But hot as the sun was, the scenery always managed to steal my attention.

The 300-kilometre trek will always be special to me, but there are particular moments that I keep with me to this day, and they are the afternoons when we arrived at our destination. The relief of putting down my backpack coupled with the thought of a warm shower and bed were always the best part, followed by the excitement of discovering a new village.

Most afternoons we would shop at the local store for dinner and

provisions for the next day, grab a coffee and greet fellow pilgrims with smiles, in acknowledgement of the distances we had covered since we last met.

On our final day's walk a profound thought came to me: *The hours are long, but the days short.* On this final stretch we would cover another 20 kilometres and enter the city of Santiago de Compostela in the early afternoon.

Although we'd walked over 100 hours through countless cities, nothing quite prepared me for seeing the signpost for Santiago de Compostela for the first time.

The road into the city – which runs around the outskirts of neighbouring towns – is strewn with messages left by previous pilgrims, some etched in trees, some spelled out by tiny rocks, and some painted on walls. Our last hour on the road, I looked up and read what would stay with me well beyond the Camino. The wisdom painted on a wall read, "*La vida es corta pero ancha.*" Life is short but wide.

I will always wonder how the right words find us at the right moment. This was one of those times. Life indeed is short, but the adventures

we fill it with allow us to broaden the beautiful lives we lead. And this adventure had been one of them.

I stepped into the courtyard where hundreds of pilgrims were congregated, looking up at the Cathedral's magnificent spires: we had finished the Camino de Santiago.

And now, a new walk was waiting for Nino and myself.

Pilgrims find themselves on the path for different reasons, and for Nino and I the path was one last adventure before we would take our wedding vows inside the Cathedral's chapel a few days later.



PILGRIMS CARRY A SCALLOP SHELL AS A NOD TO SAINT JAMES

Some say it might have been the longest walk to the altar, all 322 kilometres of it. Family and friends had travelled from across the world to see us finish the Camino and takes the first steps in a new life together.

The priest gave us one last piece of advice. He said we may have finished the Camino, but our real camino now starts as a married couple.

Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 8 for details on how to contribute.



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Bringing Baby to Visit

LORNE HENRY

From 2008 to 2019, I lived in an old farmhouse in Lansdowne, a village on the mid-north coast of New South Wales, with no neighbours nearby. In the late afternoons, a pair of yellow-tailed black cockatoos would fly over, on their way from the mountain forests to who knows where, heralded by their sad cry.

During the long drought in 2018, they'd stop in my backyard to drink from my large ceramic lily pond. One would stand guard high in the old black bean tree that used to

shade the outdoor toilet, while the other drank its fill. Then, they'd change positions. When both were replete, they'd fly off. This occurred every day.

When I hadn't seen them for quite some time, I'd wondered what had befallen them until, one afternoon they returned with their young chick. I was thrilled that they were teaching it how to survive and showing it the safest places to visit.

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 8 for details on how to contribute.

Mamma Mao

MUSTABSHIRAH HANIF

In the summer of 2005, a stray ginger cat gave birth to a litter of kittens in our front yard, right near a neem tree. Our family warmly welcomed the cat and her four kittens. We named the mother cat Mao.

When the kittens were about three months old, my sisters and I would watch on as Mao taught her young ones to climb the neem tree.

We especially enjoyed observing the peculiar way Mao patiently taught her kittens to grip the tree and climb. It was a very funny sight as sometimes the kittens would slip down the trunk and at other times they would pay no attention to their mother at all and spend the entire 'lesson' scratching at the bark!

Time passed and after two months of practising regularly in the evenings, the kittens had finally learnt to climb trees.

Early one miserable morning, around 2am, we woke to a commotion in our front yard. Instantly, I knew that our kittens were in danger.

My sisters and I immediately ran downstairs and went outside to find two dogs howling, trying to attack the cats. My father, who had followed us, went to find something with which to shoo them away. Though I could not



see the dogs clearly, they were the medium-sized strays that are common in Karachi, Pakistan. My sisters and I watched as Mao helped her babies up the neem tree, staying on the ground to fight off the dogs and protect her kittens.

By the time our father arrived to shoo the dogs away, it was too late. The dogs had severely injured Mao.

Mother and my two elder sisters rushed Mao to our neighbour's house, who was a vet and fortunately able to treat the poor cat.

Two weeks later, a recovered Mao rejoined her kittens at home. This incident taught us all a valuable lesson about how far parents will go to protect their young.

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PETS

Why Does My Cat Do That?

The reasons behind some weird cat habits and quirks

BY *Dr Katrina Warren*



Our regular pet columnist, Dr Katrina Warren, is an established and trusted animal expert.

CAT BEHAVIOUR can often be puzzling and confusing to humans. However, rest assured, your cat isn't crazy, there's often a rational explanation for their actions. Veterinarian Dr Katrina Warren shares her expertise on some common and quirky cat behaviours to help you understand why your cat behaves the way it does.

MY CAT ALWAYS SCRATCHES THE FURNITURE

Scratching is a natural behaviour for cats – it's a way for them to mark their territory and is how they remove the outer sheath of their claws to expose a new sharper claw underneath. If your cat does not have a suitable surface to scratch, they will choose your furniture or carpet.

To protect your furniture, provide at least two scratching posts. These posts need to be stable so they don't rock or tip over, have a rough surface and be tall enough for your cat to stretch out when using it.

Cats tend to scratch when they wake in the morning, so place one post close to where they sleep. Teach them to use the post by playing games that encourage them to stretch up the post.

MY CAT KNEADS ME ALL THE TIME If you have a cat that loves to knead, you will know that it does look like they are kneading dough. It usually occurs when



a cat is in a relaxed, dreamy state and they may knead people or soft surfaces like a blanket or jumper. Not all cats knead and some do it only occasionally.

It is believed the habit develops as a kitten habit and stays into adulthood. Kittens will knead their mother to stimulate milk flow and may create a lifelong comforting association.

When your cat is kneading you, they are relaxed and happy.

MY CAT BUTTS ME WITH HIS HEAD When a cat bumps its head on you or rubs its cheek on part of your body, it is called ‘head bunting’. They may also do this to other people or your furniture. Head bunting is a way for cats to leave their scent. Cats have scent glands on their head that produce pheromones and it is common for them to exchange scents with

There’s no single explanation for why cats may supplement their diets with grass

other cats or people who share their environment.

It is considered a social, friendly gesture, so take it as a compliment.

MY CAT EATS GRASS There are several reasons why cats eat grass: they may be seeking the nutrients in the grass or, if they have an upset stomach, inducing vomiting. Grass also provides fibre and may help to quicken their bowel movements.

It is not a problem if your cat enjoys eating grass, but make sure it hasn’t been treated with pesticides. Alternatively, offer your cat a pot of untreated cat grass to nibble on, especially indoor cats. This is available from most plant nurseries.

If you have any concerns about your cat’s behaviour or frequency of vomiting, please talk with your vet.

3 FUN FACTS ABOUT CATS

- A group of cats is called a clowder.
- Cats can sleep for an average of 15 hours a day – some up to 20 hours.
- Most cats have a total of 18 toes – five on each front paw and four on the back. However, it’s not uncommon for a cat to have more or less.



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Dr Rosalba Cortney DO
PhD, Osteopath &
Breathing Therapist

Recommends Steam Breathing

"Helps in so many ways. Such an improvement week after week since I have been using it, I have slowly gone up in the heat settings and it really has made such a difference, I am not waking up reaching for my inhaler. It has been a blessing for me!"

BEE | South East Queensland, QLD

5 WAYS TO GET 'LUNG FIT'!

STAY HYDRATED

It might seem simple, but keeping well hydrated helps maintain the health of the mucosal lining in the lungs.

SLOW RELAXED BREATH

Deep breathing helps you expand and allow your lungs to reach their full capacity.

NASAL BREATHING

Our nose is an important part of the respiratory system. It warms and humidifies the air we breathe and helps protect the airways from allergens, pollutants, and pathogens.

SIT STRAIGHT, STAND TALL AND BREATHE WITH DIAPHRAGM

Our lungs are soft structures, so making room for them to expand and contract as we breathe is incredibly important.

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Know the Signs of Sepsis

Acting fast could save your life

BY *Lisa Bendall*



We usually think of an insect bite or bladder infection as uncomfortable, not necessarily dangerous. But scratch your skin too much, or put off getting antibiotics, and your health could take a serious turn if you get sepsis – you could have trouble breathing or feel faint or disoriented, with no idea why you’re suddenly so sick. Sepsis is a medical emergency that can turn deadly fast.

It’s a condition that kills about 11 million people per year worldwide, more than total deaths from cancer. So it’s surprising most people don’t know much about sepsis. It’s not only potentially

lethal, it can cause long-term complications for survivors if it isn’t treated early.

You may have heard of sepsis by its colloquial name, blood poisoning, or its now obsolete name, septicaemia. It develops when the body overreacts to an infection. Instead of limiting activity to one area of the body, the immune system releases an abundance of germ-fighting chemicals into the bloodstream, causing widespread inflammation. It can eventually lead to dangerously low blood pressure and organ failure, or septic shock.

“You can think of it as collateral damage,” says Global Sepsis Alliance founding president

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

Dr Konrad Reinhart. “It’s like in war, when you’re defending your country. You may hit your own people.”

Usually, sepsis starts with a bacterial infection like pneumonia, a urinary tract infection, or cellulitis (an infection from a break in the skin). It can also develop from a fungal infection, a virus or, in rare cases, a parasite.

“Sepsis is time-critical,” says intensive-care consultant Dr Ron Daniels. Surprisingly, 80 per cent of cases in developed countries start outside the hospital, according to the Centres for Disease Control in the US. That’s why it’s vitally important that people recognise the symptoms and seek immediate care. “The more rapidly people can present, the greater chance we have of improving their outcome,” says Dr Daniels.

WHAT SHOULD YOU WATCH FOR?

If you know or suspect you have any type of infection, consider it an emergency if you develop slurred speech, confusion, extreme pain in a joint or muscle, severe shortness of breath, pale or mottled skin, a lack of urination all day, or just a sense you could be dying. “Trust your instincts,” Daniels says. “Be prepared to ask, ‘could this be

sepsis?’” You could be in urgent need of antibiotics or antifungals. More serious cases may require IV fluids and drugs to raise blood pressure, steroids to support circulation and blood pressure, and treatments like kidney dialysis or ventilation if organs are already failing.

Anyone can get sepsis, although old age and illness raise the risk, and its effects may be long-lasting. “Forty per cent of people who survive it have one or more

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE SLURRED SPEECH, CONFUSION AND PAIN

persistent physical, psychological or cognitive problem, like impaired judgment or poor memory,” notes Dr Daniels. They may also experience traumatic stress, anxiety or depression. Some survivors have long-

lasting fatigue, and joint and muscle pain. Only about half return to normal within a year.

Lives can be saved if people learn the signs of sepsis, Dr Reinhart says. He points to measures such as vaccinations for diseases like pneumonia and flu, management of chronic conditions, and paying attention to cuts. “It’s also healthy living. Avoid drugs, smoking, too much alcohol. Get exercise and fresh air. Do whatever helps your immune system cope with stress, so you’re less susceptible to infection.”



How Can I Soothe Sore Eyes?

Simple remedies to relieve dry, irritated eyes

BY *The Editors*

Dry eyes are a common issue for many people but there are ways to soothe sore, irritated eyes. With some simple eye care measures, the discomfort caused by dryness can be avoided.

The first thing to do is limit screen time, or at least give your eyes regular breaks from the screen – this is especially important for those whose jobs require them to spend long hours looking at a computer.

If your eyes remain dry and sore, try washing your eyelids and lashes with warm water, which should get rid of any environmental particles that may have entered.

Warm compresses are also a

common approach to soothe dry eyes. Simply run warm water over clean cottonwool balls or pads, close your eyes and lightly press along your eyelash line for one minute. The heat from the compresses should help the glands that produce tears to work better and relieve your eyes.

Eye drops are a convenient way to alleviate discomfort and keep eyes moist and healthy, whether at home, work or out and about. Opt for eye drops that protect from moisture loss and keep the area lubricated for longer periods of time. You'll find several options available at your pharmacy.

Having dry eyes can cause people to want to rub the itchy area, however this should be avoided at all costs as rubbing can cause long-term damage to your retina.

If your eyes are still sore after trying these remedies, book an appointment with your GP or optometrist.

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WORLD OF MEDICINE

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART-HEALTH RISK IS

Life partners share a lot of things – and that includes their level of cardiovascular health, according to a *JAMA Network Open* study. Among the 5364 couples that took part, the correlation was most often the case because they both had the same risk factors, whether it was high cholesterol, smoking, physical inactivity, obesity, high blood pressure or poor eating habits.

However, on the flip side, researchers found that partners can also have a positive effect on each other: participants were 2.3 times more likely to quit smoking if their other half did, and 6.4 times more likely to follow the other's lead in improving their diet.

RETHINKING BREAST CANCER SURGERY FOR OLDER WOMEN

Breast cancer can often be stopped through surgery – mastectomies and lumpectomies – but doctors don't always offer it to women over age 70, worrying that it may do them more harm than good.

However, new research suggests that for most older women, surgery is life-lengthening – and more tolerated than some have assumed.

EXPLORING CLOSE TO HOME IS ALSO A MOOD BOOSTER

COVID-19 may have curbed the joy that comes from travel, but it doesn't have to end it. A *Nature Neuroscience* study showed that simply exploring near where you live brings novel experiences that could lift your mood. The researchers found those with a wider variety of daily experiences are more likely to feel happier.

THE PROS AND CONS OF PPIs

One of the world's most commonly used drugs, proton-pump inhibitors (PPIs) bring relief from acid reflux, peptic ulcers and indigestion. However, scientists have linked long-term use to an increased risk of kidney disease, gut infections, stomach cancer and diabetes. If you have relied on PPIs for two years

or more, ask your doctor about risks and getting your blood sugar checked regularly.



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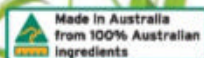
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ANOTHER CHANCE AT

LIFE





KINDNESS OF STRANGERS

A traffic accident left a young photographer badly injured on the road where he would have died, until finally a car pulled up

BY *Santanu Mitra* AS TOLD TO *Snigdha Hasan*

New Delhi, March 31, 1992: When I left the office for a news assignment that early summer evening, I had absolutely no idea that this was going to become a dateline of my own life story.

As a young photographer with *The Times of India* in Delhi, I was on my way to a photo shoot before I wrapped up for the day. I was thrilled to be leaving for Paris in five days. I couldn't wait to fly out – I was going to visit friends and give my career a boost, as I had also planned meetings with photo agencies there. I had, in fact, received my visa only a while before I headed out for my assignment at about 7pm.

On Moolchand flyover, with my camera bag containing my equipment, passport and \$500 strapped to my back, I rode my motorbike at moderate speed. Suddenly, something

massive hit me from behind. All I knew was I was no longer on my bike.

I was flung from my bike and had hit the road. Before I blacked out, I could see my helmet lying at a distance, smashed into three pieces.

Hours, maybe days later, I opened my eyes. Was I at an airport terminal? But why were the air hostesses in white uniforms? I realised I was on a hospital bed and later learnt that I had been shifted to the ward 19 days after the accident. Under the influence of the morphine I'd been pumped with, it took me some time to understand this was the ICU of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). Even as I flitted in and out of consciousness, I could sense a lot had happened already. And who knew what was to come? Later I discovered that the impact of the crash was such that my skull had been fractured, leading to a complication called CSF rhinorrhoea, in which the

fluid surrounding the brain drains out of the nose. After the doctors monitored me, waiting for me to stabilise, I was finally shifted to a private ward. A slew of surgeries followed – a reconstruction of the skull, my broken right wrist fixed and a rhinoplasty. My jaw needed mending, too.

I lived by myself in Delhi, and after hearing about my accident, my mother rushed from Kolkata – a 1500 kilometre and 20-hour train trip – to be with me. My colleagues rallied around me and looked after me like family. They donated eight bottles of blood and stood by me throughout.

As I lay in hospital, I tried to piece together that fateful Tuesday. A friend, Madhumita Mitra, who was the first to learn of my accident, told me that someone had found me badly injured on the flyover. It was a hit-and-run case, and judging by the amount of blood I had lost, it seemed that I'd been lying there for a while. The man drove me to Moolchand hospital, not far from the scene of my accident. He saw Madhumita's number in my pocket phone book and because we had the same surname – I also had my press card with me – assumed she was a relative.

"I rushed to the hospital when I heard the news," Madhumita told me. In the meantime, it seems, the kind

soul had informed my colleagues with the help of the same phone book. The doctors instructed that I should be shifted to AIIMS immediately as they didn't have the facilities to treat my case. In the commotion, Madhumita couldn't ask for the person's name or any other details. Assured that I was in good hands, and my colleagues had now arrived, the gentleman left.

It was a long road to recovery, which turned out to be a life-changing experience. I got discharged after about six months, my face visibly altered. I sported a ponytail before the accident, but one of the surgeries had required

my head to be shaved. Even at home I underwent regular tests and scans, and wasn't able to resume work until January 1993. Even today, my memory gets foggy at times and I find it difficult to recall things from my past.

Life, however, slowly returned to normal. I did a four-year stint with a TV news channel before I started freelancing. Though I never went to Paris, I did get an opportunity to work in Nepal in 2003 and moved to Kathmandu. When I came back to India in 2006, I decided to settle down in Kolkata.

I would often think of the person who stopped on the flyover to help

**IT WAS A
HIT-AND-RUN,
AND JUDGING
BY THE AMOUNT
OF BLOOD,
I HAD BEEN
THERE A WHILE**



me. I had no idea who he was, but I knew I owed him my life. I wish I could tell him how I felt, but I did not know how to find him. As life took over, these thoughts got buried in the recesses of my mind.

One evening in May last year when I was cooking dinner, I got a call from Madhumita. She had been to a social gathering that day. A woman she didn't know kept looking in her direction. Curious, Madhumita walked over to her and introduced herself. "If I'm not mistaken, we met briefly many years ago," the woman said to her. "Were you the person my husband contacted, when we found that accident victim on Moolchand flyover many years ago?"

Madhumita was speechless. "It was like the events of that entire evening came back to me in a flash," she said breathlessly over the phone.

It was amazing that 23 years later, the woman had spotted her at a get-together, after meeting her only briefly that fateful evening. Here was my chance to meet the man who had saved my life: I urged Madhumita to find out his contact details. I had to meet him now; I couldn't wait any longer.

A few weeks later, Madhumita called me, "The gentleman's name is Mr Rajiv Nag and I have his phone number. Maybe you would like to give him a call."

"Of course!"

I thanked her and hung up to dial the number right away. A man with a calm, rich baritone voice answered the phone. Life, it seemed, had been conspiring for me to meet him in person - Mr Nag, who lived in Delhi, was in Kolkata to visit a relative. So, off I went to meet him.

Although it was late at night, and he had to leave early in the morning for Delhi, the reunion was extraordinary. I fumbled for words of gratitude – nothing I said would describe how I really felt. No ‘thank you’ would ever be enough. All I wanted was to see him once: I just had to see the face of my saviour.

I left soon after, but not without an image that will stay with me forever – the smiling face and reassuring demeanour of Mr Nag. A man who thought of nothing, except that a life had to be saved, no matter what, even as bystanders looked on and vehicles swerved past as I lay there, on that flyover, bleeding.

WHAT DRIVES GOOD DEEDS?

When Reader's Digest spoke to Rajiv Nag, he was hesitant about us using the word *kindness* to describe his gesture. “It was more an act of duty,” said the modest software consultant, now 62.

“I was on the flyover, driving home with my wife and three-year-old son,” he said, “when I saw cars braking ahead of us and then going past.” Soon, they were stopped in their tracks by what they saw. “A man lay sprawled on the road, drenched in blood and groaning in tremendous pain,” Nag recalled. “His head had hit

the divider and, looking at the blood that been lost, it seemed that life could go out of him at any moment.”

With the help of a cyclist who had stopped, Nag heaved the injured man as gently as he could in the back seat of their car. “With my horn blaring, lights flashing and the man crying in pain, I jumped a red light or two

to reach the nearest hospital as quickly as I could,” Nag said. “Each time there was a bump in the road, the injured passenger jerked out of the seat, by reflex, and then fell back groaning.”

Nag got support at every stage. “We were helped along by the traffic police to reach the hospital. The staff at Moolchand started treatment right away, without waiting for paperwork to be completed, and the policeman stationed at the hospital was very cooperative, too,” he said.

The accident had taken place before 2004, when the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways issued a circular to police chiefs stating that there should be no legal impediment for being a ‘Good Samaritan’ in a road accident.

Didn't the thought of being caught in police and court matters worry Nag at the time? “In life, if you keep thinking about things, you'll never do them,” he replied. **R**

I FUMBLLED FOR WORDS OF GRATITUDE – NO ‘THANK YOU’ WOULD EVER BE ENOUGH

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Olivia NEWTON-JOHN

The singer-songwriter and actress talks about lockdown, finding her voice again, and how alternative treatments have changed her life

BY *Simon Button*

Being forced to stay at home during the COVID-19 lockdown has been something of a blessing for Olivia Newton-John. “I feel guilty for saying it, but I’ve actually enjoyed not being able to go anywhere,” the singer admitted down the phone from her California home during the lockdown. “My life has always been about being on planes and travelling and staying in hotels, so to be in one place for almost a year has been blissful.”

PHOTO: © MICHELLE DAY





Olivia on *Loose Women* in November 2020

Olivia and her entrepreneur husband, John Easterling, live on a horse ranch near Santa Barbara. “And it’s been wonderful having so much time at home,” she says. “I’ve been able to do things like clean out cupboards and garages. I’ve also learned how to make bread, I’ve done arts and crafts-y things, and have hung out with my animals and my husband. I haven’t been bored for one second.”

Not that the 72-year-old multi-Grammy Award-winner, whose records have sold over 100 million worldwide, is resting on the laurels she’s earned from nearly six decades in the business. She’s recorded a new single, prepared a duets album and launched her own foundation to fund research into holistic

care for cancer. The single, ‘Window in the Wall’, carries a message that’s dear to Olivia’s heart.

“It’s about having compassion for each other and realising that we all have different ways of thinking and just accepting that,” she explains. “There seems to be so much conflict and we have to realise we’re all humans sharing the same planet. We need to get along.”

It’s her first new record in a decade, although she says she wasn’t planning on making new music: “I didn’t think I was going to record anymore. I was thinking, I’m just going to enjoy my life.” Then she heard the track and loved it so much

THE ‘PHYSICAL’ SINGER HAS BEEN VERY OPEN ABOUT HER HEALTH ISSUES

it made her cry. “It really touched my heart and I was compelled to record it.”

She opted to create the track as a duet with her daughter, Chloe Lattanzi. “And I think it’s turned out really quite nice,” the

ever-modest Olivia says of the song, which was recorded separately. “Chloe was nervous about me being there so I went for a walk while she did her vocals.”

The duo has enjoyed some quality mother-daughter time lately, with 34-year-old Chloe staying at

the family home for a spell and her mother practically cooing: “We’re great friends and we have so much in common with our love of animals and nature. I’m very proud of her.”

THE ‘PHYSICAL’ SINGER has been very open about her health issues since she was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1992.

The cancer came back in 2013 and 2017 and has metastasised to her bones, but she’s a fighter who now swears by the use of medicinal cannabis and other plant-based remedies with the help of husband John, who founded the Amazon Herb Company in 1990 and who is an advocate for herbal wellness treatments.

“In the past five years or so he’s been growing cannabis for me and I’m doing extremely well,” a very upbeat-sounding Olivia says. “I feel wonderful, I don’t have pain, I’m mobile and I feel healthy.”

Launched in October last year, The Olivia Newton-John Foundation is raising money for research and treatment programmes, with a particular focus on plant medicine.

“Having gone through chemotherapy and radiation thinking, *There’s got to be a kinder way we can treat this*, I wanted to find kinder treatments for cancer,” she says.

Some in the medical profession have expressed scepticism about the efficacy of such treatments. “There’s always going to be that, but we have to remember we started with plant medicine,” says Olivia.

With growing cannabis and its medicinal use now legal in most US states, Olivia adds: “When I had a recurrence of cancer and was in hospital a couple of years ago, I weaned myself off morphine [for pain relief] with cannabis and that was a major thing because I didn’t want to remain on a powerful

Fundraising with partner John Easterling in 2008 on the Great Wall of China



READER'S DIGEST

opiate like that. I want to tell people, 'Hey, you can do this and it's safe!'"

Olivia feels re-energised when it comes to music, too, with a duets album in the pipeline. She's keeping details under wraps for now but 'Window in the Wall' will be on it, along with ones from the vaults.

Her daughter Chloe is following in her mother's footsteps as a singer and actress, although Olivia has never felt the need to advise her on her career path.

"I encouraged her to explore other avenues but it was kind of a natural progression. I saw no reason to discourage her because I've had a wonderful life and career."

UK-born Newton-John, whose family relocated to Australia when she was six, started a girl band at age 14, switched to singing on TV shows, returned to Britain to cut

records and became a star with a string of hit singles like 'If Not for You', 'Banks of the Ohio' and 'Take Me Home, Country Roads'.

"I just kept going and went with the flow," she says of a subsequent career that has taken in chart-topping records, movie roles, a

performance at the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics and a 2020 UK damehood for services to music, cancer research and charity.

