

# FEMINA

HEALTH PLUS

## IF ONLY YOUR BODY COULD TALK!

Ever wondered what's causing all those itches, rashes and creaks? Avantika Bhuyan talks to the experts and decodes the secrets your body might be keeping from you



### STOP PUNISHING YOUR KNEES

Our sedentary lifestyle leaves our knees with almost no exercise, leading to slackening of muscles and weak joints. The best knee exercises are cycling and swimming. Before starting, warm up by walking around and start with fewer repetitions. Also, remember to bend at the knees when lifting something heavy off the floor.



### STOP SMOKING

Nearly 20 per cent of urban Indian women aged 25-30 are diagnosed with osteoporosis. Lifestyle habits like smoking are to blame, as are harmful diets which advocate cutting down on calcium and protein-rich diets. So, stop smoking. And increase consumption of milk, nuts, green vegetables and fruits, as the body absorbs calcium more easily from natural sources than from supplements.



### CHECK FOR HEPATITIS C

As the initial symptoms of Hepatitis C are fatigue, insomnia and digestive disorders, many people don't even know they have this liver disease till it progresses to a harmful stage. Make sure you don't share syringes, razors or toothbrushes with anyone.



### STOP REMOVING THE HAIR ON YOUR CHIN

And get tested for Polycystic Ovarian Disease (PCOD) instead. Women with PCOD tend to produce excessive amounts of male hormones which can lead to outbreaks of acne as well as unusual hair growth—typically, on the chin. PCOD is also one of the major causes of infertility.

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**body slam** **GET TO KNOW YOUR SKIN BETTER**  
Dermatologists say most women are ignorant about their skin type even today. So make it a point to find out your skin type and take care of it accordingly. If it is dry, has active acne and inflammations, stay away from scrubs as they are abrasive. Those with sun allergies should not use deodorants, cleansers and talcum powders as they can develop dark spots and itchy rashes. Also, avoid creams that have hydroquinone and its derivatives (usually found in fairness creams). Hydroquinone strips off the skin's outer protective layer to make it look lighter, making it exposed and vulnerable to infection.

**body slam** **VISIT A CLINIC IF YOU SNORE HEAVILY**  
Obstructive sleep apnea, which occurs in both overweight as well as thin people, can cause snoring. This happens when a part of the throat closes off at night, maybe for a few seconds, and blocks the air passage. When this happens, the oxygen level in the blood decreases. So you wake up with a heavy head, or could even fall asleep while driving. This could affect the brain and heart. If you're overweight, a simple way to combat the problem is to lose weight. Also, reduce alcohol intake and get your thyroid levels checked. If that doesn't help, visit a doctor and get a polysomnography (ie a sleep study) done.

**body slam** **EVALUATE HOW MUCH YOU SLEEP**  
Too much sleep can be an indication of depression, as can insomnia. If a sleep disorder lasts for more than 15 days, you should visit a counsellor for depression and anxiety. Sleep disorders cannot be solved by popping pills. For a more regular sleeping pattern, avoid a heavy dinner, get into bed at the same time every night, don't drink anything with caffeine at least two hours before you sleep and steer clear of night-time TV shows that over-stimulate your brain.

**body slam** **GET RID OF DANDRUFF**  
Falling dandruff can cause blepharitis, a condition in which the eyelids become inflamed, scaly and itchy. In order to soothe the eyes, wet a piece of cotton in lukewarm water and gently clean the lid margin. ■

**body slam** **GO EASY WITH THE BIG BAG TREND**  
Bags that weigh more than a kilo can cause backaches, muscle spasms, joint pains and headaches. Go for bags with wider straps that distribute the weight evenly. Walk with your shoulders straight and on the same level and regularly switch the bag from shoulder to shoulder.

—WITH INPUTS FROM DR ARJUN SETHI, SENIOR CONSULTANT WITH APOLLO HOSPITAL, NEW DELHI; DR RIMA MUKHERJI, PSYCHIATRIST, KOLKATA; DR NEERAJ JAIN, HONORARY SENIOR CONSULTANT WITH SIR GANGARAM HOSPITAL, NEW DELHI; DR SANJAY GUPTA, HEAD OF GUPTA HOSPITAL FOR RESEARCH IN REPRODUCTION, PUNE; DR SUNDEEP UPADHYAYA, RHEUMATOLOGY CONSULTANT WITH APOLLO HOSPITAL, NEW DELHI; DR RAJIV THUKRAL, ORTHOPAEDIC CONSULTANT WITH MAX HEALTHCARE, NEW DELHI; DR SHRICHAND PARASRAMANI, CONSULTANT DERMATOLOGIST AND LASER SPECIALIST AT LILAVATI HOSPITAL, MUMBAI; DR DEEPAK AMRAPURKAR, CONSULTANT GASTROENTEROLOGIST AND HEPATOLOGIST AT BOMBAY HOSPITAL, MUMBAI

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