



Are you feeling sluggish after the Christmas festivities? Have you put on a few pounds over the festive season and not quite sure where to begin your “New Year” health and fitness campaign?

Help is at hand! Liz Marks, Henfield based Personal Trainer & Pilates teacher gives you 5 top tips to get you started.

You can improve your chances of long term success. Liz’s 5 top tips will help you to start 2011 with a plan of action that is achievable to you all.

Your 2011 Health & Fitness Plan starts here!

Tip 1: Exercise: Exercising is one of the most important activities you can do for your health and it is a good idea for you to find an activity that you enjoy and also fits into your daily life. We are very fortunate to have the Henfield Leisure Centre on our doorstep which offers a wide variety of exercise options for all ages and fitness levels, ranging from circuit training and spinning to short mat bowls and badminton. Their ‘New Year - New You’ package starts in January.

A balanced exercise programme should incorporate a mixture of the following:

- Regular cardiovascular exercise (30 minutes, 5 times a week if possible) that gets your heart pumping, which for some of you could be a brisk walk around our beautiful village
- Flexibility and stretching exercises to improve your posture
- Core stability and strengthening exercises e.g. Pilates, which help you improve the strength of your deep core stabilising muscles and maintain your bone density

Tip 2: Sleep: Good sleep is a cornerstone of good health... you can help yourself enormously by getting

to sleep by 10.30pm, sleeping in a room that is completely dark, avoiding stimulants in the evening (coffee, tea, sugar) and avoiding late night TV or computer work just before you retire to bed.

Tip 3: Hydration: It is important to keep ourselves well hydrated... it helps weight loss, concentration, digestion and with many other vital bodily processes.

Tip 4: Diet and weight loss: There are many books available on dieting and a huge amount of conflicting advice about losing weight! My suggestions for you all are to consider the following... eating regularly and not missing meals to reduce your calories (your body reacts to missing meals by reducing your ‘fat burning’ hormones); reduce the size of your portions; avoid fast food and try to eat your main meal before 7pm. Lastly... move your body! If you don’t like a structured exercise programme, then simply remain active.

Tip 5: Sunlight! Most of us would agree that we all feel better for having a daily dose of fresh air and this is often missing during the Christmas period. Sunlight is important for the maintenance of healthy bones and a healthy immune system. So get wrapped up warm and get your daily ½ hour walk during daylight hours.

By following these guidelines you will be well on your way to achieving a healthy start to 2011... the key is to have a plan, keep it simple and have fun in achieving your goals!

Liz Marks

“Pilates for Life” APPI Pilates teacher & Personal Trainer, Henfield Leisure Centre. www.elizabethmarks.co.uk Henfield 01273 495911.