**"I'VE
FULFILLED
ALL MY
DREAMS,
EVERYTHING
ELSE IS THE
ICING ON
THE CAKE"**

Olivia with John Travolta in the hugely successful *Grease* (1978)



PHOTO: LANDMARK MEDIA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Then, of course, there's the 1978 blockbuster musical *Grease* – the enduring love for which she puts down to “the cast, the choreography, the director, the energy of the story, great music, and a larger-than-life colourful and cartoonish feel”.

As for some in the Twitter-sphere denouncing it as outdated and sexist, Olivia is both amused and bemused. “I think it's hilarious they take it so seriously. It was set in the 1950s and that was then, this is now.”

Career-wise, Olivia is happy to say: “I've fulfilled all my dreams and more, and everything I'm doing now is icing on the cake.”

As for her eternal optimism in the face of her ongoing cancer battle,

she reasons: “You have to make a decision when you go through something like this.”

Olivia says that she believes there are always going to be challenges in life but it's how you respond to them that determines the quality of your life. “Your mind and body aren't separate and if you keep reinforcing negativity you're going to reinforce bad health. That's why I choose to be positive and grateful for every day.” **R**

The views expressed in this piece should not be taken as medical advice. Any changes to the treatment of cancer must first be discussed with your treating medical specialist.

◆ ◆ ◆

Chained Together – But Not for Life

Can you imagine being handcuffed to your partner for a full 24 hours and doing everything together? After 123 days handcuffed together to save their relationship, a young couple have split up, saying the experiment had brought home uncomfortable truths.

Alexandr Kudlay and Viktoria Pustovitova from Kharkiv in the Ukraine decided to handcuff themselves together on Valentine's Day, in a last-ditch attempt to break the cycle of breaking up and making up. Throughout the odd experiment, the inseparable couple did everything together, including shopping. They took turns to use the bathroom (with one waiting outside with one hand in the bathroom) and take showers. Pustovitova told Reuters personal space is what she missed most. Kudlay added that the cuffs helped him understand that the pair were not “like-minded people”. The couple plan to sell the handcuffs and donate a part of the money to charity. REUTERS



FIXES A LOOSE BATTERY



UNCLOGS A SINK

EXTRAORDINARY USES

Save time and money with these ingenious tips



ELIMINATES GREASE STAINS



REMOVES WATER MARKS

HOME TIPS



MAKES GLUE



SAVES A BOTTLE OF WINE

FOR ORDINARY THINGS

for getting more out of the stuff you already have

Photographs by Joleen Zubek



STOPS A WINDSHIELD CRACK

**FROM THE BOOK EXTRAORDINARY
USES FOR ORDINARY THINGS
BY DON EARNEST**



DISINFECTS A CUT

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT.

That's a lesson our parents have long made clear, but we've relearnt it the hard way over the past year as the pandemic disrupted much in our lives. That doesn't mean you have to accept defeat, however, or even delay. These 37 items are domestic superheroes: they have secret skills and there they sit, minding their own business under your sink, in your fridge, or in a drawer. They look so ordinary. Yet once you discover their powers, they will save you unwanted trips to the supermarket, expensive visits from the handyman, gnashing of teeth, and more.

1. Food & Cooking

SUBSTITUTE FOR YEAST Looking to make a loaf of bread? Mix one teaspoon of powdered vitamin C (or citric acid) and bicarbonate of soda. What's more, the dough you add it to won't have to rise before baking.

REPLACE BAKING POWDER Substitute two parts cream of tartar mixed with one part bicarbonate of soda and cornflour. The cornflour slows the reaction between the acidic cream of tartar and the alkaline bicarbonate of soda, which helps the compound maintain its leavening power longer.

PROTECT VEGETABLES IN THE FRIDGE Line your refrigerator's crisper with paper towels. They will absorb the

moisture that causes your fruit and vegetables to rot. When the lining gets dirty, just throw it out and replace with fresh paper towels.

KEEP FRUIT FRESH Do your berries and grapes get mouldy before you've had a chance to enjoy them? Store them in a colander – not a closed plastic container – in the refrigerator. The cold air will be able to circulate through the holes and around the fruit, keeping it fresh for days.

REVIVE SOGGY LETTUCE Don't toss those sorry leaves in the compost bin. Add the juice of half a lemon to a bowl of cold water, put the soggy lettuce in it, and refrigerate for about an hour. Make sure the leaves are completely dry before using them in salads or sandwiches.

TENDERISE MEAT Soaking inexpensive cuts of meat in vinegar for up to four hours doesn't just break down tough fibres, it also reduces carcinogenic compounds that form during grilling. Experiment with different vinegar varieties for added flavour, or simply use apple-cider vinegar or distilled vinegar. Just be sure to rinse the meat off before cooking.

SAVE A BOTTLE OF WINE If the cork breaks apart when you open a bottle, no problem. Pour the wine through a coffee filter. It will catch everything but the liquid.

2. Cleaning

GET RID OF SOAP SCUM Spritz that gunk with cooking spray oil and let it sit for a couple of minutes. The scum will come off with just a swipe of a towel. Then wash the surface with soap and water.

RESCUE A RUG If you've spilled coffee or tea on the carpet, there's another beverage that can clean the mess: beer. Rub a few teaspoons (or more, if you made a really big mess) lightly into the fabric. Flat beer will also polish up your timber furniture.

ELIMINATE GREASE STAINS Rub chalk on greasy spots on clothes or table linens and let it absorb the oil before you brush it off. If the stain lingers, rub more chalk into it before laundering.



LEMON JUICE

Besides brightening the flavour of recipes, lemon juice can clean and freshen your microwave and your laundry. It's also a potent exfoliant, dandruff fighter, wart remover and disinfectant.

To get rid of ring-around-the-collar stains, mark them heavily with chalk before laundering to absorb the oils that hold in dirt.

REPEL DUST FROM YOUR SCREENS

Because televisions and computers are electrically charged, they attract dust. Fabric softener sheets will get them clean and keep them that way.

DISSOLVE TARNISH ON SILVERWARE

Grab some potatoes and boil them up. Remove them from the water



FABRIC SOFTENER SHEETS

The dryer isn't the only place where fabric softener sheets can help tame stinky smells. Tuck them into cupboards, suitcases, waste-paper baskets, drawers and even sports shoes for an inexpensive air freshener. The sheets also work wonderfully to pick up pet hair, lift burned-on residue from casserole dishes, keep dust off blinds and screens, clean soap scum from showers, buff chrome to a brilliant shine and chase away fruitflies.

and save them to eat later. Then place your silverware in the potato water and let it sit for an hour. Remove and wash it. The tarnish should have disappeared.

REMOVE WATER STAINS FROM TIMBER FURNITURE Did your guests somehow miss the coasters? To get

rid of those annoying white rings left by moist glasses, gently rub some non-gel toothpaste on the wood with a soft cloth. Wipe it off with a damp cloth and let the area dry.

UNSTICK GUM Got chewing gum rubbed into the carpet or on the wall? WD-40 spray lubricant will loosen it. This works on wax drippings, too.

LIFT A SCORCH MARK If you singe your favourite shirt with a hot iron, wet the area and cover it with cornflour. Allow the cornflour to dry, then brush it away.

3. Home Fixes

UNCLOG A BATHROOM SINK – WITHOUT A PLUNGER Cut off and discard the top third of an old tennis ball. Place the open end of what remains over the clogged drain. Block the overflow hole with a damp cloth and run a small amount of water into the basin to make a seal with the edge of the ball. Using the ball of your hand, plunge down hard and fast until the blockage is clear.

CLEAR A BLOCKED DRAIN If the tennis ball plunger doesn't work, pour in half a cup of bicarbonate of soda and let it sit for a few minutes. Then add one cup each of vinegar and hot water. Cover with the stopper for ten minutes, then flush with hot water. Repeat, and plunge, if needed.

Extraordinary Uses for Ordinary Things

FILL A CRACK IN THE FLOOR Crayons make great fill material for small scratches, gouges or holes in many floors. Select the colour that most closely matches yours. Melt the crayon in the microwave over waxed paper on medium power, a minute at a time, until you have a pliant glob of colour. Now, with a plastic knife or putty knife, fill the hole. Smooth it over with a rolling pin, a book, or some other flat object. You don't even need to sand it.

SUBSTITUTE GLUE Egg whites can act as a replacement when you need to adhere some paper or light cardboard together.

ADD INSULATION Cut window-sized pieces of wide bubble wrap, then duct-tape them to windows for extra warmth and savings on winter fuel bills. Don't like the look? Lowering the blinds will make it less noticeable, and keeping them closed once the sun goes down will save on fuel bills, too.

JUMP-START THE FIREPLACE Dried orange and lemon peels make even better kindling than newspaper. Not only do they smell better and produce less creosote than newspaper, but the flammable oils found inside the peels enable them to burn much longer. Don't want to wait for the peels to dry out? Put them on a baking sheet in a 100°C oven for 25 to 30 minutes.

RESCUE A DROWNING LAPTOP You just spilled water on your laptop. Now what? Power down and disconnect any accessories. Open the screen at a right angle, then place the laptop upside down on a dry towel overnight in a warm, well-ventilated place. The next day, blast air into the machine for 15 minutes with a hair dryer set to the lowest heat setting. Keep it about 15 centimetres above the keyboard and move it constantly to avoid creating hot spots.

REPAIR A SCRATCHED PHONE SCREEN For shallow scratches, first clean the affected area using a fresh, lint-free cloth dipped in water. Wipe it dry with a second lint-free cloth. Then rub the affected area lightly with a clean, soft pencil eraser, following the direction of the scratch. You might need to repeat this several times before the scratch disappears.

FIX A LOOSE BATTERY Got a battery that won't stay in place in a torch? Ball up a piece of aluminium foil and put it at the bottom of the canister.

HALT A WINDSHIELD CRACK If you've developed a small crack in your windshield, stop it in its tracks with some clear nail polish. Working in the shade, brush the crack on both sides of the glass with polish to fill it well. Move the car into the sun so the windshield can dry. But take note:



ALUMINIUM FOIL

Keeping your food warm is just the beginning. You can also use foil to clean a cast-iron pan, sharpen scissors, fix a loose battery, soften brown sugar, build a seed incubator, keep bees away from beverages, improve outdoor lighting and make a funnel.

this fix is only temporary. Try to get the glass replaced within a day or two at most.

MAKE AN EMERGENCY SHOELACE If you've busted a shoe lace, cut off a piece of duct tape that's as long as you need and rip off twice the width you need. Fold the tape in half along its length, sticky side in. Thread your new lace onto your shoe and tie it up.

CARDBOARD TUBES KEEP EXTENSION CORDS TIDY The simplest way to keep cords tangle-free in storage is to slip wrapped cords into toilet paper tubes and stack in a box. This also keeps a single cord tidy behind your desk.

4. Gardening

FERTILISE YOUR PLANTS Don't throw out those old coffee grounds. They're full of nutrients that your acid-loving plants crave. Save them to fertilise rosebushes, azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias and evergreens.

REPEL INSECTS Scatter a border of ash from your fire around your garden to deter slugs and snails – ash sticks to their bodies and draws moisture out of them. Also sprinkle small amounts over garden plants to manage infestations of soft-bodied insects. Be warned that because ash is alkaline, it shouldn't be used on acid-loving plants like azaleas, rhododendrons or hydrangeas.

KEEP FLOWERS FRESH Cut flowers will stay perky longer if you add a coin made from copper and an aspirin to the vase water. And don't forget to change the water daily.

5. Health & Beauty

DISINFECT A CUT No antiseptic disinfectant liquid or hydrogen peroxide? An alcohol-based mouthwash

Extraordinary Uses for Ordinary Things

can clean a shallow cut and disinfect your skin. Alternatively, you can dab a few drops of lemon juice directly on the cut.

EASE ACHES For pain in your knee or other joints or muscles, rub in some warming liniment and wrap the area with plastic wrap. The wrap will increase the heating effect of the liniment. Test on a small area first to make sure your skin does not burn.

RELAX STIFF MUSCLES If you prefer to soak your sore spots, take a bath in Epsom salts and throw in a few tablespoons of mustard. The mustard will enhance the soothing effects of the salts.

REMOVE A SPLINTER You can avoid the agony of digging a splinter out with a needle by covering it with adhesive tape instead. After about three days, pull the tape off slowly, and the splinter should come out with it.

SAVE YOUR SHAVE If you run out of shaving cream, try slathering some soft butter on your wet skin for a smooth, close shave. Baby oil and hair conditioner are other options.

MAKE A DEHUMIDIFIER A humid cupboard, garage or storeroom can wreak havoc on your health as well as on your clothes. Get rid of all that humidity with homemade dehumidifiers. To make one, just put some charcoal briquettes in a large, clean lidded can and punch a few holes in the lid. Place one or more in humid areas. Replace the charcoal every few months.

REPEL TICKS AND OTHER INSECTS Going for a walk in the bush? Smear some mentholated chest rub on your ankles, wrists and neck before you leave the house. It might not be your favourite scent, but mosquitoes and ticks hate it, and they'll go in search of a sweeter-smelling victim. **R**



AWOL Book Returned

An overdue library book has been returned to a library in Scotland – 38 years late. The novel *To Sea in a Sieve* by Peter Bull was dropped off at a library in southern England, some 1000 kilometres from its rightful destination. The Shetland Library finally regained the absentee book after it was hand-delivered by staff from a community library in England. “It was due back on 12 July, 1983 – which pre-dates myself,” said the support services librarian. Officials said it had been brought in by a woman who found it at an estate sale in Suffolk. UPI

LIFE'S LIKE THAT

Seeing the Funny Side



Beyond Words

Every year for my birthday, my husband buys me a particular perfume that has a delicate floral scent that I especially love.

This past year, with money tight, I told him not to bother getting me a gift. Instead, I asked that he handwrite a beautiful letter encapsulating our 25 years together.

My husband leaned in, gently took my hand, and begged, “Can I please just buy you a bottle of perfume?”

SUBMITTED BY LISA COLLINS

Horse Trading

My daughter told me she wanted a pony but I had to tell her that it was impossible as her dad was allergic to horses. She had a think about this and then asked again. “When Dad dies, can I have a horse?”

SUBMITTED BY JESS WARD

Slow News Day

On a trip to a rural village, a friend of mine stopped off at the only shop in town to buy a newspaper.

However, all the shop had was the

previous day's edition. "Excuse me," he asked the shop owner, "do you have today's newspaper?"

"Yes, I do," answered the man. "It'll be here tomorrow."

SUBMITTED BY H.H.

It's Curtains For Him

After our Siamese kitten ran up our expensive curtains, snagging them, my wife took him to the veterinarian to have him neutered, hoping it would calm him down.

A few weeks later, my sister-in-law brought her new boyfriend over to meet us. Before entering the house, she offered him this bit of advice: "Whatever you do, don't touch the curtains."

SUBMITTED BY JAMES BELL

Open Secret

Dan, aged seven, was trying to open a bottle of paracetamol. I took it from him, opened it easily, and explained, "It's got a child lock on it, so that children can't do it, because that could be dangerous."

Dan pondered for a moment, then asked, "But how did it know I was a child?"

SUBMITTED BY PENNY WARD

Simply Country

I listen to country music because I like to kick back and hear a guy with three houses teach me how to appreciate the simple things in life.

DONOVAN WOODS, MUSICIAN



THE GREAT TWEET OFF: FRUIT EDITION

We've handpicked some fresh tweets for you to go bananas over.

Basically impossible to carry a watermelon around without seeming proud or ashamed of it.

@SAMUELSAULSBURY

I only use shampoo that smells like raspberries so people don't think it's weird when I have jam in my hair.

@DAWN_M_

A cantaloupe is an antelope that doesn't.

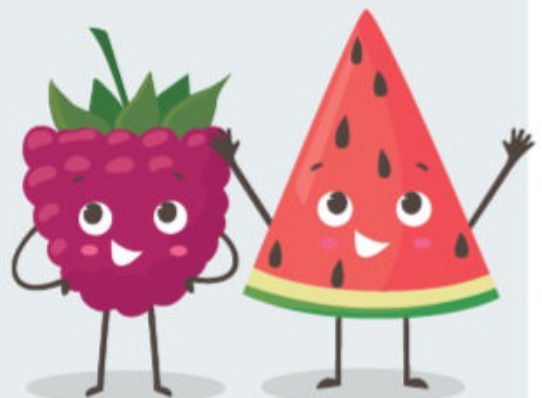
@LEONEARLGREY

I buy seedless grapes because let's leave the grape-growing to the vineyards.

@DARLAINKY

Grapefruit juice tastes like orange juice that just found out it has to work on its day off.

@JERMHIMSELFISH



I Am the
FOOD ON YOUR PLATE



Widely cultivated and nourishing

BY *Diane Godley*

You know that muffin you munched on at morning tea? And that burger you enjoyed for lunch? Even the spaghetti bolognese you're planning for dinner tonight... I, omnipresent wheat, play a huge part in every one of those meals and many more.

A staple for much of the world, I am a firm favourite amongst you humans. In fact, I am the world's most widely cultivated crop. New foods embracing me emerge weekly, and I am crucial in food security for the world's growing population.

Frankly, without me, sitting down to any meal of the day just wouldn't

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

be the same for many. I provide the grain in bread and breakfast cereals, and a whopping 97 per cent of the ingredients in your morning bowl of Weet-bix – sans milk.

In fact, you humans have had a love affair with me ever since Neolithic times, when I was still a wild grass swaying in the breeze. These nomadic people gathered and threshed me until my seeds became loose, which they pounded into flat cakes and baked on hot rocks to make the world's first bread. I was added to a pot of water and simmered over a fire to make a crude gruel.

To say I have a long ancestral history is something of an understatement. My family tree goes back some 12,000 years to a clan of wild grasses located in the 'Fertile Crescent' (western Asia and northern Africa) called *Triticeae*. Through their keen powers of observation, early humans selected grass heads with large seeds and varieties whose grains were easily separated from their hulls.

Some thousands of years later, your farming ancestors began cultivating the more edible of my wild cousins, emmer (*Triticum turgidum*) and einkorn, cross-pollinating emmer with a tough, inedible weed called goat grass (*Aegilops tauschii*). The

result was a pleasing and more reliable type of wheat which gave rise to the varieties you use today for making bread. While they didn't know it at the time, those goat grass genes contributed to my ability to tolerate cold and disease.

The evolution of agricultural practices and the ability to mill, store and trade my grain not only changed the availability of food for early humans, but helped to start fledgling townships. As people became more established, they travelled further, taking me with them to trade.

Did I mention that I was the ideal commodity? I am dry, so I was easy to transport, simple to transform

into food, and able to provide seed for the next year's crop.

Early trade followed routes in the Mediterranean, with Greek and Roman civilisations being some of the earliest importers of me from West Asian and Middle Eastern countries. I was also thought to have travelled the Silk Road into China.

Through a fortuitous accident around 2600 BCE, I became even more in demand. By mixing beer into flour, Egyptians produced the first raised loaves of bread. There is even proof of these early loaves of bread in the British Museum. As was discovered all those years ago, gluten, the

TODAY, I CAN BE FOUND GROWING ON EVERY CONTINENT IN THE WORLD

READER'S DIGEST

protein component of flour which gives dough its elasticity, is a valuable commodity in manufacturing products made from me and has greatly enabled the proliferation of processed food.

Eventually, I was farmed wherever I could gain a foothold. And with my popularity growing from strength to strength through the centuries, today I can be found growing on every continent in the world. I can even be found inside the freezing Arctic Circle, along the steamy Equator, and at lofty heights of 4500 metres, such as the Himalayas.

Since the 1960s the world's production of me has tripled. In that decade, a farmer would average 1.1 tonnes of wheat per hectare. Fast forward to 2020, and things look a whole lot different. Eric Watson, a New Zealand farmer from Ashburton on the Canterbury Plains, set a new Guinness World Record with 17.4 tonnes of wheat per hectare in July last year, breaking his 2017 record of 16.8 tonnes.

I may be able to grow everywhere, but obviously I do better in some places than others. Watson says he owes his ultra-high yielding successes to >>

BANANA BREAD

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- Line a loaf tin with baking paper.
- Mash 2 bananas with a fork.
- Sift 250 g self-raising flour and 1 tsp baking

powder into a bowl, then stir in ¼ cup (55 g) firmly packed soft brown sugar.

- Whisk together 100ml sunflower oil, 100ml milk and 2 eggs, then add to the flour mixture.

- Stir in the mashed bananas and ½ cup walnuts, then pour the mixture into the prepared tin.
- Bake for 50-55 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean.
- Leave to cool for 15 minutes, then gently tip out onto a wire rack to cool completely.



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



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RINGING IN YOUR EARS?

ENT DOCTOR DEVELOPED

Tinnitus specialists are now recommending a new medically based program which can offer genuine relief for tinnitus – **Sound Therapy!**

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- Work related noise exposure
- Dizziness or vertigo
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- Blocked ear/s
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“I suddenly realised I didn’t have tinnitus anymore!”

*Kelvin Fleming,
panel beater*



Sound Therapy
INTERNATIONAL Pty Ltd

Effective Tinnitus Relief – at last!

Every year millions of people visit their doctors complaining of tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and most are told that they just have to learn to live with it. Affecting approximately 20% of the population, tinnitus is a stressful condition that can cause sleeplessness, anxiety and social isolation. It is often accompanied by dizziness, sound sensitivity, blocked-ear or hearing loss.

Now there is a home-based treatment which comes from new research on the ear and brain. It uses high frequency stimulation, through music, to re-build and organise brain connections. The result, for most listeners, is relief or reduction of tinnitus and related conditions.

Benefits can also include better sleep, clearer hearing, better memory, relief of dizziness and vertigo and a general feeling that the brain is sharper and communication is easier.

For a free DVD and information pack call the Sound Therapy national enquiry line on 1300 55 77 96.

READER'S DIGEST

>> the region's fertile soils, abundant rainfall and good amounts of sunlight, which provide his crop with a long, slow growing period.

The most prolific form of me eaten today, comprising 95 per cent of all wheat grown, is common wheat (*Triticum aestivum vulgare*), which is milled into flour.

Hard varieties of this flour have high proportions of protein and are used for baking bread. Softer varieties, which have lower amounts of protein, are often referred to as 'cake flour' and are used for baking cakes and making biscuits, pastries and crackers.

I can also be puffed, flaked and extruded, methods commonly used to manufacture breakfast cereals and muesli bars. My bran can be added to muffins, cakes and bread to increase their fibre content. And by parboiling, drying and coarsely grinding I am turned into bulgur, or cracked wheat,

which is found in a wide range of dishes such as tabbouleh and kofta.

Durum (*Triticum turgidum durum*) is the second-most cultivated wheat crop and is ground into semolina to make pasta, noodles and couscous. Other varieties of me are spelt, emmer/farro, einkorn and kamut (an ancient grain from prehistoric times that has not changed through modern breeding programmes).

I am high in carbohydrates (71%), a source of protein (although my protein doesn't provide good quality nutritional value for you humans) and when eaten as whole grain, provide a rich source of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre.

Be aware though, once refined, like the flour used in white bread and fluffy cakes, my dietary fibre is negligible, so to get my full nutritional value aim for food using whole wheat or whole grain. **R**



Get Paid Doing What You Love

A company recently announced it was seeking 'nap reviewers' to get paid \$1500 each to take daily naps for 30 days and document the experience. EachNight.com, which offers comparisons on mattresses and bedding, said it was researching the 'pros and cons of napping' and needed reviewers to document their mid-day rests. Needless to say, the positions were filled quickly. UPI

Another website offered two friends \$2000 to spend 21 hours playing video games. FrontierBundles.com, which sells internet and phone service packages, wanted to know whether the duo felt they played better with their best friend or on their own. FEMALE FIRST

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A STAR IS BORN

A chance encounter with a waiting-room songstress pulled my dad out of his Alzheimer's fog

BY *Deborah Stock*

FROM **THE GLOBE AND MAIL**

A few years ago, at a medical laboratory clinic near my father's home, an elderly woman sat on the edge of a waiting room chair belting out the Celine Dion tune 'My Heart Will Go On.' Other than a slight rhythmic rocking of her torso to the *Titanic* theme song, she was motionless, with her arms crossed elegantly over her chest. With little effort, she was able to send her sweet, high-pitched voice exploding into every corner of the clinic.

I had fun watching how people reacted. There was a lot of shifting in seats and a couple of stony sideways stares, but mainly they awkwardly averted their eyes and tried to pretend that there was nothing out of the ordinary going on. Business as usual. This sort of thing happens all the time.

I was at the clinic with my father, who was getting a routine blood test, when the woman first arrived. She settled into the seat directly across from my dad. Because she was so tiny, she was forced to perch on the

edge of the chair so her feet could touch the floor. The position made it seem as though she was sitting forwards to engage in conversation with him. She smiled at him and he smiled back.

I was concerned about how my dad would react to the possible encroachment on his space. He was 77 years old at the time and had been living with Alzheimer's for several years. He came into adulthood in the Swinging '60s, but he was definitely a product of the '50s.

He was a brilliant, introverted, Catholic military man who was suckled and plumped on guilt, obligation and humility. When he was healthy, he tolerated people's eccentricities dutifully but with a healthy dose of silent reproach. Privacy and personal space were definitely his thing, and he considered it wholly bad mannered to bring undue attention to oneself.

Since Alzheimer's has a tendency to play havoc with a person's patience and erode restraint, Dad had experienced a few challenging encounters in the past. I couldn't help but think that this melodic little woman was playing with fire.

Her singing began gently, like a quiet hum. I glanced over at Dad to see his response. His smile was gone,

and he was staring right at her. She was staring back. I couldn't read his expression initially, but it seemed to be something like confusion. This wasn't an unusual state for him, and I wondered if he was actually seeing her at all or if he was lost somewhere deep in his mind, not really aware of her presence at that point. Or maybe he was trying to establish whether this was someone he should know.

Dad had never been one to partake comfortably in unnecessary conversation. Traditionally, he would relinquish that task to my mother, who took over the responsibility with her own brand of enthusiastic relish while he

sat contentedly on the outskirts as a silent but engaged participant.

IF WE HAD BEEN MORE ASTUTE, we probably would have recognised his declining condition earlier. We would have noticed that, on the odd occasions when he was drawn into a conversation, he'd become increasingly reliant on her to finish his thoughts or answer questions directed to him. Without missing a beat, she would fill in all the blanks whenever he paused, and our attention was shifted away from him.

It also took us some time to realise that he had begun to abandon

**INSTEAD,
HIS FACE
SOFTENED, AND
HE NO LONGER
LOOKED
CONFUSED**

any effort to nod politely or insert an obliging smile in appropriate places. We just thought he was getting a little cranky in his old age.

That's what was happening now: no more smile, no amiable nod, no acknowledgment of any kind. Just a stare.

This didn't deter the diminutive songstress one bit, and her singing slowly got louder. By the time she got to the chorus - "Near, far, wherever you are..." - it was full-tilt belting. She was in a meditative, eyes-shut, torso-rocking, inner-diva-embracing trance.

Now Dad looked a little stunned.

I tried not to laugh. It wasn't that I didn't appreciate this woman. In fact, I kind of loved her. I wanted to be her friend. But the thought of my tightly wound, somewhat prudish dad being serenaded in a packed medical clinic by this itty-bitty Celine Dion was just too delicious. Still, I watched cautiously, waiting for any sign of an impending irritated outburst and was considering my options on how best to intervene.

Instead, his face softened, and the tension eased in his brow. He no longer looked confused.

People will tell you that Alzheimer's

is a thief, that it steals your loved ones, slowly, day by day. There is, without a doubt, so much heartbreaking truth in that statement. The loss is painful and unrelenting. But during certain experiences with my dad, things have happened that allowed me to see a side of him that I never knew existed. I will hold onto those quiet moments when he held my gaze and told me tender stories about when he was a child or regaled me with tales of his time in the air force, as if he knew that he didn't have much time left to show me who he really was.

In a quiet and unexpected way, that's also what happened for me that day in the clinic. Alzheimer's sometimes seemed to be peeling back the onion of my dad's true self, and while I hate that he struggled with this disease, I love the sweet man I've met.

When her song ended and the waiting room became silent, the woman opened her eyes. My dad was still looking directly at her.

"That was beautiful," he said.

And she smiled and said, "Thank you." **R**

© 2019, DEBORAH STOCK. FROM 'THE ODD ENCOUNTER THAT PULLED DAD OUT OF HIS ALZHEIMER'S FOG', *THE GLOBE AND MAIL* (OCTOBER 22, 2019), THEGLOBEANDMAIL.COM



Wedding Presence

Is it a bad sign that the photo from our wedding that my in-laws want as a framed Christmas present doesn't include me? @W.KAMAU.BELL



An aerial photograph of a river delta system. A prominent, wide, orange-colored channel flows from the top left towards the center, then branches out into several smaller channels that spread across a light-colored, sandy or silty delta plain. The background is a darker, brownish terrain, likely the source of the river. The overall scene is a natural, geographical landscape.


SEE THE WORLD...

Turn the page »

READER'S DIGEST

...DIFFERENTLY





TREE OF LIFE: Lake Cakora, at Brooms Head on the north coast of New South Wales, has been photographed from above to reveal stunning, tree-like patterns.

Amateur photographer Derry Moroney discovered the secluded lake in June 2020, after following a winding beach estuary inland. The lake's unique shifting colours and branch-like patterns are created by a combination of the connected beach and tea tree-lined estuary.

Following a significant rain event, this tea-stained water washes into the lake, then gets pushed in by the tides to create the intricate 'branches'. Moroney captured the ever-changing lake fortnightly, using a DJI Mavic Air 2 drone.

"The best time to visit is after big storms," he says. That's when his excitement builds. "I wonder what I might get to see and how much it has changed."

CREDIT: DERRY MORONEY PHOTOGRAPHY

LAUGHTER

The Best Medicine



One for the Books

A famous author was autographing copies of his latest book. One man brought a copy of the book as well as copies of his previous two books.

"My wife really likes your books," the man explained, "so I've decided to give her autographed copies for her birthday."

"So, it's going to be a surprise?" the author guessed.

"I'll say," the man responded. "She's expecting a new car."

From Go2GBO

In a Hole

A busload of politicians were driving down a country road when, all of a sudden, the bus ran off the road and crashed into a tree in an old farmer's field. The old farmer, after seeing what happened, went over to investigate. He then proceeded to dig a hole and bury the politicians.

A few days later, the local police officer came out, saw the crashed bus and asked the old farmer where all the politicians had gone. The old farmer said he had buried them.

The police officer then asked the

old farmer, “Were they ALL dead?”

The old farmer replied, “Well, some of them said they weren’t, but you know how them politicians lie.”

From the internet

Wishful Thinking

A man was walking down the beach and picked up a very old bottle. As he rubbed it to remove the sand, a genie popped out and said, “You can have one wish.”

The man thought for a minute and said, “Make it so all women will love me.”

Poof! In an instant the man was changed into a bar of chocolate.

From maaw.info

Generation Gap

A mum texts, “Hi! Son, what do IDK, LY and TTYL mean?” He texts back, “I don’t know, love you and talk to you later.” The mother replies, “It’s OK, don’t worry about it. I’ll ask your sister. Love you too.”

LAUGHFACTORY.COM

WEIGHT FOR IT



- I went onto the Weight Watchers website earlier and it asked if I would accept cookies, which felt like a test.

- My New Year’s resolution is to get in shape. I choose round.

SARAH MILLICAN, COMEDIAN



Feats of Strength

A shark could swim faster than me, but I could probably run faster than a shark. So, in a triathlon, it would all come down to who is the better cyclist.

@EmmaManzini

Creep Calm

SPIDER: Why are you terrified by me?

ME: Well, the reasons I once had have all now been replaced by the fact that you can talk.

@TheAlexNevil

Hee-Haw

Ada’s friend asked to borrow her donkey. “My donkey isn’t here,” she explained as the donkey brayed loudly in the background.

“I thought your donkey wasn’t there?”

“Who are you going to believe?” Ada asked. “Me or a donkey?”

Seen on Reddit



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

BEATING

BLADDER

CANCER

**THE KEY IS EARLY DETECTION
– AND THAT'S UP TO YOU**

BY *Lina Zeldovich*

W

hen Frances Dobrowolski noticed blood in her urine in August 2019, she didn't think much of it. But then it happened again, and since she was scheduled to see her doctor in two weeks, she mentioned that strange fact. Her doctor immediately referred her to a urologist, and it proved life-saving for the retiree and grandmother. When her urologist threaded a tube with a tiny video camera into her urethra and bladder (a cystoscopy), she immediately saw the cancerous tumours. Frances, who was able to watch the procedure on a screen, also saw the tumours – they were growing from her bladder walls into the bladder. “It was a lot of cancer,” she says.

Frances also learned that smoking could have been the cause. “I quit 13 years ago, but I smoked for 40 years, two packs a day,” she says. “I thought if I got anything, it would be lung cancer, but I got bladder cancer instead.”

Frances had surgery to remove the tumours within days, but on the follow-up test a few weeks later, more cancer showed up on the screen, so she had to undergo surgery a second time. She also started having chemotherapy drug infusions into her bladder once a week for six weeks to kill the remaining tumour cells.

When her next check-up revealed another tumour, she needed more infusions. “But because I saw my doctor as soon as I spotted symptoms,” she says, “and because the tumours aren’t growing into my muscles, my prognosis is good. I stay optimistic.”

BLADDER CANCER is among the top ten most common cancer types in the world, with approximately 550,000 new cases annually. In Australia, it is estimated that over 3000 new cases of bladder cancer will be diagnosed this year.

Many bladder cancers are highly treatable. The key to beating it is early detection – and that’s where things get tricky. Unlike with prostate or breast cancers, there’s no test that can detect an elevated risk of bladder cancer, so patients have to spot the troubling signs themselves.

SYMPTOMS

The most telling sign of bladder cancer is the sudden appearance of blood in urine, a symptom called haematuria, which Frances had. The moment you see it, you should call your doctor right away, rather than waiting for it to disappear. Haematuria may not be accompanied by any pain, so some people wait for it to go away, losing precious time.

WHEN YOU QUIT SMOKING, THE CHANCE OF BLADDER CANCERS DEVELOPING OR COMING BACK DECREASES

In addition to blood in the urine, symptoms may include changes in urination, such as a burning sensation, pain and increase in frequency. These symptoms can be deceptive because people may attribute them to age or an overactive bladder, and ignore them. And when they finally share their concerns with their GPs, the doctors sometimes mistake them as urinary tract infections (UTIs).

RISK FACTORS, GENDER & AGE

Smoking is the single most important risk factor in developing bladder cancer, according to research.

When inhaled, the smoke toxins pass through the lungs and percolate through the bloodstream until they are filtered out of the body by the kidneys, mixing into the urine. That toxin-high urine can remain in the bladder for hours, essentially poisoning its walls.

“When patients quit smoking,” says urologist Dr Antoine G. van der Heijden, “the chances of cancer coming back or evolving will decrease, and survival will increase.”

ABOUT 75 PER CENT OF PEOPLE DEVELOP LESS-AGGRESSIVE NON-MUSCLE-INVASIVE BLADDER CANCER

Men are three times more likely than women to be diagnosed with bladder cancer. According to the Cancer Council, about one in every 108 men will be diagnosed with bladder cancer before the age of 75, making it one of the top ten most common cancers in men.

For women, the chance is about one in 394. However, even though bladder cancer affects fewer women, their survival chances are slightly lower than men's – and there might be several reasons for that, experts say.

The disease may progress faster in women because their bladder

walls are thinner, allowing certain tumours to spread more easily and invade other organs. Hormones such as oestrogen might play a role, too. And because women are more susceptible to urinary tract infections, doctors often misinterpret their symptoms.

Most women with cancer whose first symptom is blood in their urine are initially misclassified as having a UTI, says urologist Dr Renate Pichler. So, she says, if you have been treated with several rounds of antibiotics and your infection isn't subsiding, that's not normal. It's time to see the urologist and do a bladder cancer check.

Age doesn't play a big role in bladder cancer, but the average age of diagnosis is 73. “The highest incidence is seen in the age group 70 to 75,” Dr van der Heijden says.

TYPES OF BLADDER CANCER

There are important differences between types of bladder cancer. Most patients (including Frances Dobrowolski) – about 75 per cent – develop less-aggressive urothelial carcinomas, which start in the urothelial cells that line the inside of the bladder. Most of these tumours are slender, finger-like protrusions, growing from the bladder's inner surface and towards its hollow centre rather than into its walls and out of the bladder

into the surrounding tissues. Dr van der Heijden adds that some types of urothelial carcinomas can be more aggressive than others, so doctors differentiate them by grades that range from zero to four, with higher numbers being more invasive.

The remaining 25 per cent of patients have more aggressive cancers. Carcinoma in situ, or CIS, begins as a non-invasive tumour but it tends to grow and spread more quickly and has a higher chance of recurrence. Nearly half of CIS patients will eventually develop a muscle-invasive tumour, says Dr van der Heijden.

Certain rare types of bladder cancers can be muscle-invasive from the start. These are very aggressive, but each constitutes only about one per cent of all bladder cancer cases. Patients' prognosis and treatment depend on their tumours' type and stage.

DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENTS

As Frances discovered, to diagnose the cancer urologists perform a cystoscopy. This allows the doctor to view the bladder's inner lining on a computer screen and get a sample for a biopsy. Sometimes doctors



Frances Dobrowolski's cancer was caught early, and she remains optimistic about her outcome

also order a fluorescence cystoscopy, which uses a drug activated by blue light to find abnormal cells. Or, the doctor may order a CT scan or MRI with a contrast dye that highlights tumours, allowing the doctor to determine the exact type and stage of the cancer present.

Non-muscle-invasive cancers, as in Frances's case, are removed by a procedure called a transurethral resection of the bladder tumour. A thin

instrument is inserted through the urethra and into the bladder. It has a wire loop at the end that removes the tumour. An electrode or laser is then used to destroy remaining abnormal cells, which may not necessarily be part of the tumour.

After surgery, doctors may also use a catheter to inject a liquid drug directly into the bladder to kill any remaining cancer cells. This type of treatment is called intravesical therapy. More aggressive cancers might require multiple applications administered over months and even years, with the exact process designed to address the patient's specific case.

TO DIAGNOSE THE CANCER, UROLOGISTS USE A PROCEDURE THAT LETS THEM SEE INSIDE THE BLADDER

Patients must also have regular cystoscopy check-ups after surgery to make sure the cancer doesn't return, because urothelial carcinomas tend to grow again. But with careful monitoring, future cancers can be prevented from taking hold.

Piet van Klaveren* can attest to that. His bladder cancer fight began in 1996. It was detected because of blood in his urine – which he ignored at first. “Like most men, I postponed

it, hoping it would go away,” recalls the 73-year-old pharmacist. When he finally mentioned it to his GP a few months later, he was immediately referred to a urologist who diagnosed him with a non-muscle-invasive urothelial carcinoma – so his prognosis was good.

Piet had surgery, but a year later the cancer came back. This time, after scooping it out, Piet's doctor used intravesical therapy, injecting a chemotherapy drug into his bladder over the course of a year. Piet remained cancer-free for a decade until in 2011 he spotted blood in his urine once again. And once again he had surgery followed by intravesical therapy over four years.

“I'm currently free of cancer,” he says, noting that regular surveillance is key to staying that way. “It's checked twice a year with a cystoscopy.”

Dr Pichler says that patients with early-stage non-muscle-invasive cancers can also receive immunotherapy that is administered via intervesical therapy that stimulates the immune system to attack cancer.

In the case of muscle-invasive cancers and tumours that can't be stopped by these means, doctors may recommend radical cystectomy – removing the bladder entirely. Then they can either construct a conduit that diverts urine from the kidneys into a small pouch worn on the >>

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Chris O'Brien Lifehouse

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To find out more about how you can make an impact, please contact Rebecca Scott for a confidential discussion on 02 8514 0988 or Rebecca.Scott@lh.org.au.

THE KEY TO STAYING CANCER-FREE AFTER TREATMENT IS REGULAR CHECK-UPS AND CYSTOSCOPY TESTS

>> body that patients empty manually, or they can reconstruct the bladder entirely, from a piece of the patient's small intestine.

"Clinicians need to choose the right option for the right patients," Dr Pichler says.

The key to staying healthy after treatment is regular check-ups and cystoscopy tests, experts say. Usually, urologists do them every three

months for the first two years, every six months for the next three years, and once a year after that, says Dr Pichler.

For those spotting blood in their urine for the first time or having sudden onset of recurring UTIs – especially after never having them before – these are reasons for a thorough urological exam, Dr van der Heijden says. Even having an actual UTI doesn't rule out a tumour entirely, because the two may co-occur.

Keep this advice from Dr van der Heijden in mind: "In women who suddenly have recurrent UTIs, analysis by a urologist is mandatory. In men, a single UTI is already a reason to be referred to a urologist." **R**



Drivers Off Course

A man who recently drove his SUV onto a golf course and became completely stuck on the sixth hole told police officers he had been led astray by his GPS app. Police said the man did not appear to be intoxicated and is not facing any charges. "I think the moral of the story is, if you're using one of these GPS apps, just keep your eyes on the road, your eyes won't lie to you," said a police spokesperson.

The man who landed in the sixth hole certainly was not the first person and won't be the last to be led astray by GPS directions.

The car of three tourists from Japan ended up in the sea while they unquestioningly followed instructions that were supposed to get them to North Stradbroke Island in Queensland in 2012. In Europe, a middle-aged Swedish couple hoping to holiday on the picturesque Isle of Capri found themselves instead in the industrial town of Carpi in northern Italy. UPI

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The ALARM Clock

*Getting out of bed on time,
from raucous roosters
to cheerful apps*

BY Zoë Meunier

Say what you will about the deprivations of early humanity, but one of the distinct benefits was that time truly was... irrelevant. There was no need to know what the time was and no obligation to get up to do much other than experience the day and dodge another sabre-toothed tiger.

Of course, if early humans did want to wake up early, the simplest method was just to drink lots of water before bed and let the call of nature

wield its bodily chime. Or, simply sleep where natural sunlight would wake you with its brightness. (Out of the cave, man!)

As humans became more sophisticated, the need for an early wake-up call became more important. Ancient Greek philosopher Plato was renowned for his legendary dawn lectures in the 4th century BCE, when water clocks – with markings to show how water flow corresponded to time passing – were the time keepers *de jour*. Plato's water clock had the added feature of a chime set to go off once in the early evening and once at dawn. Handy for Plato, although how his lecture attendees managed to get there on time is anyone's guess.

Another of the world's earliest recorded alarm clocks dates to the year

Zzz

Zzz



READER'S DIGEST

725 CE, courtesy of mathematician, engineer, Buddhist monk, astronomer (and chronic overachiever!) Yi Xing. Tasked with improving calendars in China, he built on centuries of Chinese innovation to create an astronomical clock, snappily titled 'Water-Driven Spherical Bird's-Eye-View Map of the Heaven'.

Measuring not only time but the distance of planets and stars, a water wheel turned gears in the clock, with puppet shows and gongs set to emerge at various times. Impressive work there, Yi Xing, if slightly superfluous to the needs of most at the time.

For many more centuries, people continued to rely on daylight, bird-song and our cock-a-doodle-doo-ing friend the rooster to wake.

The Middle Ages saw the invention of mechanical clocks, originally driven by weights. These massive objects, found only in churches and town bell-fries, soon began sounding

bells at specific times. In fact, 2021 marks the 700th anniversary of perhaps the first such musical clock. Installed in a monastery near Rouen, France, in 1321, it was probably developed by some tech-savvy monks as a handy wake-up call for pre-dawn prayer-singing, without one of them having to pull an all-nighter.

The idea was expanded on by other Europeans, who created complex displays within chiming clocks in town squares, such as the 16th-century Strasbourg clock, which included a famous cockerel whose cries echoed through the cathedral.

The next step was to make these clocks smaller so they could be used individually. It's thought personal mechanical alarm clocks originated in Germany in the 15th century, but their inventors are unknown. The first name associated with the mechanical alarm clock invention is Levi Hutchins, an American who invented a personal alarm device in 1787 to

**RISE
AND SHINE**
A timeline
of what woke
us up



Through the ages
Rooster



Industrial Revolution
Knocker-upper



Late 1800s
Classic alarm clock

wake him up at 4am every morning. No special reason, he just really liked to wake up early.

Hutchins never patented his invention (probably too tired from those pre-dawn starts) and it took another half a century for Frenchman Antoine Redier to patent the first adjustable alarm clock, in 1847. It allowed the user to set a time to wake up by placing a pin in the hour hole of the time you needed to be up. Nice and easy, if only accurate to the closest hour.

American Seth E. Thomas got in on the action, patenting his own version via the Seth E. Thomas Clock Company. Although Thomas died in 1859, in 1876 the company bearing his name brought out the first practical, mass-produced, mechanical, hand-wound alarm-clock that could be set to any time. By the late 1800s, the 'classic' alarm clock was being manufactured – you know, the one with twin bells, two keys, two feet, two hands and that clanging, nerve-jangling noise that is perhaps the most

jarringly, unpleasant way to wake up.

Not everyone felt the need for a mechanical solution, though. Since the Industrial Revolution began, people had been finding other novel ways to make sure they got to work on time. Some factories would blow a large whistle. Another popular method in Britain and Ireland involved hiring a 'knocker-upper'. Using everything from a truncheon to a pea shooter, the knocker-upper would bang on doors and windows to wake those inside. By the 1920s however, as alarm clocks grew in popularity, knocker-uppers were forced to pack away their pea-shooters and beat a quiet retreat.

Throughout the 1900s, alarm clock companies continued to innovate. Sadly, the hero who invented the combination of the clock-radio appears to have been lost to history, but it was believed to be sometime from the late 1920s to the late 1940s.

The forward progress of the alarm clock was then thwarted by WWII, with clock-companies in Britain and



1950s
Teasmade



2005
Clocky alarm clock



2020s
App alarm

READER'S DIGEST

America ceasing production from 1942-1945 as they turned their hands to producing aeroplane parts and other important wartime components.

As the war dragged on and alarm clocks broke or were destroyed in bomb-raids, the government realised alarm clocks were essential to the smooth running of industry, allowing some factories to recommence selling their products as early as 1944. By the end of the war, alarm clocks were a must-have item.

In the 'Long Boom' of the 1950s, alarm clocks featured new technologies and materials. Goodbye metal, hello plastic! Seeya, spring-wound mechanical clocks, hello electronic digital clocks! And enter stage left, snooze button! General Electric-Telechron first marketed the snooze alarm in 1956. (We now know that hitting snooze just disrupts our sleep and makes us feel worse, but we were young and innocent then.)

Like all good inventions, there was always someone striving to add a little extra something, which saw the introduction of everything from flying alarm-clocks, to exploding alarm-clocks, alarm-clocks that play air-raid sirens, and Ticky, Tocky and Clocky, wandering alarm-clocks that would

literally roll off the end of your bedside table and roll around the floor, beeping incessantly, forcing you to get up and chase them to turn off the alarm. And who could forget the breakfast-making alarm clocks seen on *The Goodies*?

Still struggling to get out of bed?

How about the Tugaslugabed, an alarm clock that would wake you by pulling your toe. All you had to do was place a loop around your big toe before hitting the sack, and at the designated time, the clock, which was bolted to the floor, would yank on the loop to wake the soundest of sleepers (and probably dislocating a few digits in the process).

These days the original alarm clock is endangered, since alarm apps can now be found everywhere from your mobile-phone to your laptop computer. With smart everything allowing us to program our favourite song or sound to go off when we want it to, we can be lulled from the land of nod by myriad means. But for some, nothing quite competes with the slumber-obliterating sonorosity of the traditional, spring-driven mechanical alarm clock that continues to grace the bedside tables of millions around the world. **R**



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PHOTO FEATURE

AS CLEAR AS GLASS

*Strong yet brittle – glass inspires
artists and master builders*

BY *Cornelia Kumfert*



PHOTOS: (THIS PAGE) ROBERTHARDING/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; (NEXT SPREAD CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) IMAGEBROKER/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; JAN DAGNALL/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; DAVID MARTINEAU/SOLARONIX

◀ **The colour** of the honeycomb façade of Harpa Concert Hall and Congress Centre in Reykjavík depends on the sunlight and the perspective of the observer. The south side of the building consists of more than 1000 elements of colour-effect glass. This allows only certain wavelengths of light to pass through and reflects all others. Thus this concert hall in Iceland glitters spectacularly in the sunlight.

READER'S DIGEST

► **A sea of flowers** decorates the ceiling in the entrance area of the Bellagio, the famed casino in Las Vegas. The colourful splendour consists of 2000 mouth-blown glass flowers, which were arranged by the artist Dale Chihuly in 1998. The flowers are made of Murano glass, which is famous for its elaborate production and brilliant colours. Amazingly, this delicate and light-looking work of art weighs almost 20 tonnes.

► **Mighty but filigree** are these particular blue firs, spruces, beeches, pines and aspens (top right). Found in the Bavarian Forest, Germany, close to the Czech border, their leaves do not rustle nor do their branches bend even in the strongest winds. The 30 or so trees are actually made of eight-millimetre thick sheets of green, blue and brown flat glass and rise up to eight metres in height.

► **The façade** of the Swiss-Tech Convention Centre in Lausanne is clad with dye-sensitised solar cells, known as 'Energy Glass', to let light through and generate energy (far right). This produces and stores electricity through an artificial photosynthesis process. The glass front therefore lets light into the building as well as handling its power needs.



As Clear As Glass







As Clear As Glass

◀ **Only the brave** set foot on Cabo Girão in Madeira – one of the island’s most popular tourist attractions. Those who dare to climb onto the massive glass floor will hover above one of the highest cliffs in Europe at 580 metres above sea level. Nothing blocks the view into the depths.

◀ **Tudeley in Great Britain** has the only church whose windows were all designed by the famous Russian artist Marc Chagall starting from 1967 (far left). Originally commissioned with only one window, the artist decided to design the remaining 11 when he paid a visit to All Saints’ Church.

◀ **A glass slipper** brought Cinderella good luck – and a prince. In Chiayi, Taiwan, however, couples can even marry inside one. The shoe-shaped church is built of around 300 bluish glass panels, and is 17 metres in height.



PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP-LEFT) PJRWINDOWS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; JOSIE ELIAS/STOCKIMO/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; JOYI CHANG/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



Telepathy With... **MY DOG?**

A pet whisperer's tales were the cause of much mirth

BY *Patricia Pearson*

I can count a dozen friends, all in their 50s, who inexplicably reacted to the global pandemic by adopting a puppy. Actually, I did, too. Last year, paralysed in the house, afraid to leave without donning a hazmat suit, I was suddenly consumed by the urgent desire to acquire a seven-week-old

Australian shepherd. This craving will no doubt be the subject of a future study on irrational pandemic behaviour. For one thing, this breed is one of the most energetic on the planet, whereas I am bookish, lazy and middle-aged.

And I had taken this route before – with mixed results.

ILLUSTRATION: NISHANT CHOKSI

My trouble with dogs is that I never have the remotest clue what they want, and they never seem to have the slightest inkling what I'm saying to them.

This domestic impasse became legendary in my family when we had a dog named Kevin. He was a cross between a border collie and a basenji, which means that half of him descended from the smartest breed and the other half from, easily, one of the stupidest.

He was highly alert, yet unable to grasp a single thing. Kevin's entire communicative repertoire - whether he wanted food, exercise, permission to jump on the sofa, a toy, or, who knows, a conversation about the electricity bill - consisted of padding up to me and staring.

He did this about 50 times a day, just staring brightly without moving a muscle, and after years of living together I still didn't know what he wanted. We coexisted in a state of profound mutual incomprehension.

"Sometimes I think," I wrote in my diary, "it doesn't matter that I don't know what he wants, because we have nothing in common. Whatever he wants will be something I don't want. He probably wants me to go outside and chase squirrels. I don't want to."

My husband would let Kevin stare

at him until his eyeballs fell out and not worry about it. He took Kevin for walks, fed him, and let him sleep on the bed. Done. But as a mother, I was wired to worry about how everyone was feeling.

So, one evening I left Kevin at home and, with about 20 other confused pet owners, attended a workshop led by a pet telepathist whom I hoped would explain the trick to reading Kevin's mind. She was a former bureaucrat who apparently had the revelation that she wasn't meant to file tax reports because she knew what pets were thinking.

She arrived for the class carrying a slim grey cat, whom she introduced as her assistant. The cat soon shot into a cupboard, where he remained for the next two hours.

"Moose is going to be invisible for a while, but that will help you get used to communicating with pets at a distance," our instructor assured us, beaming.

We nodded, awaiting a message from Moose, such as "Get me the hell out of here". In the meantime, our teacher explained what she knew about animal communication.

"The thing that animals want most in their life is to be heard," she said, sitting on a desk and swinging her legs, "especially the birds. They really

**MY TROUBLE
IS THAT I
NEVER HAVE
THE REMOTEST
CLUE WHAT
DOGS WANT**

have a lot to say because they travel around the world." *Um, what?*

"Don't analyse; don't edit," she warned, about receiving messages. "Just be willing to say, 'That was real'."

She had us divide into pairs. The woman beside me was to tune in to Kevin, who was at home sniffing about, and I was to pick up her cat's thoughts.

We both looked horrified, which suggested our shared insecurity about this. But we'd paid our money. So I offered that her cat was...under the bed...and wanted to go out? She countered that Kevin was...lying in front of the fireplace...and also wanted to go out.

We reported our findings to the class, feeling like a pair of Pinocchios.

Back home, my husband suggested I contact the instructor for a personal consultation with Kevin. "Let them go *mano a mano*," Ambrose urged. "Just her and him." I couldn't resist.

When I introduced the telepathist to her subject, he was conked out on our dining room floor making snuffling sounds. I asked her what he was thinking.

"He says that you, as a family, should lighten up," she reported. Otherwise, she said, Kevin is happy with his role in life: to be a teacher to us, to help us connect with our energies, "and to receive messages from

him." *This is just a vicious circle*, I thought. *What messages?*

My husband interrupted: "Ask Kevin who killed our nephew's gerbil - him or Biscuit?" Biscuit was my sister's psycho-frisky golden retriever, who couldn't be in a room two seconds without knocking something over. She drove my sister bananas.

Undaunted, the telepathist asked the deeply asleep Kevin if he was responsible for a certain gerbil's corpse appearing beneath my nephew's

MY SISTER LAUGHED SO HARD SHE FELL OFF HER CHAIR

bed the previous summer. Then she looked at me. "Kevin says it was sad, it happened very fast, but his back was turned at the time." Upon hearing this, Ambrose had to go outside and bray with laughter. Meanwhile, she offered to tune in to Biscuit, because maybe Kevin was evading responsibility. Moments later, she announced that yes, Biscuit had killed the gerbil, "and she's not sorry".

I thanked the pet telepathist and ran to call my sister at work. "BISCUIT DID IT - AND SHE'S NOT SORRY!" My sister laughed so hard she fell off her chair.

This became a widely shared tale in the family, so everyone is preparing to be amused by how I fare with our new pup. So far, the fact that I've been training Ellie while wearing a mask hardly improves the odds. **R**



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QUOTABLE QUOTES



TO REFLECT IS ONE THING,
BUT TO REGRET IS ANOTHER.
REGRET IS USELESS.

IDRIS ELBA, ACTOR

My vibe is like, hey,
you could probably
pour soup in my
lap and I'll
apologise to you.

JOHN MULANEY, COMEDIAN



*I believe the
secret to a long
and happy
marriage is not
just finding
someone you
can live with
for 50 years.
It's finding
someone you
can't live
without.*

FRANK CAPRIO, TV JUDGE

Put all your eggs
in one basket,
and then watch
that basket.

ANDREW CARNEGIE,
INDUSTRIALIST

We're always walking
with our younger
selves. I feel like I'm
always answering to
her, about whether
I'm being as brave as
I could be, or as big as
I could be, or as
ambitious as I could be.

GRETA GERWIG, DIRECTOR



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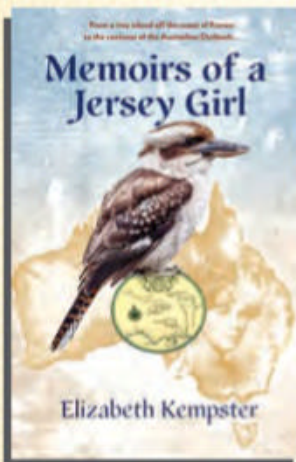
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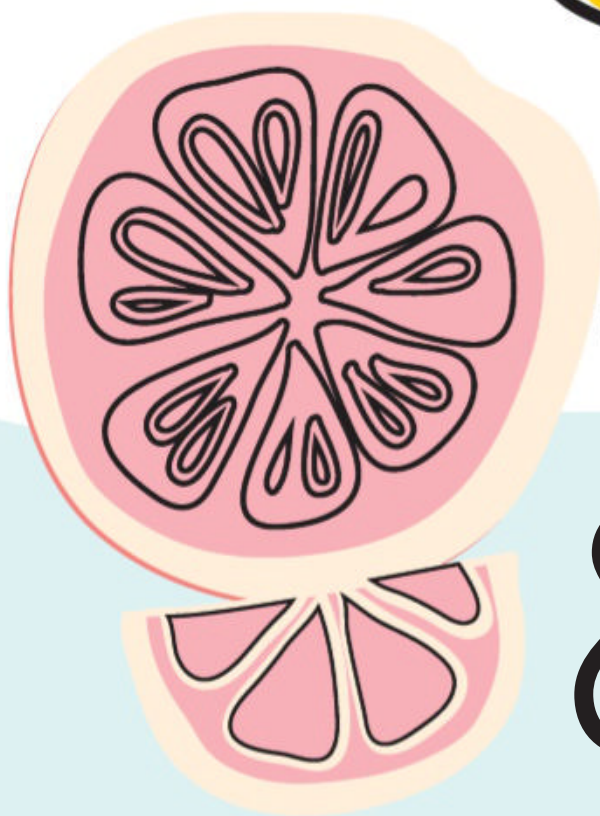


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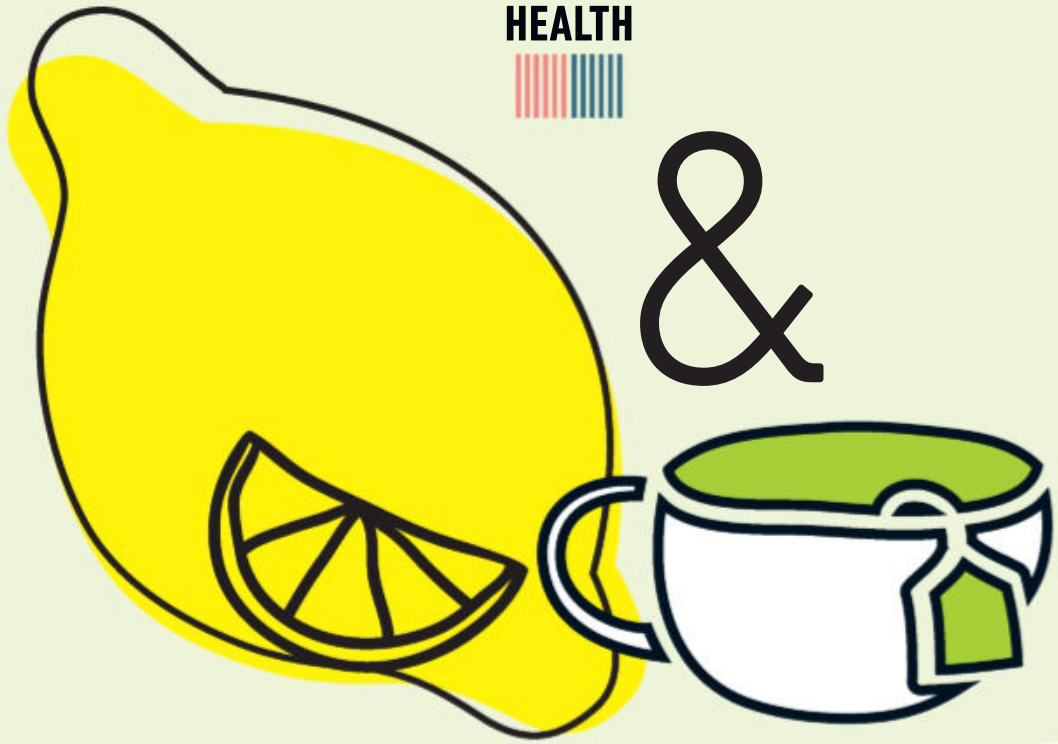


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HEALTH



DYNAMIC DUOS

Researchers are continually finding that certain foods deliver an even bigger health boost when consumed together. Make the most of these nutritious foods by teaming them up

BY *The Editors*

PASTA & VINEGAR

Help prevent type-2 diabetes

Make your pasta salad with a vinaigrette dressing. Vinegar contains acetic acid, which reduces the spike in blood sugar that occurs after consuming starchy foods high in carbohydrates, such as pasta, rice and bread. A steadier rise in blood sugar reduces hunger by keeping you feeling satiated, as well as helping to minimise the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Blood-sugar spikes are best avoided, so that your body isn't secreting too much insulin in an attempt to manage them. Research in 2015 by the Max Planck Institute for Heart and Lung Research in Germany discovered that acetic acid activates the receptors that inhibit insulin secretion.

BEETROOT & EGGS

Maintain brain power

How about a lunch plate that includes pickled beetroot and sliced hard-boiled eggs? Choline is abundant in egg yolks (as well as in beef liver, chicken liver and veal liver); betaine is found in beetroot, spinach and some grain products.

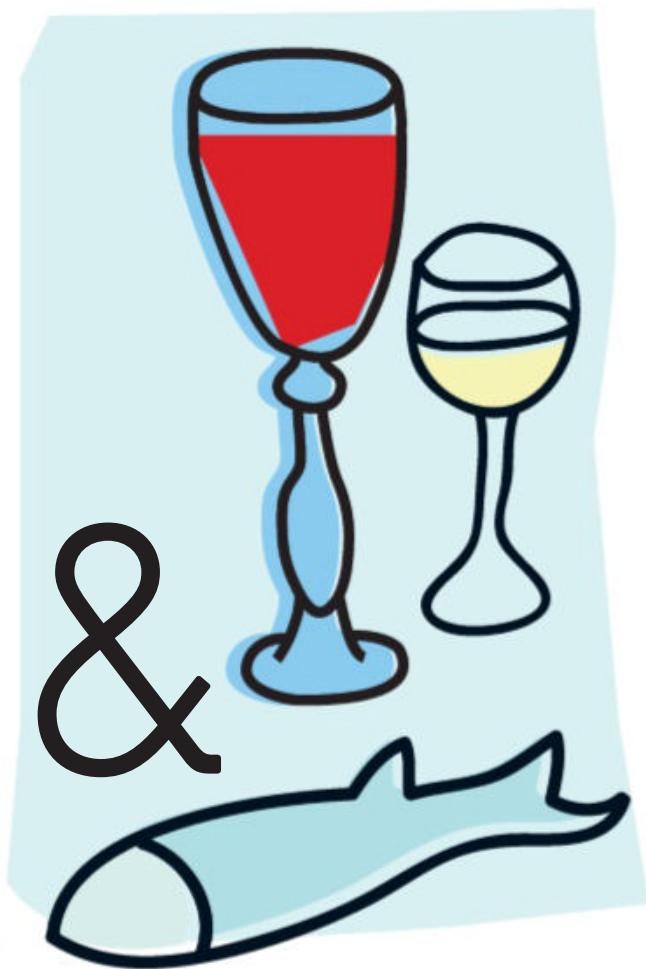
A 2010 *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* study found pairing these two nutrients was associated with lower blood levels of homocysteine, an amino acid produced in the body.

Elevated levels of homocysteine have been linked with declining cognitive function. The power combination may also protect against cancer, according to a review study by Nanjing Medical University in China in 2016, published in *Scientific Reports*.

FISH & WINE

Absorb more omega-3s

Italian researchers found that adults who consumed a glass of wine a day had higher blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in fish



such as trout, salmon, herring and sardines. The same results were not found for beer or spirits.

The finding is from a 2008 study of 1604 subjects from Belgium, Italy and England between ages 25 and 65. Scientists believe that heart-healthy polyphenol antioxidants in wine might be responsible for improved omega-3 absorption. Omega-3 fatty acids are proven to reduce your risk of experiencing a major cardiac event.

GREEN BEANS & TOMATOES

Boost iron intake

Iron is necessary for producing haemoglobin, which transports oxygen to muscles and the brain. Low levels of iron can lead to fatigue, fast heartbeat, headache and more. Iron from food comes in two forms: heme (found in animal-based foods) and non-heme (found in plant foods such as green beans, edamame and leafy greens). But our bodies absorb far less non-heme iron than heme iron. So, consume those non-heme iron foods along with vitamin C, which is found in tomatoes, citrus fruit, sweet peppers and berries, for a bigger boost.

A Swiss study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Medicine* reported that adding vitamin C to a meal rich in non-heme iron yielded an almost three-fold increase in our body's ability to absorb the iron.



GREEN TEA & LEMON JUICE

Boost immunity and heart health

Green tea has been shown to strengthen the immune system and, in animal studies, to reduce the growth rate of tumours. And the catechins found in green tea are powerful antioxidants that have a positive effect on cardiovascular health. There's a way to further boost the power of those catechins, which are a type of antioxidant: add some citrus juice.

According to a Purdue University report, adding a splash of juice from

READER'S DIGEST

a lemon, lime or grapefruit to green tea reduces the breakdown of its catechins in our digestive system, making them more readily absorbed by the body.

SALMON & YOGHURT

Build bone strength

Try mixing vitamin D-rich canned salmon with calcium-laden plain yoghurt instead of mayonnaise the next time you make a salmon salad. Vitamin D's best-known role is to keep bones healthy by increasing our intestines' ability to absorb calcium. Without enough vitamin D, the body can absorb only up to 15 per cent of dietary calcium, according to Harvard University research. But when vitamin D reserves are normal, we absorb between 30 and 40 per cent of dietary calcium.

You can get vitamin D in three ways: through your skin from sunlight; from foods including salmon and tuna; and from a supplement.

TOFU & CHILLI PEPPERS

Reduce inflammation, body fat

Lab research in 2009 in South Korea discovered that genistein (an isoflavone with antioxidant properties that's found in soy foods such as edamame and tofu) plus capsaicin (an antioxidant that gives chilli peppers and jalapeno peppers their fiery kick) helps tame inflammation. Chronic



inflammation in the body is known to be a risk factor for heart disease and cancer. And in 2019, Indian researchers at the Central Food Technological Research Institute found that combining capsaicin with genistein helps increase our body's ability to digest fat. Spicy tofu stew, anyone?

BROCCOLI & RADISH

May help prevent cancer

Adding a little peppery kick to your broccoli with some sliced radishes can maximise its antioxidant firepower.

A 2018 Chinese study published in *Food Science and Biotechnology* stated

that the addition of radish, rocket and rapeseed sprouts to broccoli sprouts could promote the formation of sulforaphane, broccoli's signature antioxidant. Foods including radishes possess the enzyme myrosinase, which works to improve the formation of sulforaphane and its absorption rate into the blood. Research suggests that sulforaphane has strong anti-cancer power, particularly by preventing the expansion of cancer cells in the body.

BANANAS & WATER

Faster post-workout recovery

A 2018 study by Appalachian State University, published in the journal *PLOS ONE*, shows that consuming both water and bananas is just as, or more, effective than a sports drink for exercise recovery.

Bananas mimic ibuprofen in reducing pain and inflammation – thanks to boosting serotonin and dopamine levels – while the water rehydrates the body.

VEGETABLES & OLIVE OIL

Increase antioxidants

If you normally sauté vegetables in butter, consider switching to olive oil. Research from the University of Barcelona, published in *Molecules* in 2019, showed that when cooking onions, garlic and tomatoes in olive oil, the oil acts as a vehicle that

boosts the bioavailability of the vegetables' components. In other words, heating this combination of ingredients, known as 'sofrito' in some Mediterranean cooking, was shown to allow more of the vegetables' polyphenols – which are antioxidants – into circulation in our body.

ONIONS & CHICKPEAS

Give you more energy

Any dish made with chickpeas is tastier with onions, but the combination is also good for you. According



READER'S DIGEST

to a 2010 study in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, sulphur compounds in onions, garlic and leeks can help you absorb more iron and zinc from grains and legumes, including chickpeas. Iron is involved in the transport of oxygen in the body, so an iron deficiency can cause fatigue and 'brain fog'.

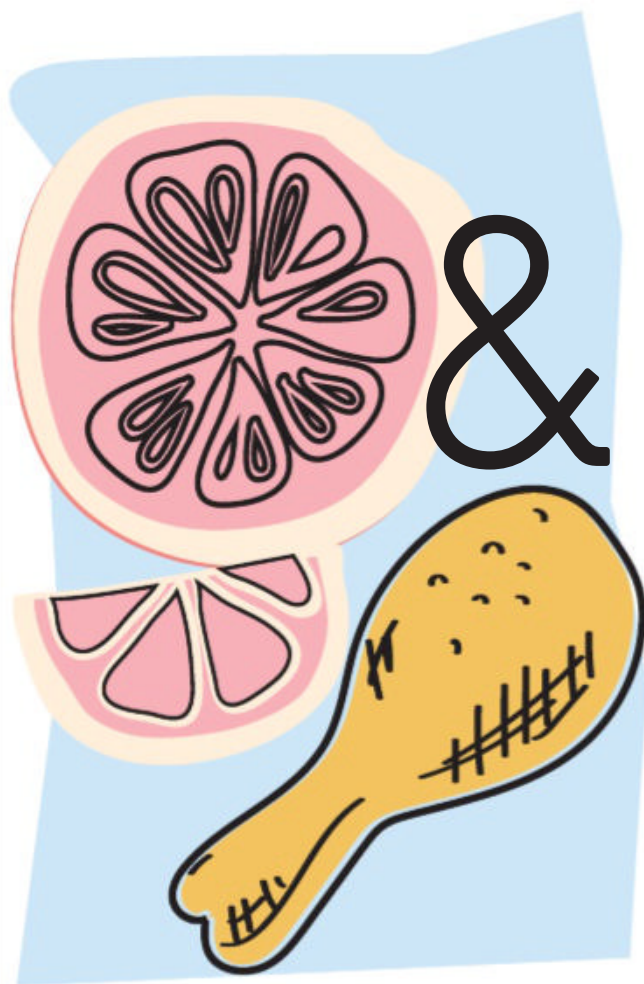
And as for zinc, a large body of research shows it's effective in fighting the common cold. For example, a 2017 review study by the University of Helsinki found that the duration of cold symptoms were reduced by one third for those who took zinc.

SOBA NOODLES & BROCCOLI

Help protect skin

Rutin is a bioflavonoid, or pigment, that's found in buckwheat, a whole grain used to make some flours and noodles (it's also in apple skin, asparagus, figs and green tea). And vitamin C is, of course, found in many fruit and vegetables, including broccoli, brussels sprouts, strawberries and citrus fruit.

A 2019 Polish lab study found that the combined antioxidant and anti-inflammatory action of rutin and vitamin C can protect skin cells from the effects of UV radiation from sunlight. A bowl of soba noodles (Japanese noodles made with buckwheat) plus vitamin-C-packed vegetables makes a healthy meal.



CHICKEN & GRAPEFRUIT

Boost energy

Poultry, beef, pork and fish are all top dietary sources of coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10). This power source for our body's cells plays a vital role in the production of the energy we use for everything from digesting food to running on a treadmill. CoQ10 may also help control blood pressure in those with hypertension.

A 2010 Japanese study discovered that eating grapefruit allows up to 50 per cent higher cellular absorption of CoQ10. Chicken roasted with

sliced grapefruit, onions and other vegetables makes for a delicious family meal.

But beware of eating grapefruit if you are taking certain medications – statins is one example, but talk to your doctor – as it can cause some medications to pass into your bloodstream too quickly, which could be dangerous.

KEFIR & ALMONDS

Improve gut bacteria

The results of a 2016 randomised, controlled British study, published in *Nutrition Research*, showed that consuming almonds changed levels of gut bacteria in participants – almond skin and almonds helped healthy bacteria in the gut (probiotics) flourish.

Probiotics are found in fermented foods such as yoghurt, miso, sauerkraut, kefir and kimchi. Helping healthy bacteria thrive is important because once they multiply, they can outnumber illness-causing bacteria and bolster immunity. Almond muesli with kefir for breakfast? That's powerful stuff.

KALE & WALNUTS

Safeguard eye health

Kale, as well as other leafy greens, contains a lot of lutein and zeaxanthin, which are antioxidants that may protect against cataracts and

macular degeneration, both leading causes of blindness.


These antioxidants are deposited in the retina, where they reduce sunlight damage. You can bolster absorption of them by consuming dark leafy greens with foods containing healthy fats, such as nuts, avocados and olive oil. And, an animal study in 2011 showed that lutein and zeaxanthin may also reduce the effects of 'bad' LDL cholesterol, thus decreasing plaque build-up in your arteries and reducing your risk of heart disease.

Eating kale sautéed in avocado oil or sprinkled with walnuts is a winner.

PORK & MANGO

Strengthen bones

A stir-fry that includes sliced pork and mangoes is more than just delicious. The beta-carotene in orange-coloured fruit and vegetables such as mangoes, carrots or sweet potatoes is converted into vitamin A in your body.

In addition to its role in bone growth, this vitamin is good for maintaining the health of your skin, eyes and immune system. But you need zinc to get the optimum benefits of vitamin A – it is necessary to make retinol-binding protein that transports vitamin A throughout your body. You'll find zinc in pork, poultry, beef, lamb, pumpkin seeds, oysters and wheat germ. 

Gout-Standing *Achievements*

*This month **Olly Mann** comes to terms
with a surprising diagnosis*

ILLUSTRATION BY *Dom McKenzie*

There's only one health story in town, of course, and that's my ongoing foot injury. This is because I have just discovered that nasty red hump under my big toe wasn't tendonitis at all, but gout. *Gout!*

I know, shocking news. Pour yourself a stiff drink to recover! Or don't, if you're susceptible to gout. Which you might be. I didn't think I was. But after six weeks of waiting for a foot X-ray, I buckled and consulted a GP, who diagnosed it in an instant.

In as much as I had ever considered

the condition, I had imagined that gout was strictly for portly Victorian gentlemen with sideburns, or blokes in tracksuits who subsist solely on beer and crisps. But then the doc scribbled down a list of trigger foods, and suddenly the diagnosis didn't seem so unlikely.

"Red meat is to be avoided," he said. But we've just got a new barbecue! Those ribs won't smoke themselves!

"And don't drink coffee excessively." OK, so that coffee beans subscription may not have been the best idea.



"Cheese is especially problematic. Just a small slither occasionally." My online grocery order has been 29 per cent cheese.

"Chickpeas should be eaten only in moderation", he continued. Chickpeas? Hummus is my favourite lubricant and the thought it could do me harm hit me like a Dear John letter.

"Spinach should be wilted, not raw." Eh? We all know raw spinach is good for you! Literally nobody eats raw spinach for fun! Are you telling me I could have been gobbling back chips, and that would have actually been better for me?

"Eggs are fine, but not too many." We've got chickens as pets! 'Too Many Eggs' is our way of life. *Too Many Eggs* could be the title of my memoirs.

"And really," the doctor concluded, "you must cut down your alcohol consumption." This was the hardest bit to hear, because, frankly, with two kids, and a pandemic to pull through, the prospect of my nightly glass (or two, or three) of wine had really been helping me get through the afternoons.

I DID WHAT A LOT OF FOLKS DO AFTER RECEIVING BAD NEWS: I BOUGHT SOME SHOES

the throbbing pain I'd endured for six weeks subsided. Next, I did what a lot of folks do after receiving bad news: I bought some shoes.

Not a sparkly pair of Jimmy Choos, mind: some Crocs. If this is going to be a recurring problem, I reasoned, Poppa's gonna need some brand new sandals. For weeks I'd been traipsing around in my 'bin shoes' – some truly appallingly cheap plastic clogs I'd bought from a sports warehouse specifically for taking out the bins – because they were the only shoes I owned that my bloated hoof could comfortably enter.

Crocs are really only acceptable footwear for kitchen assistants, or kidney surgeons, or anyone who works in a place where their feet come into regular contact with offal, but I found some smart(er)



READER'S DIGEST

navy blue ones, with a little red stripe around the bottom and no visible branding, and felt instantly more zen. I was still wearing Crocs, yes; but at least I didn't smell of bin.

The next step, obviously, was to spend some money on vegan cookbooks. "Got gout, have you?" said the guy at the bookstore. "So's my mother-in-law. Can't eat scallops."

Then off to buy a container-load of cherry juice. "My husband's got gout," the cashier told me. "He's only 45!"

Virtually everyone I told replied they knew someone with gout. Rarely someone very old, or especially overweight, or nutritionally deprived: merely an individual whose body produces too much uric acid from the

purines in their diet. Indeed, it turns out the majority of gout patients are men between the ages of 30 and 50 – so I'm smack-bang in the middle of the demographic.

Adapting my diet has been tough (I've cut alcohol to two nights per week, my coffee consumption to two cups per day, and gone veggie four days per week.) But I live in the countryside, and the idea of my toe joints becoming so damaged that it might affect my ability to walk through the fields is a huge motivator. I don't miss carbonated drinks, overnight oats are a revelation, and it turns out red meat and cheese taste even better as an occasional treat. Now I just need to work on growing those sideburns. **R**



Love Cheat

A man from Osaka, Japan, has been arrested after going to an awful lot of trouble to receive birthday gifts and cards. Takashi Miyagawa allegedly juggled 35 different girlfriends in order to get a year-long stream of presents. He allegedly supplied the women with different birthdates throughout the year and is accused of defrauding them by pretending to be romantically interested in them to get the gifts of money and clothing, which were worth a total of about 100,000 yen, or roughly \$1175. The 39 year old – whose true birthday is on November 13, though he is accused of telling three of the women it was on February 22, in April, and in July – met the women while selling hydrogen water shower heads through a marketing company. His alleged scheme was exposed when the women discovered what he was up to, formed a victim's association, and reported him to the police. *THE TELEGRAPH (UK), NEWSER*

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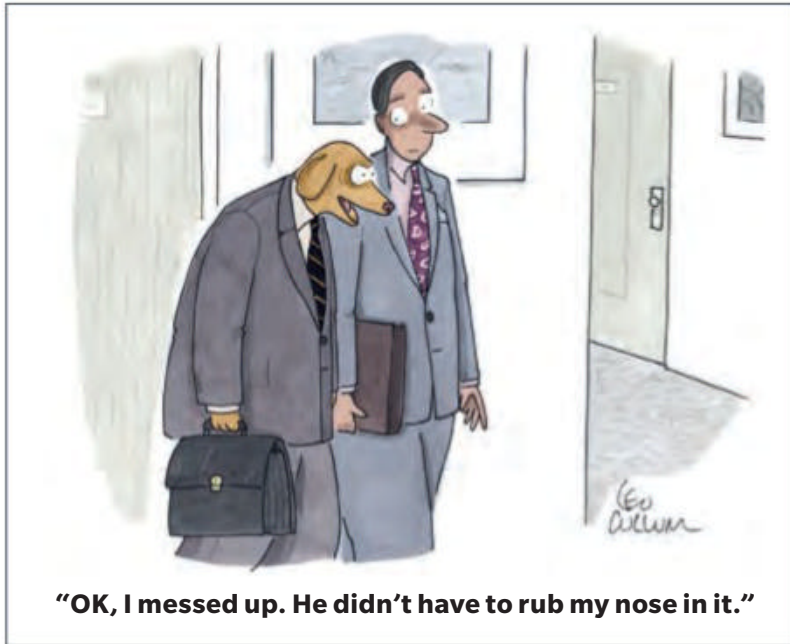
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ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Humour on the Job



The Office-Lingo-to-English Dictionary

KEYBOARD PLAQUE: The disgusting build-up of dirt and crud found on computer keyboards.

MOUSE POTATO: The online, wired generation's answer to the couch potato.

STRESS PUPPY: A person who seems to thrive on being stressed out and whiny.

TREWARE: Hacker slang for printed documentation.

UNINSTALLED: A euphemism for being fired.

TOURIST: Someone who takes training classes just to get a holiday from his or her job. Berkeley.edu

Home, Sweet Work

I think we need to stop calling it "working from home" and start calling it "living at work".

@H_DeQuincey

Fantastic Beast

One of my students just called me a "cruel beastie", which I'm taking as a sign of affection.

@BorrowedHorses

Perfectly Normal

We were dining with my husband's colleague, a therapist, who told us that her seven-year-old daughter had recently asked, "Mummy, what's normal?"

Our friend gave a response that only a mother who's analysed one too many patients could give: "Normal is what people are before you get to know them."

SUBMITTED BY MARY-ANNE REED

In the Soup

"In an attempt to be frugal, I made roasted red capsicum soup to take to work for lunch. When it came time to enjoy my fat-free soupy goodness, the Thermos I placed in the microwave exploded open with a gunshot sound. Naturally the secretary ran over to see what the gunshot was and saw a thick, blood-like substance all over my face – so she started screaming.

"The day ended with me hopelessly trying to scrub red capsicum from the ceiling while all of the employees watched me, discussing the physics behind my red capsicum soup explosion while my boss paced around assessing the damage.

"My attempt to save a dollar on soup cost my company a freshly painted wall and two of those extra-fancy acoustical ceiling tiles. They didn't fire me. They just call me 'Capsicum Spray' now."

STEPHANIE YUHAS, FILMMAKER

LET'S GO SHOPPING

At a shopping mall, I watched as a man was approached by a kiosk vendor. "Excuse me, can I ask you a question?" said the vendor.

The man smiled as he replied, "You just did," and kept right on walking.

SUBMITTED BY JOHN LEWANDOWSKI

I like walking into a shop and immediately realising it's too fancy but pretending to look around for a few minutes for the benefit of the salesperson, who already dislikes me by default.

@sarahclazarus

The manager of the shop where I work was dealing with an angry customer. The customer asked him if he could talk to the manager. So the manager spun around in a dramatic 360-degree turn and then said to the customer: "Hi, I'm the manager, how can I help you today?"

@ItsStephaniee







TRUE CRIME

SCAMMED BY MY BEST FRIEND

She swindled me
out of thousands,
forcing me into
bankruptcy and
destroying my once
sunny outlook.
But I finally
got justice

BY *Johnathan Walton*

FROM **HUFFPOST.COM**

I fell hard for one of the oldest cons in the book. But this scheme wasn't cooked up by some fictional Nigerian prince soliciting me through a sketchy email. I fell under the spell of an immensely lovable woman who inserted herself into my life and became my best friend. She was also an international con artist on the run.

She snared me in an age-old con called the Inheritance Scam, ultimately deceiving me out of nearly US\$100,000. She simultaneously destroyed my sense of self and darkened my once joyful outlook. As she was ruining my life, she was also scamming dozens of others around the world by impersonating psychics, mortgage brokers, psychologists, lawyers and travel agents. She even pretended to be a cancer victim.

She was a true queen of the con, using disguises and plastic surgery to alter her appearance.

I was a reality TV producer, working on shows such as *American Ninja Warrior* and *Shark Tank*, and I never saw through her masterful performances. She might have got away with cheating many more people if she hadn't turned me into a vigilante.

Allow me to explain.

She introduced herself as Mair Smyth in May 2013, when she joined a group of angry neighbours in my living room to discuss what to do about losing access to our building's swimming pool because of a legal spat with a neighbouring building.

"I can help," she told us. "My boyfriend is a lawyer who can get the pool back!"

I liked her immediately. We all did. She was brash. Funny. Intelligent and outspoken. Ironically, for someone who turned out to be a liar and a con artist, she came across as a woman who would always "tell it like it was".

She also came across as extremely wealthy. She wore expensive Jimmy Choo shoes and once showed me her wardrobe with more than 250 pairs. I later discovered they were all fake.

After our initial meeting, Mair invited my husband, Pablito, and I to dinner. Over the next year, she frequently

wined and dined us at fancy restaurants and always insisted on picking up the bill. "I have a lot of money - let me pay!" she'd plead convincingly.

We'd hang out almost every evening in our barbecue area, exchanging intimacies under the cool star-lit sky. Mair told us she was originally from Ireland. One night she pointed to a framed document hanging in her

**FOURTEEN
MONTHS
INTO OUR
FRIENDSHIP,
MAIR AND I
WERE LIKE
SISTER AND
BROTHER**

COMPOSITE: PREVIOUS SPREAD JOLEEN ZUBEK. PHOTO: PREVIOUS SPREAD AND THIS PAGE: COURTESY JOHNATHANWALTON.COM



Soon Mair became more than just a neighbour or even a close friend. She and my husband (right) and I were family

living room. “This is the Irish Constitution,” she said.

“See that signature at the bottom? That’s my great-uncle’s.”

I had no idea that, like her shoes, that tale was fake.

Mair brought me Irish tea and pastries and regaled me with stories of how when she was a young girl, her grandmother – who was supposedly in the Irish Republican Army – would take her to the top of a bridge and teach her how to hurl Molotov cocktails down on British soldiers.

When I tearfully confided in her that part of my family had disowned me for being gay, she pounced.

“My family disowned me, too!” she said as she fought back tears. “They’re trying to get me disinherited.” Mair told me that an uncle,

the patriarch of her family, had recently died, and her cousins were dividing up an estate worth 25 million euros (about US\$32 million). She said she was supposed to receive five million euros as her share of the inheritance and showed me angry text messages and emails from her cousins threatening that she wouldn’t get a cent.

Mair was hired at a travel agency where her family supposedly did a lot of business.

Fourteen months into our friendship, Mair and I were like sister and brother, even ending our phone calls with “I love you”. She told me that her barristers were having trouble trying to secure her inheritance and that they had warned her about a clause in her uncle’s will stating that if any



family member were convicted of a crime, the person would forfeit his or her share. “You’d better be careful!” I cautioned. “One of your disgruntled cousins might try and set you up!”

On July 8, 2014, my phone rang.

“You have a collect call from an inmate at the Century Regional Detention Facility. Press one to accept,” the computerised voice instructed me.

It was Mair. I quickly pressed one.

“You were right!” she sobbed. “I was arrested today. My family set me up to make it look like I stole \$200,000 from my job.”

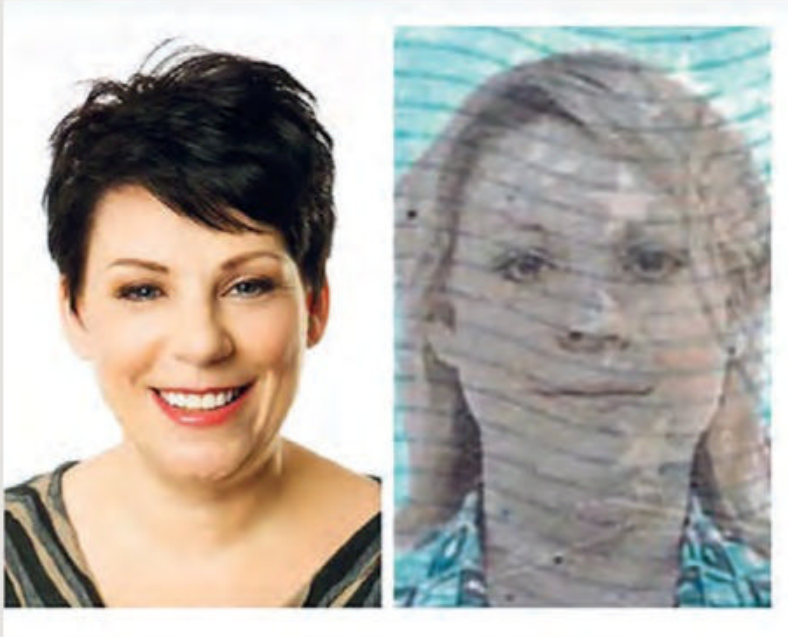
“I told you this would happen!” I yelled. I was distraught. I found a bail bondsman and paid him \$4200 to get her out of jail. That’s when I

first learned that her legal name was Marianne Smyth, not Mair Smyth. But she paid me back the next day, when she was released from prison. Or, rather, the married man she was dating at the time paid me back. Little did I (or he) know she was scamming him, too.

As the months passed, Mair showed me emails from her lawyers assuring her that the case against her was falling apart. I had no idea those emails were fake.

Then, almost three years into our friendship, she told me that the district attorney prosecuting her case had frozen her bank accounts. So I started lending her money. She had immediately paid back the \$4200 I

Scammed By My Best Friend



A queen of the con, Mair used disguises and even plastic surgery to change her look

credit cards to get the criminal case against her dropped.

A few months later, Mair was arrested again. She said the judge had charged her with money laundering, something to do with her using my credit cards, and punished her with 30 days in prison – a “slap on the wrist”. She assured me as soon as she got out and received her inheritance,

used to bail her out of prison, so I felt confident she’d pay me back.

But that’s the thing: the term con artist is short for confidence artist because these individuals are skilled at gaining your confidence and then using it to scam you out of your money.

Over several months, I lent Mair nearly \$15,000. You’d think I’d be worried about giving her that much money, but I wasn’t. Not only was she my best friend, but she also claimed she was about to inherit millions of dollars. I never even considered that anything sinister could be taking place.

One day, Mair called me and said the district attorney was demanding \$50,000 to dismiss the case against her. I let her charge the \$50,000 on my

she would pay me back.

Mair called me reverse-charges from prison every day. When I said I wanted to visit, she begged me not to. “I don’t want you to see me like this,” she said. But I insisted. So I logged on to the prison’s website to schedule a visit. That’s when the true devastation she had wrought on my life started to reveal itself.

The website showed that Mair was serving time for felony grand theft. This was no slap on the wrist.

I took the day off and rushed to a Los Angeles courthouse. With trembling hands, I reviewed every record I could find from Mair’s case. I discovered she had lied to me about everything. I couldn’t breathe.



**I was a TV producer, not a detective.
But I was determined to get justice**

I learned that the \$50,000 I let her charge on my credit cards had gone to pay \$40,000 as part of a plea agreement to a theft charge she faced for stealing more than \$200,000 from the travel agency she worked for. Had she not been able to come up with that \$40,000, she would have received a five-year prison sentence, not a measly 30 days.

Her bank accounts had never been frozen. There was no inheritance. She was not even Irish! Those were all lies she used to entrap me.

I went home and collapsed in my husband's arms. "How could I let this happen to us?" I sobbed.

Eventually, my pain was replaced by anger. I was a TV producer, not a detective. But I was determined to get justice.

The day Mair was released from

prison, I confronted her. She denied everything. "That's not true, Johnathan! That's not true!" she protested, tears streaming down her face. But I was done believing anything she had to say. I clenched my jaw and walked away. We never spoke again.

I went to the police days later, in March 2017, and filed a report. The officer interviewing me seemed sceptical that there was anything they could do. "Don't give strangers your money," were his parting words. So I started my own investigation.

I dug up Mair Smyth's high school yearbook and learned that she was born Marianne Andle in Maine. She later moved to Tennessee, where, according to estranged family members, she claimed she had breast cancer and allegedly scammed friends and neighbours out of thousands for "treatments". They told me Mair was oddly obsessed with wanting to be Irish. In 2000, she went to Ireland on holiday. She ended up marrying a local and stayed for nine years.

In the same way that wooden stakes kill vampires, publicity kills con artists. I began turning my pain into a profound sense of purpose. I started a blog, johnathanwalton.com, detailing how Mair had scammed me. Soon, other victims of hers reached out.

I heard from one who claimed Mair had scammed her out of \$10,000 by impersonating a psychologist. She allegedly tricked our landlord out of \$12,000 in rent by pretending to

have cancer. Mair had iron-deficiency anaemia and would purposely avoid iron-rich foods so she would be admitted to hospital for iron infusions. While in a hospital bed, she'd ask a nurse to take her photo, then she'd email it to her victims to better sell her cancer story.

A police detective in Northern Ireland told me that authorities in Belfast had been looking for Marianne Smyth for years. The detective said she had worked as a mortgage broker in 2008 and had scammed many people and then vanished.

All in all, Mair Smyth used at least 23 different aliases and has been charged with fraud and grand theft in Florida and Tennessee.

I was determined to get justice and called the Los Angeles Police Department every day. A year after I'd last seen her, Mair was arrested and charged with grand theft for scamming me. She was released on her own recognisance.

I never went near her, but one month before trial, Mair filed for a restraining order against me, asserting that I was threatening her with violence. It cost me \$1500 to hire a lawyer to fight her bogus claim.

"If a judge grants the restraining order, you would be prevented from testifying against her at her criminal trial," my lawyer explained. *Could this*

be her checkmate move? I wondered. I was apoplectic.

Thankfully, the judge refused to grant the restraining order, and Mair's trial proceeded. The prosecution presented a mountain of irrefutable evidence. Though she was charged with scamming only me, the judge allowed testimony from three other victims to demonstrate a pattern.

On January 9, 2019, Marianne Smyth was found guilty of conning me out of \$91,784 and sentenced to five years behind bars.

I spent two years pursuing Mair. I had to file for bankruptcy because of what she had done to me. And the 24 court appearances I made even before the trial – for continuances, pretrial motions, and hearings – meant

I missed a lot of work and lost even more money. Not to mention the cost of hiring private investigators in multiple states and countries to ferret out all her scams.

But it was worth it.

I am now suspicious of everyone and everything. Making new friends is not something I'm good at anymore. And I'm ashamed, too. But my desire to stop her from hurting other people is much stronger than my shame. **R**

I BEGAN TURNING MY PAIN INTO A PROFOUND SENSE OF PURPOSE

HUFFPOST.COM (AUGUST 16, 2019), © 2019 BY JOHNATHAN WALTER.



*In the Land
of the*
Giants



TRAVEL

*On the coastline of Northern Ireland,
myths and history live side by side*

BY Sarah Kante



**The Giant's Causeway is
magnificent to behold**



Many know the island as a whole, which includes the Republic of Ireland, as the Emerald Isle. *Game of Thrones*

fans know Northern Ireland itself as the Iron Islands. Anyone visiting this part of the UK will discover, as I did, a lot of rugged, breathtaking beauty.

After I visit a revitalised Belfast, with its excellent *Titanic* museum (the ill-fated vessel was built in the city's shipyard), it is surfing that entices me to head to Northern Ireland's north coast and to settle in the quiet beach town of Portrush. But the Antrim coast has a lot of fascinating places to explore, and I am soon boarding a local bus to nearby Giant's Causeway, the biggest attraction in the region.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is simply fascinating. A hike up the

Shepherd's Steps takes me to the clifftop trail, where I watch the waves crash onto the basalt columns created by a series of volcanic eruptions some 50 to 60 million years ago, and stare in awe at the power and beauty of nature.

It is a mind-boggling experiment to try to imagine the sheer volcanic power that created such a masterpiece, one of almost perfect mathematical precision that stretches some six kilometres along this piece of coastline. It's thought that cooling lava formed these interlocking columns, each typically with five to seven sides; some of the columns are as tall as 25 metres. Science demands that we wrap our heads around the creation of this chessboard of basalt and accept the power of nature for what it is: unfathomable. And so we look to the myth for a somewhat simpler explanation.



**Dunluce Castle was built in
the 16th century**

THE DUNLUCE CASTLE KITCHENS, ALONG WITH ITS STAFF, FELL INTO THE SEA IN 1639

The tale goes that a giant named Finn MacCool (or, in Old Irish, Fionn MacCumhaill, a hunter-warrior in Irish mythology) created the causeway by tearing up chunks of the coastline and hurling them into the Irish Sea so he would have a path on which to cross to Scotland. He wanted to reach the Scottish giant Benandonner, who had been threatening Ireland. But when he discovered that Benandonner was terrifyingly massive, Finn beat a hasty retreat.

The Scottish giant followed, but Finn was saved by his quick-thinking wife, who disguised him as a baby. When the angry Scot saw the baby, he decided that if the child was that big, Dad must be really huge, and returned home, tearing up as much of the causeway as he could. Indeed, similar rock formations are found on the shores of the Scottish isle of Staffa some 130 kilometres to the north.

With the weather holding up, I take the walking trail alongside the Giant's Causeway & Bushmills Railway to the town of Portballintrae, about three kilometres to the west, crossing the Bush River. The village of Bushmills, home to the Old Bushmills Whiskey Distillery, is just a short distance inland, but I want to stay on the coast to take in the scenic views of the North Atlantic.

READER'S DIGEST

Continuing west for another couple of kilometres, I come upon the precariously perched 16th-century Dunluce Castle, which became the seat of the earls of Antrim in the 17th century. The castle kitchens – along with its staff – fell into the sea in 1639, and the second Earl of Antrim and his wife abandoned the place.

With the sky starting to cloud over, I make my way to the Magheracross viewpoint to take pictures of the

cross. On narrow planks suspended 30 metres above the sea, this rope bridge bounces as you traverse the 20-metre-wide chasm between the coast and a tiny island that is home to many seabirds. It's a more modern version of the bridge that the local salmon fishermen originally built in 1755 at this very spot. I forgo the dizzying experience and instead walk along the coast, watching families cross the bridge, their shrieks of laughter and fear mingling with the wind.

Wanting to continue walking in such fine weather, I follow the Causeway Coast Way a short distance to Ballintoy Harbour, finding myself squarely in 'Iron Islands' territory: this is where parts of seasons two and four of *Game of Thrones* were filmed. Away from the harbour, and the tourists on a bus tour, I make my way



Try a wee dram at the Old Bushmills Distillery

sweeping vista before finding cover while the rain briefly lashes the coast. After the rain comes the rainbow, and I walk back to Portrush where I'm staying, watching the surfers manoeuvring the icy waves under double rainbows.

Another day and another bus. I head east, back past Giant's Causeway to the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, which visitors have to muster a bit of courage to

across muddy fields crisscrossed by rivulets and overrun by rabbits. The ruggedness of the coast that translated so well on television is exhilarating in reality: waves crash on rocks strewn along cliff bottoms, seabirds whirl overhead, and the wind has a mind of its own.

Alone but for the elements, I attempt to continue on to White Park Bay beach, known for its wild surf and beautiful sands. However, the tide is working against me and a cliff



Top: The dizzying Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge. Bottom: Ballintoy Harbour, where parts of *Game of Thrones* was filmed



COLD-WATER SURFING

Located on a peninsula, Portrush has two beaches, a lovely harbour, and the usual points of interest of a UK coastal town: an amusement park; Ramore Head and its cliff edges and trails; and the famous Dunluce Links golf course.

For surfers, what makes this stretch of coast so special is the promise of consistent swells hitting its uncrowded shores. This is the home of six-time Irish national surfing champion Andrew Hill, but it is still relatively under the radar. To visit in October, as I did, is to discover it's a surfer's freezing paradise.

I hire a board at Troggs Surf Shop across from my accommodation at the Portrush Townhouse boutique hostel and jump into the water at West Strand Beach. It doesn't take me long to realise I am seriously under-equipped for the conditions. Within 30 minutes, I've lost all feeling in my feet and hands, and my ears are burning. I go back to the Townhouse

and gulp down a copious amount of tea, before popping in at Troggs Surf Shop again for some booties.

I will probably always regret declining the invitation I received in Troggs by its owner – none other than the aforementioned surfing champion Andrew Hill – to surf a different spot with him and his friend that afternoon. How could I pass up the opportunity to go out with surfers whose abilities far exceed my own? But on this particular day, my head is set on one thing only: getting back to West Strand Beach and taking my revenge on the waves that had turned me into a popsicle.

Surfing the cold waters of Portrush leaves my feet – even with boots – purple. I find myself covered in bruises that do not appear until I thaw in the evening. And it will take me a couple of days to regain full feeling in my hands. But it was worth it, and I would gladly do it all over again...though with a thicker wetsuit, and maybe some gloves.



West Strand Beach at Portrush, on the north coast of Northern Ireland

is in my way. It's not possible to go around it – so I can only glimpse bits of the beach I'd been hoping to get to between waves that forcefully hold me back.

With waterlogged feet and muddy jeans, I turn around and go back up to Ballintoy, stopping to take pictures of Ballintoy Church of Ireland, its cemetery highlighted against the now stormy-looking skies. It appears that the weather is turning, so I jump on the bus, and soon, rain is lashing at the windows as we drive back to Portrush.

The Antrim Coast is as far away from Northern Ireland's modern history as possible: this is a land of legends, of castles falling into the sea and giants, of fantasy and wild seas, of international surfers and

friendly bus drivers. But this is also, I find out on my last night in Portrush, a land still tainted by the Troubles, a period of violence and unrest between Protestants and Catholics from 1968 to 1998 that did not forget to reach this coast. A local who recounts his school days in vivid detail responds to my misunderstanding of the rules of Gaelic Football with, "Catholic game, that". And then he is quick to add that he's not religious.

The next day, I walk through town and to the bus that will take me to Coleraine and on to the city of Londonderry, or just 'Derry' to locals. A few surfers are out, but Portrush is otherwise a ghost town. It is Sunday. The streets may be empty, but the waves pound on, oblivious to the giants and the history that define this coast so distinctly. **R**



BONUS READ



LOST OVERBOARD

No one saw him fall off the boat in the middle of the night. How long could he survive in a storm-tossed sea?

BY *Brett Archibald* ILLUSTRATION BY *Alexander Wells*

FROM THE BOOK **ALONE: LOST OVERBOARD IN THE INDIAN OCEAN**





It began with an invitation to surf the world's best waves in Indonesia's Mentawai Islands, an archipelago separated from Sumatra's west coast by the 150-kilometre-wide Mentawai Strait. The nine South Africans, all in their early 50s, mates since school, jumped at the chance.

By coincidence, a similar trip was organised for nine Western Australian friends, also in their 50s. Their journeys – the South Africans on the *Naga Laut* and the Australians on the *Barrenjoey* – would cross and the destinies of two men would intersect over two unforgettable days.

“I'M GOING TO DIE OUT HERE”

BRETT, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2.30AM, MENTAWAI STRAIT. From the shelter of the upper deck, I stumble out to the port railing of the *Naga Laut*, a 20-metre surf charter boat, and into the full brunt of the storm. The sea is heaving. A surge of Coke and bile rockets up my throat and I spew it out over the side. I've barely wiped my mouth when I lurch over the side once more.

My head is pounding, my stomach a corkscrew of pain. I vomit a third time. It occurs to me what the offending dish was: the calzone pizza at dinner, with its dodgy meat filling. I feel dizzy looking down at the water churning beneath me. My last conscious thought is, *If I vomit*

like that again, I'm going to pass out.

A great weight forces my chin to my chest. I'm tumbling. I hear a gurgle as bubbles froth from my ears and nose. Water swamps my face and washes down my throat. I cough violently and open my eyes.

I'm in the ocean. The wind is howling and the surf boiling around me. Perhaps 30 metres ahead, the *Naga Laut* is moving slowly away from me.

“Hey!” I scream, waving both arms wildly.

Baz, the Indonesian engineer on watch, does not hear me. I can make out my mate Banger – Benoit Maingard – lying on the upper deck.

No one has seen me fall overboard.

“God, please make the boat come back for me,” I pray. It forges on into the night, leaving me behind.

I wait, stunned, desperately treading water. My outstretched arms pull great circles in the swirling foam as I fight to take breaths between the waves.

“I’m going to die out here,” I say.

I feel no fear, only an overwhelming sadness that I’m never going to see my beautiful wife and children again.

THE NAGA LAUT, TUAPEJAT HARBOUR, 8.12AM. The *Naga Laut* is sitting calmly in its anchorage. It was an awful night. The stormy 12-hour crossing to Tuapejat Harbour on the island of Sipura left four of the nine friends vomiting – a combination of seasickness, jet lag and suspected food poisoning.

Jean-Marc Tostee, who shares a cabin with Brett, clambers up the ladder to the bridge. Yanto, the only English-speaking crewman, is chuckling with the captain, an older man Brett had christened ‘Skippy’.

“Yanto, have you seen Brett this morning?” Jean-Marc’s question is urgent. “The loud one with no hair? I’ve looked everywhere. He’s not on the boat.”

All the blood drains from Yanto’s face. In Indonesia, losing someone at sea means a mandatory jail sentence for the boat’s captain and his first mate.

Mark ‘Ridgy’ Ridgway joins Jean-Marc on the

bridge and quickly picks up that Brett is missing. “We have to go back for him,” Ridgy says.

“People don’t come back from the sea,” says Yanto.

“We all did military training,” Jean-Marc says firmly. “He knows how to survive.”

While the captain goes to the harbour master to report that Brett is overboard, Ridgy, a pilot and yachtmaster, consults the boat’s charts. When he checked on the sick men at 2.30, Brett was vomiting over the port beam. “We would have been here-ish.” He marks the spot.

Ridgy considers the current – “Two knots, going south,” says Yanto – and outlines the search window on the map.

The captain is called on his phone.

Brett Archibald (top left) and his friends on the *Naga Laut*. Their surfing adventure would turn into a nightmare when Brett fell overboard during a storm





Brett with his wife Anita and their children Jamie and Zara

He can catch up to them in the tender. The boat's engines grind back to life. The wind produces a cross swell that sets the boat pitching and yawing as they leave the bay.

RAGE AND REGRET

BRETT, ONE HOUR IN THE WATER. The water is warm, like a tepid bath. My stomach lets go again – the detestable pizza still doing its wicked work. I am dehydrated from the continuous vomiting and all the salt water I've been swallowing.

I know that I cannot let fear take over. *Keep calm*, I coach myself, *stay alert and aware of everything around you.*

I start talking out loud to my wife, Anita. "Neets, I'm so sorry to leave you like this."

I think of my nine-year-old Zara and Jamie, only six. My daughter is my princess. My son is my zany little Mini-Me. The ache in my chest is like a concrete weight.

Regret is folding up my insides like origami. *You gave up your corporate career in London*, I remind myself. *You returned to Cape Town for the lifestyle, but instead you've been completely immersed in your bloody outdoor awning business.*

Now you're going to die.

I am overtaken by rage. "This is not fair!" I shout to the swirling clouds above.

Without warning, great rollers come from the gloom to dump me. I swallow what feels like a gallon of salt water, then cough and retch.

Torrential rain begins to fall. I tilt my head back and swallow the fresh water. It's a cool balm to my swelling tongue.

BRETT, THREE HOURS IN THE WATER. It's starting to get lighter. I know that sunrise is around 5.30. *The guys on the boat will soon realise that I'm not there*, I tell myself.

In a worst-case scenario, they'll get to port, discover I'm missing and then sail back. I fell overboard about a third of the way across the Strait, about 50 kilometres from Padang, where we had set off. I calculate that

I need to stay afloat for another 11 hours – 14 at most.

I begin to feel there might be a chance.

You've got to get swimming, I think. By now I've turned around so many times, I'm completely disoriented. With no sun, I can't take a bearing. I swim in what I hope is the direction the boat has taken.

Out of the blue, I begin to feel really tired. Swimming is sapping my energy. In my pocket is a folded cardboard rectangle with a till slip inside. It's surprisingly dry. I tear off a tiny corner and put it into the water. It sweeps away from me.

I've been swimming against the current. The only thing to do is turn around and go with it. Swimming feels instantly easier. I know that ocean currents eventually lead to land. Every so often I tear off a piece of paper and use it to assess the current's direction.

THE BARRENJOEY, TUAPEJAT HARBOUR, 10.12AM. *"Pak Doris! Pak Doris!"* There's an urgency to Anas's voice that troubles Tony 'Doris' Eltherington, the 56-year-old captain of the surf charter boat the *Barrenjoey*. From the wheelhouse of the 21-metre steel ketch he watches three of his Australian guests and

two crew members alight from the tender. They had gone into the small, scruffy town for an hour.

A rough, tough Australian, Eltherington is a veteran surfer and sailor in these parts, perhaps a trifle eccentric and occasionally irascible. But the way he handles boats and his knowledge of these waters command respect. In 2012 he started his own surf charter business.

He's a good man to have on your side if you're lost in the ocean.

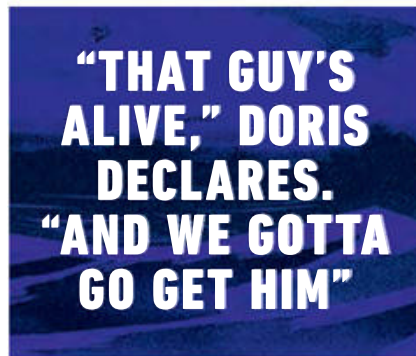
His nickname Doris was given to him when he was a kid for his Doris Day-like mop of blond hair.

Anas gets to Doris first. "Emergency, Pak Doris," he says, using the term of respect for an elder. Elvis, the first mate,

says, *"A bule* has fallen off the *Naga Laut*. In the night." *Bule* is the locals' term for foreigners, particularly white ones.

Doris snatches up the radio and calls the *Naga Laut*. A barrage of Bahasa, the local language, explodes out of the receiver. Doris hands the receiver to Elvis, who writes down the *Naga Laut*'s assumed co-ordinates at the time of the incident. "The man was vomiting over the side around 3am."

Doris calls the harbour master. "It's Tony Eltherington on the *Barrenjoey*,"



he shouts into the radio. "You need to go out for this guy!"

The reply is somewhat disinterested: "Weather too bad."

"Nah, mate. Get SAR, the navy guys, the TNI." SAR is Search and Rescue; TNI the Indonesian military. "Your boat is out here; there's also a SurfAid boat. We need speedboats."

"Too much storm." A loud click signals that the radio has been turned off.

Doris knows that there will be no official response. In such emergencies, it's left to the charities and surf charter boats to coordinate rescue and recovery operations.

He is suddenly decisive. "Elvis! Load up that fuel tank on the speedboat. That guy's alive. And we gotta go get him."

CRUSHING PAIN

BRETT, FIVE HOURS IN THE WATER. In the morning light, I rise and fall with the swells and try to float on my back to rest my limbs. I quickly sink.

I kick myself back up to the surface, coughing, and go back to treading water. Even though the water is warm, a cold sensation is creeping into my joints.

I pride myself on being able, even

at 50, to do the active things I love – surf, cycle, play touch rugby. This time is going to be no different.

The Cape Rouleur, a road cycle race between 150 and 200 kilometres a day over three days, was gruelling, especially in the summer heat and wind. *You did that, so you can do this*, I tell myself.

Minutes later, an immobilising pain crushes both my legs. Cramp. I sink like a stone.

Water fills my mouth, my throat, my ears. I'm going to drown. It's a panicky thought as I look up to the under-surface of the sea. It's very dark beneath me.

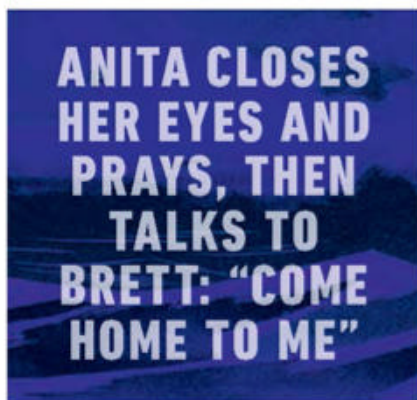
With my hips as the fulcrum, I grab my toes and pull them towards my body, stretching out

my hamstrings. My lungs want to explode. I pull my legs together and manage to propel myself back to the top.

I splutter and cough as I slap my open hands onto the surface. The cramping brings on tremors of mental uncertainty.

I glance up at the sky and search for a break in the clouds, something to offer more light. Instead, it starts to rain again. Another storm begins.

"Are the guys on their way, Neets? When I get tired, you have to tell me to keep going," I beg Anita.



CAPE TOWN, 6.13AM. Louise Killeen taps urgently on the glass at her friend Anita's front door.

Through the glass, Anita registers her friend's look. Something is very wrong. She opens the door.

"It's Brett. I'm so sorry, Anita, but he's fallen overboard." Louise recounts what her husband, Craig, had told her in his call from the satellite phone on the *Naga Laut*. "They think he's been missing at sea for about seven, maybe eight hours now."

Anita feels a physical force, like a blow across the face. She can't breathe and hears herself gasp. "No, no, no, no." She slides to the floor.

Louise bends down to gather up her friend. She has no words of comfort.

Zara comes out of the kitchen. "Mummy, what's wrong?"

Anita cannot tell the children that their father is lost. She gets to her feet and takes a deep breath. "We can't get in touch with the boat," she tells her daughter. "We're going to try to reach them on the satellite phone. Take Jamie and go and watch TV."

Anita's parents and her younger sister, Helene, arrive just after 9am. Helene offers to take the children to school. In the sudden flurry of activity, Anita organises a small altar in the lounge. She takes a framed photograph of Brett off the mantelpiece, puts down a map, positions the photo in the Strait, then lights three candles around it.

Anita closes her eyes and prays,

then talks to Brett: "Come home to me." She imagines that she can hear him calling her name.

THE BARRENJOEY, TUAPEJAT HARBOUR, 12.16PM. "Do you want a hand?" Simon Carlin, one of Doris's guests, asks. Colin Chenu and Jeff Vidler are standing with him at the stern, where the *Bynda Laut*, the *Barrenjoeys's* seven-metre twin-engine support boat, is tethered. The sky is dark, but the rain is falling softer now.

"The guy's been missing at sea for at least nine hours," someone else said earlier. "He's gone."

The comment seemed to push Doris beyond his limit. "If it were me, I'd want someone lookin'!" he bellowed. "Even if we find a body, I'd still want to be able to give it to his family," he snapped as he walked away.

Doris now replies to Simon's offer. "Come if you like."

THE NAGA LAUT, 3.40PM. The boat is pitching hard up and down and rolling left to right in the swell. The eight friends have taken up their watch around the boat, crouching, jackets or towels hooded over their heads to keep out the rain, staring out at the churning ocean.

Ridgy shouts, "What's that? What's that?" The men move to the port-side of the boat and follow his finger pointing out into the swirling grey.

Someone calls for the captain to stop the boat. The engines cut out.

Finally, Ridgy locates the object in the binoculars. "It's not him. Just some junk." As the boat, buffeted by the wind and sea, starts a gentle turn to port, the rain reduces visibility almost to nothing.

On the bridge, the captain and Yanto engage in a spirited exchange, working out their next move. Barely a minute passes before Ridgy calls out. "Yanto! I think I've seen something else! Tell the captain we need to turn back."

"Captain says we can't go there," says Yanto. "He say we go to mainland. More storm coming. Boat not good."

"This is the search area," says Craig. "Why are we leaving?"

"Boat will sink." Yanto is almost shouting now. "We need to go to mainland to refuel. Set out again 3am."

"I saw something, I'm sure of it," says Ridgy to no one.

The men stand hunched in silence as the diesel engines start up and the *Naga Laut* begins the slow journey back to the mainland.

Morale has reached its nadir.

"I'M HERE!"

BRETT, 13 HOURS IN THE WATER. A black cloud moves over me. Enormous drops fall from the heavens. I lift my head; my only focus is to get liquid into my body.

The storm doesn't last long. A paler

sky remains. Then, through a momentary break between the waves, I see it. About 300 metres away, through a shroud of rain: a boat. It's the *Naga Laut*.

They're heading straight for me. Relief floods over me.

It begins to rain harder. Suddenly the boat stops about 200 metres away from me. I start screaming. "I'm here!"

The boat turns broadside. I can just make out Niall Hegarty, beside Banger, on the starboard side. Ridgy is in the stern shouting, gesticulating wildly.

They've seen me.

I shout repeatedly but my voice is lost on the wind. Then I see Niall's head fall to his chest and Banger fold his arms. They haven't seen me.

And then they power up. They start to move. Slowly they turn.

"Oh, Jesus, no, no!" I bellow. Stunned, I watch the boat sail away.

THE BYNDA LAUT, 6.40PM. The northerly wind is see-sawing between 25 and 35 knots as Doris powers out into the tumultuous sea in the *Bynda Laut*. Simon and two other West Australians are holding on to the hard steel canopy. They can't see anything through the sheets of grey rain.

Despite a rising concern for their own safety, they're impressed with Doris's indefatigability. These are not conditions to be out in a small boat.

The light is fading when Simon shouts across to Doris, “We can’t really see anything out here anymore, skipper.” The captain slowly nods. He will need at least an hour to get back to the *Barrenjoey*.

This weather is strange and capricious, and Doris quietly prays for winds from the south that would calm conditions somewhat. He hasn’t seen currents like this in five years.

Doris steers the *Bynda Laut* towards the *Barrenjoey*. The rain has stopped at last.

TERRIFYING ENCOUNTER

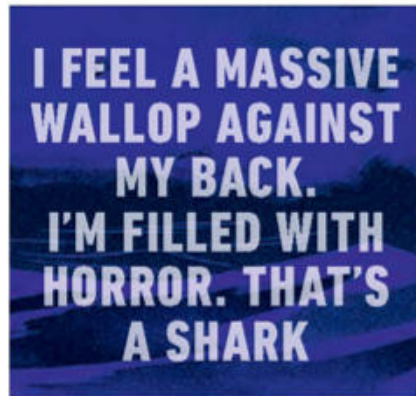
BRETT, 18 HOURS IN THE WATER.

Darkness is falling fast. The sun has set through clouds. It indicates, at last, where west is. I realise that the islands must be in front of me.

These thoughts are echoing in my head when I feel a massive wallop against my back, like a punch, slightly above my left kidney.

I swirl around. Then – bam! Whatever it was hits me again. I’m filled with horror. That’s a shark.

You’ve got to see what this is, I tell myself as fear and desperation bubble up. I sink beneath the surface and slowly twist around. The shark, a few metres away, is coming straight towards me.



It moves through the water as if in slow motion, its massive tail weaving its entire form left to right. I recognise the black edgings of its vertical fin – it’s a blacktip reef shark. It’s two metres long, big for a blacktip. It would have to be starving to attack a human.

In the next moment, it’s gone. I cautiously touch where the shark hit me. It’s very tender. I feel recharged, though. Blacktip reef sharks keep close to reefs. I have hope I’m near land.

I feel Anita’s presence all around. I believe I hear her voice. “Swim, Brettman, the love of my life. Swim!”

THE BARRENJOEY, TUAPEJAT HARBOUR, 9.30PM. Back

aboard the *Barrenjoey* safely anchored in a small bay south of Padang, Doris contacts Ridgy on the *Naga Laut*. “OK, so we know about your mate out there,” Doris’s gravelly voice booms. “You reckon he’s swimmin’?”

“Definitely. It’s not in his nature to give up,” Ridgy replies.

An hour later, Pete Inglis, Simon Carlin and Colin Chenu join Doris in the wheelhouse.

“Um, Doris, the boys are talking downstairs,” Simon ventures. “This bloke’s been in the drink for a long



Some of Brett Archibald's friends on the *Naga Laut* gather late on the second night of his disappearance to figure out their course for the next day

time. It's likely that he's gone by now ..."

"I'm not interested in your chit-chats downstairs." Doris stands up, shaking with emotion. "We'll find him! We've got to keep at it!"

The captain slowly sits down again. "I talked to some *bule* on the *Naga Laut*. This guy's 50, a bike rider. If he's fit, he's probably still alive. He has a wife. Two little children. They're somethin' to stay alive for."

Doris looks out into the darkness. "Hypothermia is going to kill him faster than anything else, but the water's warm. Also, there's been no sun. I'm tellin' you, he's alive."

The Australians stand in awkward silence. The captain seems to have taken the lack of action - from the authorities and from those around him - as a kind of personal betrayal.

"I lost my best friend yesterday. My buddy, Dave Kinder. Cancer, and hard livin'."

The statement comes entirely out of left field. They realise that Doris is attempting to explain his erratic behaviour.

Pete pulls out the ocean chart. "Right, mate. Let's decide on a course for the morning."

They consider the tides, the weakening winds and fading currents.

"We'll go north-east towards Padang, but at 99 degrees, we'll turn," Doris announces after a few minutes.

Pete shakes his head. "Nah, Doris, we should head due east ... the current goes south."

Doris asserts himself. "I'm skipper of this boat! The tides were runnin' south yesterday, but the current's moved north. We go north. My gut's not wrong."

"It's your ride, skipper, your decision."

"WE'VE GOT TO FIND HIM"

THE BARRENJOEY, 11.07PM. Doris considers how he's going to coordinate the coming hours. He calls Martin Daly. In 2004, Daly offered Doris a job captaining one of his charter boats. Doris sailed the *Mentawais* for Daly for eight years.

Now Daly commits his vessels, the *Indies Trader 3* and *Indies Trader 4*, to the search. "But if anyone's going to find this guy, it'll be you," he tells Doris. It emboldens the captain, makes him feel a little less isolated.

Doris calls a colleague in emergency management. "I've had no support from SAR, the TNI or the harbour master," Doris tells him. "They don't care about one guy."

"How far out did this happen?" his friend asks. But after a few minutes' consideration, he concludes, "Ah, Dorie, he's dead. In today's conditions? No life jacket? You can forget it."

"Thanks for nothin' mate." Earlier Doris had similar unhelpful responses from acquaintances who work in oil-rig rescue.

At around midnight, Steven 'Sooly' Sewell, a charter captain from Western Australia, comes in to Tuapejat Harbour on the *Huey* and anchors nearby. Doris is grateful for the company. Sooly tells Doris his guests are complaining, and Doris tells him about his disagreement with Pete Inglis.

"What do you want to do?" Sooly asks.

"I want to get all our boats in a line, with a mile between us

eventually, running parallel on this track."

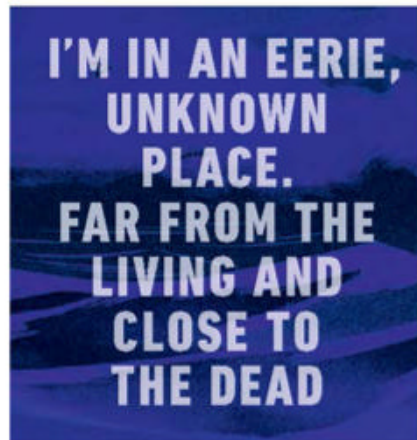
Doris paces. *We've got to find him*, he keeps thinking. *He's got kids ... I've got kids*. He starts praying, "Help me find him."

He takes a near-empty bottle of vodka and moves to the deck. He hasn't allowed himself to think of his friend Dave until now.

Doris wipes tears from his cheeks. *Gruff exterior, big heart*, he thinks. *The most amazing friend I ever had. He would have walked through hell to do the right thing.*

"Mate, tell me where this guy is ..."

Doris also talks to Denise, his sister. Her death in 2009 had taken a massive toll on him. "I've gotta go get him, Denise," Doris whispers.



BRETT, 20 HOURS IN THE WATER. I notice a strange light coming off the ocean. It's exquisite liquid blue-green. I realise it's phosphorescence, living plankton on the water's surface. Rolling on my back, I run my hands through the neon fairyland before it disappears into the wake of the undulating waves.

For the first time, the clouds break, revealing a patch of star-strewn sky. The moon, almost full tonight, has just risen.

I use the method I learned as a Boy Scout to establish south. I draw a mental line down to the horizon from the intersecting point of the Southern Cross's long axis and the perpendicular bisector of the two Pointers and realise that in fact I have not been swimming south. I'm going in the opposite direction.

A burning lash of pain sweeps across my chest and around my neck: the tentacles of jellyfish. I cry out in agony. This is pure electricity, burning, throbbing. I shake my limbs, scramble through the thick watery forest of fire and rip off the tentacles.

Just as suddenly, the creatures disappear. I'm panting from the pain and exertion. Even in the darkness, I can make out the deep, darkening welts they have left all over my chest.

The sea is calm at last. I'm so cold. I can barely stay awake. I mentally shout to Anita: "Help me stay awake!"

Then. A little boat. A canoe. Coming towards me. Two small Indonesian boys are sitting in it. They smile at me. I swim up to it and reach out to the prow. My hand passes through air and into the water.

Down I sink. I muster my last strength to push myself up to the surface and emerge coughing.

It was a trick of the mind, a phantom. Another crushing disappointment. I'm in an eerie, unknown place. Far from the living and very close to the dead.

THE *BARRENJOEY*, THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 5.34AM. When dawn comes, it's a perfect day. Doris has already been on the satellite phone and radio to the boats homing in on his search zone. Quiet and calm, he's operating with a sense of certainty and a purpose.

Doris watches as Sooly steers the *Huey* down their portside. The faster boat will reach the designated coordinates first.

Sooly smiles and salutes the captain of the *Barrenjoey* from the wheelhouse as

they pass. Doris touches the brim of his cap.

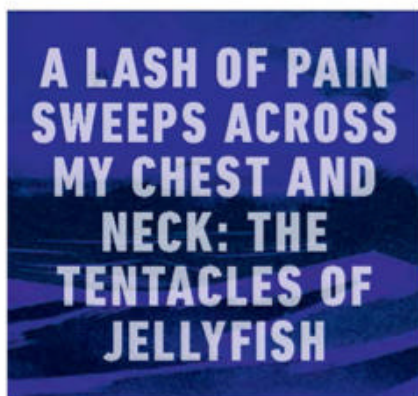
Doris watches the bow of the *Barrenjoey* cutting through the *Huey's* wake. Suddenly all sound seems to stop, and an idea slowly forms. He's certain of what he must do.

Doris grabs the radio. "Sooly, I'm peeling off at 18 degrees further north. I'm dropping it by ten."

It's a pivotal moment.

"Roger that. Whatever you think, mate."

The *Barrenjoey* slowly turns through the still water.



“GOD, TAKE ME!”

BRETT, 28 HOURS IN THE WATER.

I'm focused on saving energy. I reach forward as far as I can and pull big, sprawling breaststrokes. My arms and legs are burning.

The sun has risen. I turn slowly in a circle. The shape of an island rises up out of the water before me. A surge races through my body. Relief. There, another island, much further away. I swim for the closer one, but I'm not making any headway.

Slowly, feebly, I take out the last of the paper from my pocket. There's only a square centimetre left. I tear it in half. The current, it reveals, is going north, so I turn and swim with it.

A speck in the distance. Moored between the islands. It's a boat. I must swim to it. Each time I look up, the boat seems to be getting closer.

Then, the sound of an engine starting up is carried to me. It moves off.

Fury rises up from deep within me. I begin shrieking. Smacking the water with impotent arms. "God, take me, I am done!"

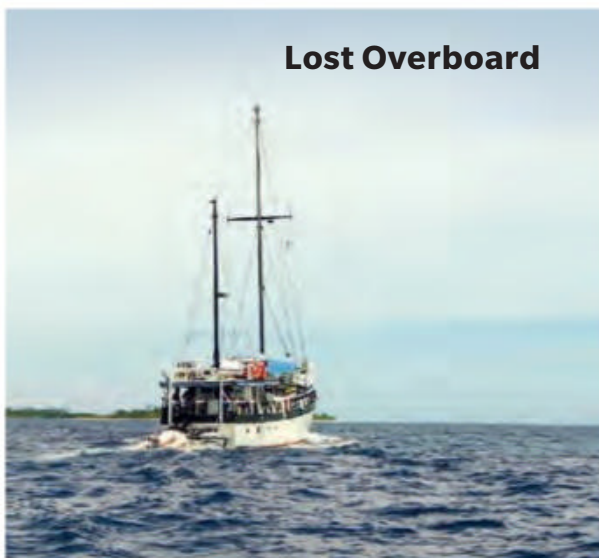
I sink under the water and float there, suspended. A dome of magnificent blue shimmers through the water.

Neets, Zara, my little Jamie. I love you more than you will ever know.

I take a breath and fill my lungs with the salt water.

Suddenly an agonising pain burns

Lost Overboard



When Brett first spotted the Barrenjoey, all he could see was its mast. To him it looked like a cross rising out of the water

around my tongue. My raw tongue cannot tolerate the searing salt water.

I kick up through two metres of water and burst onto the surface, choking and snorting. You can't do this! You can't kill yourself!

I turn my head. Floating above the water, I see it. A black cross.

THE BARRENJOEY, 6.58AM. Doris has steered the *Barrenjoey* into the new search zone. The Australians have all taken up positions on the deck.

In the wheelhouse, Doris pours himself another coffee. In the stillness of the morning, he hears Anas's voice.

"Boss." It's almost casual. "There he is. He's over there."

At that same moment, Pete shouts from the bow. "There! We've got



Top: Passengers from the *Barrenjoey* and Elvis Waruwu guide Brett to safety.

Above: The *Barrenjoey*'s crew and guests celebrate an unlikely rescue.

Doris sits to Brett's right

him!" He's pointing to the northeast.

For a moment the men on board stand still. Then a loud gasp of amazement sweeps across the deck. Then shouting. Cheering. Whooping.

Doris looks out to the portside. About a hundred metres away, he glimpses a man's head glowing like a beacon in the early light, and, beside it, a ghostly white arm raised and waving.

Doris furiously spins the wheel. He points the nose of the *Barrenjoey* towards the man in the water, then drops his head into his hands and weeps.

BRETT, 28-AND-A-HALF HOURS IN THE WATER. The cross is getting bigger. I suddenly realise it's the mast top and spreader of a yacht. The prow of a boat rises up into my line of sight, then her whole length comes into view. I clock the distance at about 400 metres. There's activity on deck. The men look like ants.

I put my head down and I swim. When I stop and look up, the boat is coming straight at me, only a hundred metres away.

"Hey! Hey!" I propel myself out of the water as high as I can, using my last traces of energy.

I see a life ring thrown from the rail and bodies diving over the side.

My last swimming effort has drained me. I start sinking down.

So close ...

And then an arm reaches beneath my ribs and across my chest. I look up to see a bright orange life ring sweeping in an arc around me.

Then I hear him. "We've got you, mate. We've got you."

BRETT ARCHIBALD WAS RESCUED AT 7.15AM ON APRIL 18, 2013. He had drifted approximately 70 kilometres

from where he went overboard. He was shaky and sunburnt, but otherwise in good condition.

Doris Eltherington was a reluctant hero, remaining on the bridge until his guests insisted he come down to meet Brett.

Brett phoned Anita, who sobbed with joy and relief. He had a rapturous reunion with his friends on the *Naga Laut* when they caught up with the *Barrenjoey*. **R**

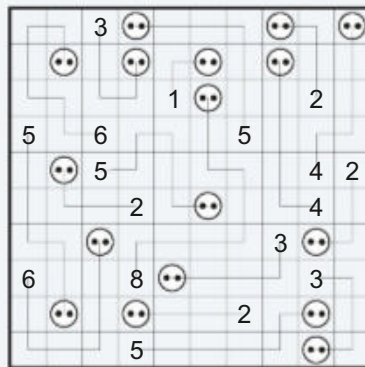
In 2014, Surfing Australia, the sport's representative organisation, gave Tony 'Doris' Eltherington the Peter Troy Lifestyle Award for his contributions to surfing and the Waterman of the Year Award for his heroism in rescuing Brett.

EXCERPTED FROM THE BOOK *ALONE: LOST OVERBOARD IN THE INDIAN OCEAN* BY BRETT ARCHIBALD, © 2016 BY BRETT ARCHIBALD. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION OF LITTLE, BROWN BOOK GROUP, A DIVISION OF HACHETTE UK. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

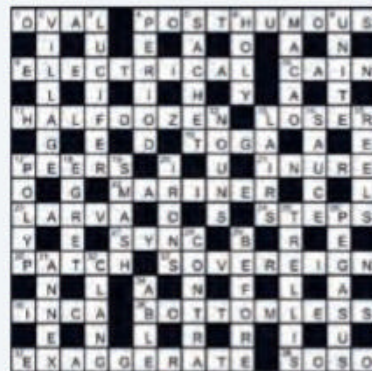
Puzzle Answers

From pages 150-152

CONTACT



CROSSWORD



SIX SUDOKU

1

6	5	3	1	4	2
4	1	2	6	3	5
2	3	5	4	6	1
1	6	4	2	5	3
3	4	1	5	2	6
5	2	6	3	1	4

2

4	1	5	6	2	3
3	6	2	4	1	5
5	2	1	3	6	4
6	4	3	1	5	2
2	3	6	5	4	1
1	5	4	2	3	6

3

4	2	5	6	1	3
6	1	3	4	5	2
3	5	2	1	6	4
1	6	4	2	3	5
5	4	1	3	2	6
2	3	6	5	4	1

4

2	5	4	3	6	1
3	6	1	5	2	4
1	4	6	2	5	3
5	2	3	1	4	6
6	1	5	4	3	2
4	3	2	6	1	5

5

3	4	6	5	2	1
2	1	5	6	4	3
1	5	3	2	6	4
6	2	4	1	3	5
5	3	2	4	1	6
4	6	1	3	5	2

6

6	3	5	2	1	4
2	4	1	3	5	6
1	5	2	6	4	3
4	6	3	1	2	5
3	2	4	5	6	1
5	1	6	4	3	2



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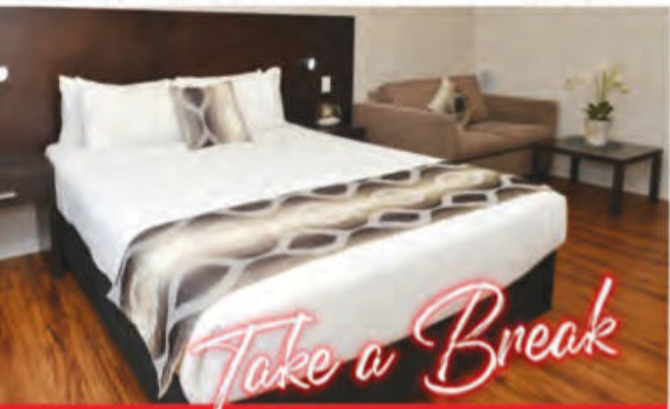
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 - Children* STAY FREE - (Max 2 adults & 2 children)

- Continental Buffet Breakfast • Unlimited WIFI access • Late check out at 12 Noon •
- ONE Free parking except Friday and Saturday @ \$30 per car per night (Subject to availability) •
- BUY ONE GET ONE free dinner voucher @ Vie Lounge & Eatery • (On Main selection, free on the lesser item, max 2 free when 2 meals purchased) •

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Take a Break

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Sunday to Thursday NZ \$ 140
Friday to Saturday NZ \$ 155



Family Fun

PREMIUM ROOM - up to 4 PAX
 Two Queen Bed or One Queen & One Single
 (Max 2 adults & 2 children)
NZ \$ 175

- FREE Cooked Breakfast • Unlimited WIFI access • Late check out at 12 Noon • FREE Car Park •



Movies

RD RECOMMENDS

Respect **Biopic**

Fans of the Queen of Soul won't want to miss *Respect* — a musical drama about the life of legendary rhythm and blues songstress Aretha Franklin. Starting out singing in her father's church, Aretha's talent is recognised early. But talent alone is not enough to turn her into a

star. With four albums under her belt, she is still virtually unknown to the world at large, until a word of advice lights a fire in her soul and she starts listening to herself — and writing and singing her own songs. Jennifer Hudson plays Franklin in a career-defining role.

COMPILED BY DIANE GODLEY



Reminiscence **Sci-fi Thriller**

Hugh Jackman stars as Nick Bannister, a private investigator of the mind in this sci-fi thriller. Living on the fringes of the Miami coastline, which is submerged under water, Bannister navigates the darkly alluring world of the past to help clients access lost memories. However, when he takes on a new client, Mae (Rebecca Ferguson), the simple matter of lost and found becomes a dangerous obsession. As Nick fights to find the truth of her disappearance, he unwittingly uncovers a violent conspiracy and must decide how far you should go to hold on to the ones you love.



Heaven

Mieko Kawakami

MACMILLAN

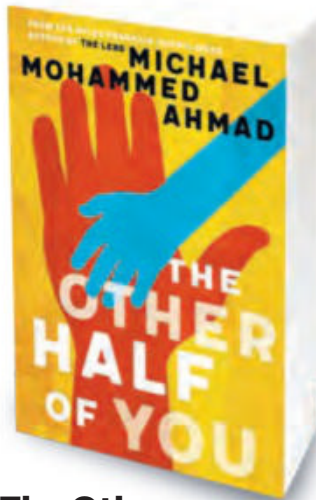
Mieko Kawakami's latest foray into new Japanese literary territory, *Heaven*, is told in the voice of a 14-year-old student who is relentlessly bullied by his classmates for having a lazy eye. Suffering in resignation, the only person who understands what he is going through is a female student who is also subjected to similar torment. The two become friends, meeting in secret and taking solace in each other's company. Until they are found out... A profound yet heartbreaking novel.

Listening Still

Anne Griffin

MACMILLAN

Jeanie Masterson has a special gift. She can telepathically communicate with the recently deceased – a gift passed on through the generations. This gift has allowed her family's undertaking business in Ireland to flourish. However, so as not to upset the living, her father often censors what the dead have said – something Jeanie has always been uneasy about. When she finishes school, she has the chance to start a new life in London with her boyfriend, but ties to the family business are hard to loosen. A captivating story.



The Other Half of You

Michael Mohammed Ahmad

HACHETTE

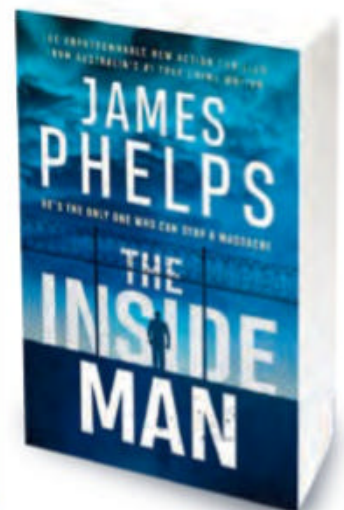
From the Miles Franklin-shortlisted author of *The Lebs*, Michael Mohammed Ahmad's new novel reprises the character Bani Adam. Bani knows what's expected of him as the son of Arab migrants – to marry the right kind of girl. But as the first of his Australian Muslim family to go to university, he sees there is an alternative way. A moving and timely novel about balancing the complexities of modern love with the demands of family, tradition and faith. A love story with a difference.

The Inside Man

James Phelps

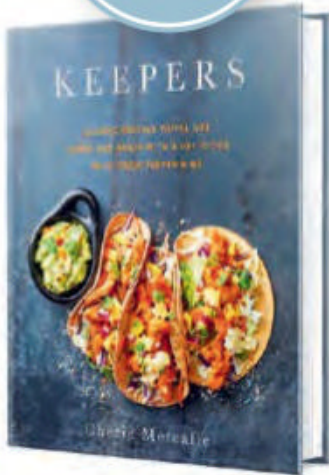
HARPERCOLLINS

Bestselling true crime writer James Phelps's extensive knowledge of prison conditions makes his first fiction book as gritty and frightening as a prison yard. Convicted of murder, young army engineer Riley Jax is thrown into a pit of murderous bikies, drug addicts and corrupt guards, and forced to learn a different set of survival tactics. Meanwhile, on the outside, international authorities are confounded by a series of church bombings by terrorists. An intense and totally gripping action thriller. *M.Egan*





Non Fiction



Keepers

Cherie Metcalfe

ALLEN & UNWIN

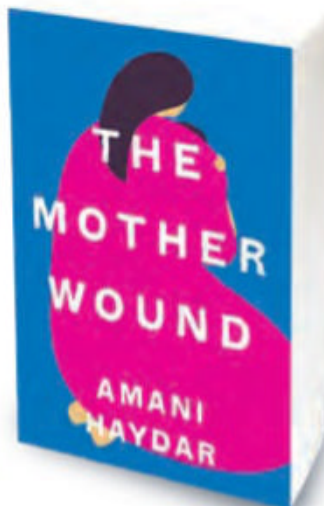
Want to take your meal repertoire to the next level? Created with heart by New Zealand chef Cherie Metcalfe of the Pepper & Me spice and condiment range, *Keepers* features popular recipes that pack a punch when it comes to flavour. With meals that put an emphasis on sharing, they also rely on her secondary business – although alternatives are given to create your own sauce/grind/rub from scratch. From Brekkie Tacos to Lamb Tagine, Metcalfe provides an array of light meals and hearty dishes to sink your teeth into.

The Mother Wound

Amani Haydar

PAN MACMILLAN

In 2015, award-winning artist, lawyer and mother Amani Haydar suffered the unimaginable. Her mother died in a brutal act of domestic violence perpetrated by her father. Over the past six years, Haydar has re-evaluated her parents' relationship and her childhood. As a lawyer, she examines the holes in the justice system in Australia – especially when abuse complaints by Muslim women are often seen as a Muslim problem rather than a gender problem. *The Mother Wound* is a powerful memoir filled with the hope of inspiring change.



Beyond Alice

Tanya Heaslip

ALLEN & UNWIN

Up until 1975, 12-year-old Tanya Heaslip had only ever known the great wide expanses of the outback. Educated by the school of the air, she rarely leaves the isolation of her family's massive property, until she is torn away from the freedoms of desert life to attend a strict boarding school in Adelaide, some 1600 kilometres away. Tanya struggles to adjust, but eventually the other boarders become her family and she survives by writing and telling stories about her family life in the outback. Warm, humorous and uplifting.



Podcasts

**The Little Heroine of Castlewood**

First, 14-year-old Karen Hartsock fought an inferno to save the lives of her brother and sisters. Then she fought to save herself. Don't miss this exceptional story about the bravery and unselfishness of a teenage girl caught in the most terrifying of circumstances.

**Finding Natasha**

Young British ballerina Debbie Gayle was chosen to go to the Soviet Union in 1974 and become the first Westerner to train at the world-renowned Kirov ballet academy. But the dream takes a near deadly turn. Now Debbie's son revisits the past to uncover what happened to his mother, and how she was rescued.

**The Line**

A group of US Navy SEALs break ranks and accuse a highly-decorated officer of murder in Iraq, thus leading to the biggest war crimes trial in a generation. Through conversations with members of elite special operations units, this series explores how blurred the line between right and wrong can become in war.

**Storyline Online**

This site isn't strictly an audio book service. Instead, it features videos of actors like Chris Pine and James Earl Jones reading popular picture books for children and showing the illustrations. For young children who might miss the pictures in an audio book, this site offers some excellent options.



Audio Book

HOW TO GET PODCASTS To listen on the web: In a search engine, look up 'The Line', for example, and click on the play button. **To download:** Download an app such as Podcatchers or iTunes on your phone or tablet and simply search by title.

TO LISTEN TO RD TALKS GO TO

www.readersdigest.com.au/podcasts and click on the play button.



THE GENIUS SECTION

*Sharpen Your
Mind*

GRAB A ROPE

*The benefit can be almost as
much mental as it is physical*

BY *Lindsay Bottoms*

FROM **THE CONVERSATION.COM**

WHILE MANY OF US may remember skipping as something we did as children, the pastime has regained popularity during the pandemic as a way of keeping fit.

Not only is skipping a fun, affordable and portable form of exercise, it also has many benefits for our health and fitness. Here are just a few reasons why skipping is such a good form of exercise.

1 IT IMPROVES CARDIO- VASCULAR FITNESS

Skipping has long been used by boxers as a form of training to help improve their footwork and general conditioning.

Skipping will cause an increase in heart rate and breathing similar to if you went jogging. If you were to skip for ten minutes every day, you would create adaptations to your body that are beneficial to cardiovascular

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

health, such as lowering blood pressure and reducing resting heart rate.

Skipping will also increase your cardiorespiratory fitness which essentially means your body becomes more efficient at taking up and using oxygen.

Research has shown that cardiorespiratory fitness is linked to improved health and longevity. Improved cardiorespiratory fitness has been shown to reduce blood pressure, reduce inflammation in the body and lower chances of developing diabetes and many other chronic diseases.

2 IT'S A FULL BODY WORKOUT

Skipping is a full body workout which uses your abdominal muscles to stabilise the body, your legs for jumping, and your shoulders and arms for turning the rope. It therefore provides an all over workout rather than just isolating one portion of the body.

Full body workouts increase muscle tone, which will help with all daily activities, and increase our resting metabolism, which helps us burn kilojoules even while resting.

3 IT IMPROVES COORDINATION AND MOTOR SKILLS

Skipping involves coordination to time your jump with the rope. Research has shown that it improves coordination, balance and basic movement skills in children. These are important fitness components for later in life as they reduce our chances of trips and falls.

There are so many different exercises you can do with the rope and each one requires different coordination to complete the exercise. This may help exercise your brain as well.

4 IT INCREASES BONE MINERAL DENSITY

Skipping involves making impact with the ground with every jump. These impacts cause our bones to remodel themselves to become stronger, thus increasing bone density. Bone density can be a benefit later on in life, when it naturally begins to decrease.

Higher bone mineral density makes you less likely to break a bone or develop osteoporosis as you get older. Hip fractures are a major cause of morbidity and mortality in older people, leading to loss of independence and a huge economic burden. Improving bone density and balance throughout your life reduces the chances of trips and falls later on.

5 IT INCREASES SPEED

Because skipping requires fast movement of the feet and arms, it's considered a plyometric exercise. This is where the muscles exert maximum force in short intervals of time, with the goal of increasing power.

Plyometric exercise is used in the sporting world to increase an athlete's speed. A lot of exercises, such as jogging, only improve cardiovascular health - whereas skipping has the added benefit of improving speed

READER'S DIGEST

as well. Daily skipping may help you run quicker than before.

6 IT'S TIME EFFICIENT Skipping offers many health benefits that may be achieved in a short period of time. Because it's a full body exercise that requires speed and coordination, you could argue that it's a form of high intensity interval training (HIIT).

HIIT exercise is where you have short bouts of high intensity efforts followed by a short rest interval. This is repeated several times. HIIT has been shown to produce higher levels of cardiorespiratory fitness in comparison to traditional endurance training.

It's also more time efficient, as you can perform exercise over a shorter period. This is why HIIT training has become the most popular workout worldwide.

Skipping is easily adaptable, and can be a high-intensity workout depending on the effort and power a person puts into their training.

7 IT'S ENJOYABLE One of the most important points we need to consider to help us change our exercise habits is that what we do needs to be enjoyable to us. One of the biggest barriers for people when it comes to sticking with exercise is enjoyment. And research shows enjoying exercise is critical for helping us change our exercise habits and continue exercising.

The great thing about skipping

is that there are so many different ways you can jump and hop over the rope. You can create a varied workout which helps maintain your enjoyment.

However, it's worth noting that skipping can put a lot of force on our lower limbs when we land. Though this improves our bone mineral density, it can lead to lower-body injury, especially if we're not used to this force. But different jumping styles, a soft surface and good pair of trainers can help ease force and reduce chance of injury. As with all types of exercise, it's good to build up duration gradually. This will help minimise injury.

Overall, skipping could be a very beneficial form of exercise. Not only does it improve many important aspects of our health – including cardiovascular health and bone density – but it's also affordable, portable and doesn't require much space. **R**

Lindsay Bottoms is a Researcher in Exercise and Health Physiology at the University of Hertfordshire.

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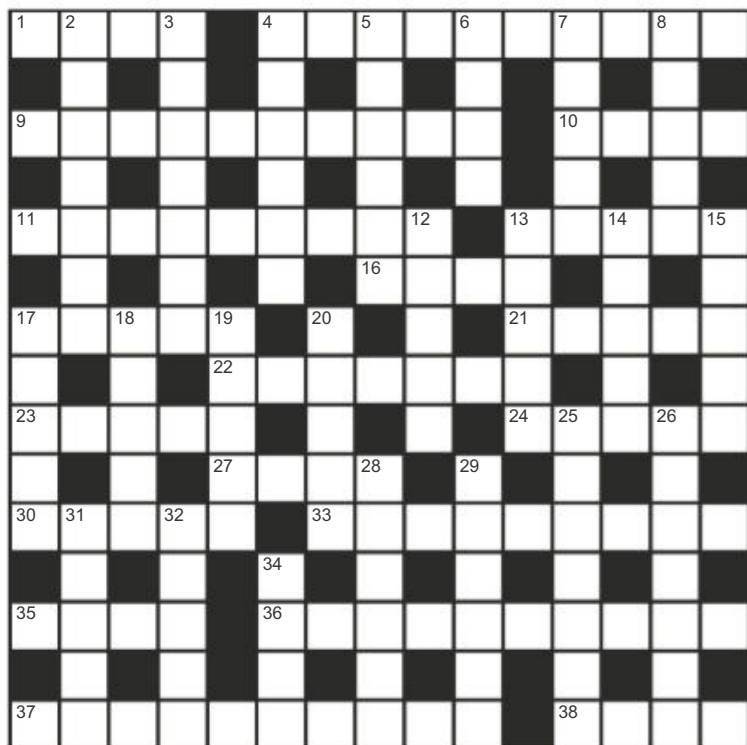
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PUZZLES

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 139.



ACROSS

- 1** Egg-shaped (4)
- 4** Occurring after one's death (10)
- 9** Kind of engineer (10)
- 10** First son of Adam and Eve (4)
- 11** Six (4-5)
- 13** Also-ran (5)
- 16** Garment of ancient Rome (4)
- 17** Contemporaries (5)

- 21** Accustom (5)
- 22** Sailor (7)
- 23** Caterpillar (5)
- 24** Paces (5)
- 27** Harmonise (4)
- 30** Plot of ground (5)
- 33** Monarch (9)
- 35** Old Peruvian (4)
- 36** Immeasurably deep (10)
- 37** Overstate (10)
- 38** Indifferent (2-2)

Crosswise

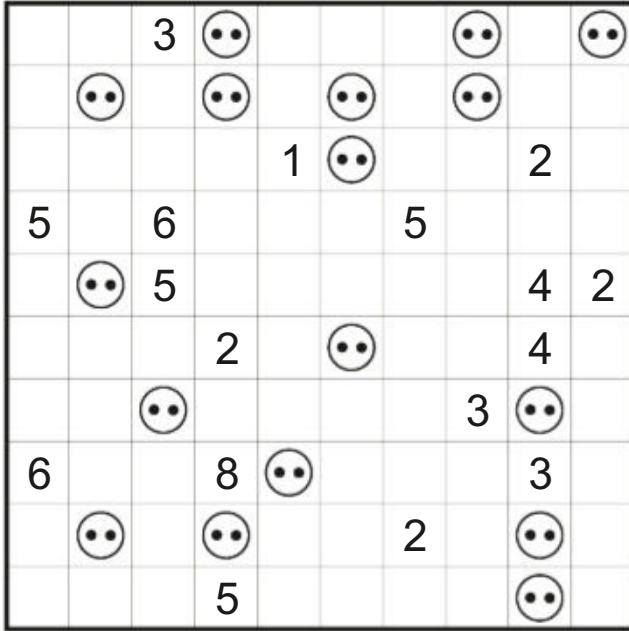
Test your general knowledge.

DOWN

- 2** Small community (7)
- 3** Satan (7)
- 4** Portion of time (6)
- 5** Small bag (6)
- 6** Consecrated (4)
- 7** Former Portuguese territory in S China (5)
- 8** Join (5)
- 12** Names for things (5)
- 13** Dens (5)
- 14** Gravy (5)
- 15** Staggers (5)
- 17** Coral builder (5)
- 18** White heron (5)
- 19** Shatter (5)
- 20** Golf clubs (5)
- 25** Lattice (7)
- 26** Winged horse (7)
- 28** Against (6)
- 29** Previously (6)
- 31** Addition (5)
- 32** Loud, resonant sound (5)
- 34** Having the skill (4)

Puzzle Answers

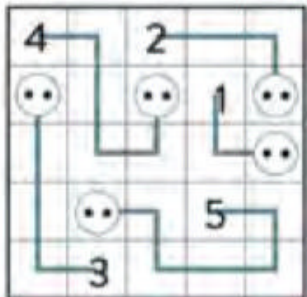
PAGE 139



Contact How to play:

Draw a line from each number to an outlet. Each line should pass as many empty squares as the number indicates. No square remains empty, and no outlet remains unused.

EXAMPLE:



BRAIN POWER
brought to you by



"Write, Erase, Rewrite"

SIX SUDOKU

Puzzle Answers
PAGE 139

1

				4	
			6		5
		5			
6	4				
4	1	5			
5			3	1	

How to play

Insert the numbers 1 to 6 just once in each a) row, b) column, c) bold outlined area and d) white or grey rectangle.

2

3					5
5	2			6	
	4		1		
		6		4	
				3	6

3

		5	6		
	1				
3					4
	4			2	
		6			

EXAMPLE:

1	2	6	5	3	4
3	5	4	1	2	6
6	4	2	3	5	1
5	1	3	6	4	2
2	3	1	4	6	5
4	6	5	2	1	3

4

		4		6	
3					
				5	
	2				
	1				
		2	6		

5

					1
		5			
		3	2		
4					

Beware!

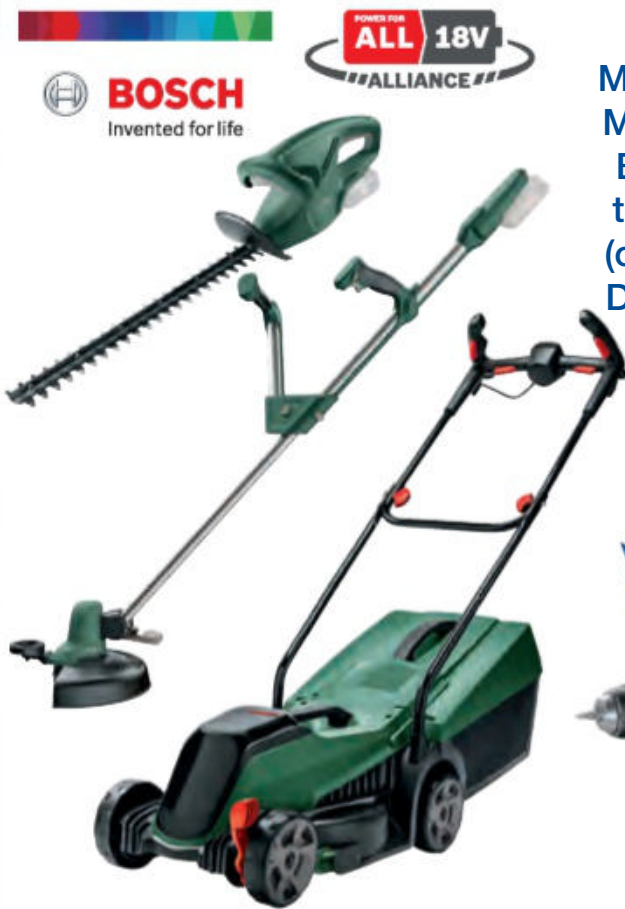
The bold outlined areas are no longer 2x3!

6

					4
2				5	
			1	2	
		6			

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For your chance to win, simply tell us in 25 words or less why you trust Bosch. To enter, visit the giveaway page at www.homeoftrustedbrands.com.au

*Full terms and conditions can be found online. Entries close August 31, 2021.

TRIVIA

Test Your General Knowledge

1. Actor Morgan Freeman turned his 50-hectare property into a sanctuary for what species recently labelled “the most important living beings on Earth”? **2 points**

2. What is the name given to Indian food cooked over charcoal in a clay oven? **1 point**

3. How many soccer players should be on the field at the same time? **1 point**

4. Where in our solar system might it rain diamonds? **1 point**

5. What writing implement can be made out of eggshells? **2 points**

6. How long is New Zealand’s Ninety Mile Beach?

- a) 90 miles (145 km)
- b) 104 miles (157 km)
- c) 55 miles (88 km)

1 point

7. Who has won more tennis grand slam titles, Venus Williams or Serena Williams? **1 point**

8. In several parts of the world, adherents of what religion have practised *langar* – feeding those in need – throughout the pandemic? **2 points**

9. Heron (Hero) of Alexandria invented the first vending machine in the first century CE. What did it dispense? **2 points**

10. Asian elephants are pregnant for 18-22 months. True or False? **1 point**

11. Which disease, affecting roughly 422 million people globally, did Canadian researchers recently cure in mice? **2 points**

12. What German vehicle once favoured by hippies will be available in an electric form in 2023?

1 point

13. Where is the world’s largest collection of tropical orchids to be found? **1 point**



14. Which European general was attacked by rabbits, forcing him to retreat from a hunt? **2 points**

16-20 Gold medal **11-15** Silver medal **6-10** Bronze medal **0-5** Wooden spoon

ANSWERS: 1. Bees. 2. Tandoori. 3. 22. 4. In the outer planets (Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune, Uranus). 5. Chalk. 6. C) 55 miles (88 km). 7. Serena Williams. 8. Sikhism. 9. Holy water. 10. True. 11. Diabetes (types 1 and 2). 12. VW Kombi. 13. National Orchid Garden in the Singapore Botanic Gardens. 14. Napoleon Bonaparte.



WORD POWER

Bright Lights

Here at Reader's Digest, we're always ready to look on the bright side. So this month we've chosen words related to light. Once you've had a chance to shine, turn to the next page for answers

BY Sarah Chassé

- 1. luminary** – A: heat lamp.
B: brilliant person. C: film projector.
- 2. gloaming** – A: dawn. B: noon.
C: twilight.
- 3. refract** – A: bend. B: scatter.
C: dim.
- 4. parasol** – A: glowworm.
B: sunshade. C: waxy glow.
- 5. translucent** – A: allowing light through. B: blocking light.
C: producing light.
- 6. scintillate** – A: polish until glossy.
B: extinguish. C: give off sparks.
- 7. beacon** – A: guiding light.
B: camera flash. C: sunbeam.
- 8. scone** – A: unit of renewable electricity. B: light fixture.
C: firework launcher.
- 9. incandescent** – A: white-hot.
B: candlelit. C: reflective.
- 10. heliotropic** – A: turning towards the sun. B: tan.
C: near the equator.
- 11. diurnal** – A: in a shaded area.
B: twice a day. C: active in daytime.
- 12. foxfire** – A: controlled burn.
B: glow from a fungus.
C: fire involving gases.
- 13. filament** – A: flickering ember.
B: wire in a light bulb.
C: constellation.
- 14. spectrum** – A: total eclipse.
B: band of colours. C: light transmitted by a cable wire.
- 15. effulgent** – A: flashing intermittently. B: fading to black.
C: shining brilliantly.

Answers

1. luminary – (B) brilliant person. Her photographic memory has helped Barbara become a luminary in the world of bridge.

2. gloaming – (C) twilight. As I walked in the grey gloaming, I heard an owl hooting in the distance.

3. refract – (A) bend. The sunlight refracted through the prism in the window, splashing tiny rainbows on the walls.

4. parasol – (B) sunshade. In addition to wearing SPF 50 daily, Lorraine often carries a parasol.

5. translucent – (A) allowing light through. Cook the onions until they're translucent, removing them before they brown.

6. scintillate – (C) give off sparks. When the campfire starts to scintillate, we can settle in for an evening of sing-alongs and stories.

7. beacon – (A) guiding light. Bring a good beacon to set up at your base camp.

8. sconce – (B) light fixture. Elijah looked at dozens of sconces before settling on ones he liked.

9. incandescent – (A) white-hot. A glassblower can turn incandescent liquid glass into a piece of art.

10. heliotropic – (A) turning towards the sun. Young sunflowers are heliotropic, facing east at dawn and following the light westward.

11. diurnal – (C) active in daytime. After working the night shift for a year, Anjali asked to switch to a diurnal schedule.

12. foxfire – (B) glow from a fungus. Certain kinds of mushrooms produce foxfire, an eerie blue-green light.

13. filament – (B) wire in a light bulb. Inventor Thomas Edison chose a type of bamboo for his electric light's filament.

14. spectrum – (B) band of colours. Ellen Jean's beautiful paintings use every hue in the spectrum.

15. effulgent – (C) shining brilliantly. The effulgent full moon hung high in the sky, illuminating the forest.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

5-9: Fair

10-12: Good

13-15: Word Power Wizard

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- 1280 Watts



Bench Top Mini Oven with Grill

Only \$99 – saves you time, money, and energy

Using a standard oven to cook a meal for one, bake a tray of biscuits or reheat a pizza wastes a lot of energy and money. This compact 26H x 40W x 31D cm benchtop oven does the same job for much less – and it heats up in no time!

16 L Bench Top Mini Oven • BTOPO
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Cooks delicious grills.



Warms pizza, pies, & chips.



Makes magnificent melts...



... and heats yummy treats!

The tough, 15L capacity bag is detachable



A fold-out seat provides a handy place to rest!

Triple-wheel action

Shopping Trolley With Seat – triple-wheel action for climbing steps

You'll enjoy shopping so much more with this versatile trolley. The fold-out seat supports up to 75 kilos so you can rest at any time. And the trolley has a 15L bag capacity for shopping or other items – you can even remove the tough polyester bag and convert it to a trolley for moving small items around the house. It also has extra pockets to keep essentials handy, stair-



6 wheels - ideal for climbing stairs effortlessly

Features:

- Lightweight frame
- Easy-grip handle
- Outer pocket
- Large 15L capacity
- Fold-out seat
- 6 wheels, for easy stair climbing action

climbing wheels and folds from 100H x 45W x 36D cm to 54H x 45W x 21D cm for easy storage.

Climbing Shopping Trolley With Seat
 • **STDAS \$69 or \$23 x 3 mths**

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Good information can lead to safer driving – and this 18.5L x 7.5H x 4D cm unit displays everything from speed, tilt and direction to map coordinates, journey time and distance. There are alerts for speeding and fatigue, you can adjust the brightness for a clear view – and you can even choose exactly what you see. The display is also easy to use with the USB cable supplied and a simple suction mount for your windscreen.

Heads-Up Display • HDUP
\$119 or \$29.75 x 4 mths

Perfect for on-road or off-road 4WD!



Keep an eye on your speed, kilometres, and direction – without ever taking your eyes off the road!

Uphill slope display



Perfect for on-road or off-road 4WD!



- Speed
- Tile Left
- Tile Right
- Driving Direction
- Clock
- Altitude
- Voltage
- Longitude and Latitude
- Driving Time
- Fatigue Driving



▲ Venetian Mask

Journey to the city of canals and celebrate Carnevale di Venezia with an iconic Venetian mask. Your **Counted Cross Stitch** kit includes 16-count white Aida fabric, pre-sorted cotton thread, needle, chart and instructions. 42 x 48 cm.

• 65909 \$64.95 or \$21.65 x 3 months



◀ Poppy Field Cushion

An appealing cushion front kit worked in cross stitches on painted canvas, this striking design will add a delightful accent to your home interior. Your **Needlepoint** kit includes design painted in colour on 4.5-mesh Sudan canvas, acrylic yarn, needle and instructions. 40 x 40 cm.

• 66006 \$49.95 or \$24.98 x 2 months

▼ Mandala-Style Throws To Crochet

Everyone loves to crochet mandalas! These stunning afghans are works of art and include both squared-up and round patterns. Discover 15 mandala throws to crochet no matter your skill level, from a simple square with self-striping yarn to stunning cables and textured projects. 64 pages.

• 65807 \$26.95



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Carry
all your
essentials!



Red

Compact Leather Zip Phone Bag

Perfect for a night out, this 19H x 9W x 3D cm leather bag with adjustable strap features a compartment for your phone, a zipped accordion-style card section as well as a zipped section for cash. Choose red, black, or taupe.

Compact Leather Zip Phone Bag • PHONH
\$29.95ea



Taupe



Black

**Handy
zippered card
section**

Colourful Paper Napkins – with Australian birds and exotic flowers

Brighten up your parties and barbecues with these decorative paper napkins. The birds are all native Australian favourites – kookaburras, superb fairywrens, cockatoos and rainbow lorikeets – plus exotic flowers – poppies, lavender and gorgeous roses in two shades of pink. You'll receive one packet of 20 in each colourful design, 160 in total.

Handy,
attractive
and
practical,
they're also
great value.

**Aussie Birds
And Flowers
Serviettes**

• AUBFS
\$19.95

Set of 8



Feature your
favourites

Dispenses the right amount of liquid soap every time

TOUCH FREE WITH MOTION SENSOR!

Automatic Soap Dispenser

– the most hygienic choice

These days, when we're so conscious of washing our hands, you'll appreciate the hygiene of this no-touch dispenser. Liquid soap flows into your hand automatically and you can set the amount you need to clean thoroughly without waste.



Easy to fill!
Perfect for kitchen, bathroom, laundry



Powered by 4 x AAA batteries (not supplied) and holding 350 ml, it measures 20H x 11W x 7.5D cm and is very easy to fill. The sleek design in gleaming stainless steel will also complement your kitchen or bathroom.

Auto Soap Dispenser
• ATSD \$19.95

\$2

Postage
on your entire order!

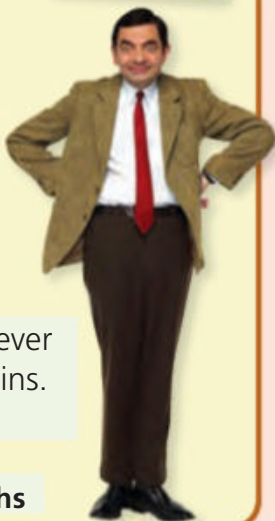
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BEAN'S BRILLIANT BOXSET (Remastered)

4 DVDs



Get set for a whole bunch of crazy adventures with the peculiar but lovable Mr Bean. With his faithful teddy by his side and a zany cast of characters, Mr Bean sets off on a series of hilarious escapades, causing disruption wherever he goes. 4 DVDs, 453 mins.



SUBTITLES

• MBEANO
\$39.95 or \$19.98 x 2 mths

LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR THE COMPLETE SERIES (1972)

You can choose your friends, but whether you live in a suburban semi or a mansion, you can rarely choose your neighbours... *Jack Smethurst* and *Rudolph Walker* star in this hugely popular series with a comic spin on racism, politics and general childish antagonism. Includes the unscreened pilot episode, Series 1-8, 1972 Christmas Sketch, 1973 New Year Special and 1973 Feature Film. 9 DVDs, 24 hrs.

• MLOVEH
\$109 or
\$27.25 x
4 mths



9 DVDs

**2-in-1
night light and
wireless charger**



**Rechargeable battery
- no messy cords!**



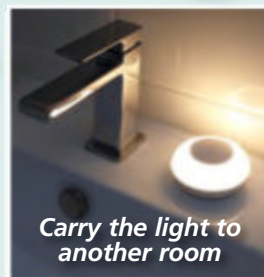
**Cool or warm light with
adjustable brightness**

Night Light with Wireless Charger – perfect for your bedside

The perfect bedside companion, this clever device can charge your compatible phone wirelessly as you sleep – and, if you should wake in the night, you can simply touch the 8 cm light to activate a reassuring soft glow. Very contemporary in design, it measures 21.5 x 8 cm and is powered by the USB cable (supplied). You can even remove the light and carry it around or hang it nearby when you're in another room. *Phone not included.*

Night Light With Wireless Charger
• NLIC \$39.95

**Detachable
portable
night light**



**Carry the light to
another room**

Bluetooth Cassette Player – a new way to enjoy old favourites

If you love 70s and 80s music, chances are your favourite albums are on cassette. Now you can discover them all over again with help from the latest technology. This 11 x 8.5 x 3 cm portable cassette player automatically searches for and connects to Bluetooth headphones or a sound system up to 10 metres away. It also has a regular headphone jack and cable headphone is also included. Powered by the adaptor supplied or two AA batteries (not included), it brings great music back to life. *Bluetooth speaker and cassettes not included.*

Bluetooth Cassette Player • BLCAP
\$59 or \$29.50 x 2 mths



**Bluetooth to your Bluetooth
speaker or headphones**

Removable
tea infuser
included

Digital Kettle With Tea Infuser

– a choice of 5 temperatures

From 80°C for green tea to 100°C – with this 1.2 litre kettle you can preselect the perfect temperature for your favourite drinks. The infuser makes brewing easy and you can even enjoy your second and third cups as much as the first as it keeps drinks hot for up to 40 minutes. The digital keypad is easy to use and the glass and stainless steel kettle is stylish for the table.

Digital Glass Kettle • DGKT
\$69 or \$23 x 3 mths

Great
features



Brewing your favourite beverage and keeping it hot has never been this easy!

Only \$2 Postage! - Quote code RM18S when ordering

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on your entire
order!

▼ A Piece Of Pride! Original 34 Jigsaw Puzzle

A hilarious Wasgij jigsaw puzzle to test even the most skilled puzzler. The picture on the box is only a clue. 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle. 68 x 49 cm.

• 64966 \$34.95



◀ Orchid Diamond Painting

Easy, relaxing and super fast, tiny "diamonds" are placed on a pre-printed fabric with an adhesive surface, using a special stylus.

Your **Diamond Painting** kit includes quality colour printed fabric, acrylic facets sorted by colour, stylus, wax caddy, craft tray and multi-lingual instructions. 50 x 40 cm.

• 65501 \$49.95 or \$24.98 x 2 months

Extra Light Slip-On Casuals – breathable, cushioned comfort



Gabbeni

When you slip into these good-looking shoes you'll feel you could walk for miles! The jersey fabric uppers have elastic inserts for a perfect fit and the insoles are generously padded to provide cushioning for your ankles and knees. They're very light – and even the tough, slip-resistant soles are flexible for extra comfort. Very versatile in blue and white, they're perfect for everyday wear.

Slip On Trainers

• SLOTR
\$39.95



Light-weight shoes with strong soles!

Perfect for everyday wear

Euro Sizes	36	37	38	39	40	41
Australian Fractional Sizes	5	6	7	8	9	10

Delightful Dachshund Planter – such a cute idea!

The dachshund is one of Australia's favourite breeds – and now you can enjoy its cuteness without feeding, walks or mess! This 51L x 17W x 30H cm polyresin planter perfectly captures the distinctive long body, short legs and sweet little face. It also makes a great home for small plants and flowers. And, just like the real thing, it can give you lots of pleasure indoors or outside. *Plants not included.*

Sausage Dog Planter

• SDPLT \$59 or
\$29.50 x
2 mths



Unique outdoor feature



Perfect for flowers, plants or herbs

Adorable Dachshund Planter will add instant charm indoors or out!



Blissful warmth and colour

Luxurious Faux Fur Scarf – pull-through design for warmth

Chic, warm and easy to wear, this sumptuous scarf will add a touch of glamour to any outfit. Simply pull one end through the hidden slit and it will stay prettily in place. The polyester faux fur is both stylish and incredibly cosy and the fashionable shade of violet will add a welcome splash of colour. 88 cm long and 13 cm wide, it's a very elegant way to keep out the cold.



Faux Fur Scarf • FFPTS \$14.95

Stays in place!

Only \$2 Postage! - Quote code RM18S when ordering

\$2 Postage on your entire order!

BANJO PATERSON'S THE MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER

THE COMPLETE SERIES (1994)



14 DVDs

An epic saga of love, loyalty, courage and determination! Set during the early 19th century, Banjo Paterson's sweeping dramatic and romantic adventure follows the trials and tribulations of the Man from Snowy River, Matt McGregor, and his family, as they confront new challenges and dangers in colonial Australia. Stars *Hugh Jackman* and *Olivia Newton-John*. Includes Seasons 1-4.

14 DVDs, 58 hrs. • MSNOWA

\$139 or \$34.75 x 4 mths



YELLOWSTONE SEASONS 1-3



4 DVDs

12 DVDs

Starring *Kevin Costner*, this brilliant Western series revolves around the Dutton family, led by John Dutton, who controls the largest ranch in the U.S. that is under constant attack by those it borders: land developers, an Indian reservation and America's first National Park. 4 DVDs, 431 mins. **SUBTITLES**

Season 3 (2020)

• MYELP \$39.95 or \$19.98 x 2 mths

Collection:

Seasons 1-3 (12 DVDs, 22 hrs) • MYELR \$74.95 or \$24.98 x 3 mths

Dog Walkers' Bag

– no pockets? no worries!

The perfect walking companion, this light and compact bag measures 16.5H x 2.5W x 8D cm – just the right size for essentials such as your phone, keys and wallet. If you're taking the dog, you can add treats, plastic bags and a ball. Made from tough, washable canvas, it has an adjustable cross-body or shoulder strap. A very handy alternative to pockets. *Accessories not included.*

Walkers Bag
• DOGWB
\$19.95



Also fits your phone



A lightweight way to keep your essentials organised



Perfect for:

- Phone & keys
- Sunglasses
- Dog treats
- Dog tidy bags

Medium Multi-Purpose

Kitchen

5-Pce Scissors Set – titanium coated blades!

Set of 5

Craft

Dressmaking

Large Multi-Purpose

Ergonomic grip handles for left- or right-handed use!

Sharp stainless steel blades

Includes an ideal pair of scissors for sewing, cutting, food prep and more!

The right scissors make everything from cutting paper to slicing pizza so much easier. This set includes 14 cm craft scissors; 19 and 21.5 cm general purpose scissors; 24.5 cm dressmaking shears; and tough 21 cm kitchen scissors with openers for jars, bottles and pull-top cans. Right or left handed, all have super-sharp stainless steel blades and ergonomically-shaped plastic handles for comfort.

Set of 5 Scissors • SCZRS \$29.95

Sleek TV Cabinet – an exciting contemporary look

Lighten up your whole sitting room with this new-look TV cabinet. The white melamine finish and solid pine legs add the sense of air and space yet it supports up to 40 kilos – and, at 95L x 29D x 46H cm, it's ideal for most televisions. Made from particle board and easy to assemble, it also provides plenty of storage space with an adjustable open shelf and two roomy side cabinets. *Props not included.*

TV Cabinet

• TVCAB
\$99 or
\$24.75 x
4 mths



Stylish storage and display cabinet

Room for your multi-media, electronics and more

\$2
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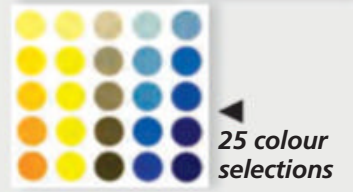
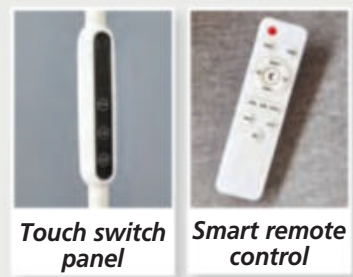
Only \$2 Postage! - Quote code **RM18S** when ordering

LED Multi-Task Lamp With Remote Control

Sleek and chic, this stylish floor lamp has loads of fantastic features making it the perfect light for illuminating all kinds of craft and needlework projects. Not only is it incredibly useful, but its slender, contoured design and glossy white finish are the perfect complement to a modern, fashionable interior.

49780 \$139 or **\$34.75** x **4** months

- Lightweight & easy to assemble
- Smart remote control
- Sleek LED head 20 x 6 cm
- Sturdy 22 x 22 cm base
- Hose neck with 360° adjustment
- Control panel with touch switch
- 25 light & brightness selections
- High powered daylight lighting for fine detail work
- 5 levels of light



25 colour selections

Quick Inflating Airbed With Built-In Pump – instant spare bed, inflates and deflates in minutes!

This queen-size air bed inflates quickly to provide ease of use and exceptional comfort. For even greater comfort, the velvety flocked surface feels warm to the touch and prevents sheets from slipping. Made from tough vinyl with a coil beam construction, it inflates in 5 minutes using the provided mains-powered pump. It then folds down into a carry bag for easy storage. Perfect for holiday guests!

Luxurious queen-size air bed for your guests

Inflatable Air Bed • HRAIR
\$69 or \$23 x 3 mths



*self
inflates!*



Easy carry bag

- Inflates in 5 minutes • Carry bag
- Quick and easy to inflate and deflate with a built-in electric pump • Flocked surface and pillowed headboard provide added comfort • Standard queen-size
- Supports up to 250 kgs



Space-Saving Drying Rack

– perfect for small spaces

When open, this rack holds up to 36 hangers so there's plenty of room to dry and air your clothes. At just 72 cm across it's also perfect for tiny apartments, courtyards and balconies. It even folds down to just 10 cm in diameter for easy storage. 167 cm tall, it is made from sturdy metal and plastic, supports up to 15 kilos – and the slip-resistant feet keep it stable on most indoor and outdoor surfaces.

Space Saving Clothes Airer

• **SSAIR \$49 or \$24.50 x 2 mths**

*Stores neatly
when not in use*



*Holds up to
36 hangers!*



*Quick to
set up and
pack away*



Cheekiness restored with **FAST CHILDREN'S FEVER RELIEF**



AUSTRALIA'S MOST TRUSTED PAIN RELIEF BRAND*

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1. Wong A et al. Clin Pediatr (Phila) 2001 June;40(6):313-324. 2. Mahar AF et al. Clin Pediatr (Phila) 1994 April;33(4):227-231. +Refers only to non-prescription paediatric analgesic and antipyretic medicines and is based on the liquid paracetamol formulation given at a dosage of 15 mg/kg.

This medicine may not be right for you. Read the label before purchase. Follow the directions for use. If symptoms persist, talk to your health professional. Incorrect use could be harmful. Seek medical advice for children under 3 months.

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