



Spring ... the season of transition and renewal, of fresh beginnings. Do you want to let go of something? Try something for the first time? Achieve a special goal? Spring is your chance to stretch yourself, to reach for what you want. What do you want?



Walking is an ideal low impact aerobic exercise for all ages

If done regularly, walking can reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer, lower total cholesterol, raise healthy HDL cholesterol, and lower blood pressure. It also helps to maintain healthy bones and muscles, stabilise weight and blood sugar, improve immunity, boost energy, and relieve some of the stress in your life.

Better still, walking is inexpensive: all it takes is motivation, a bit of time most days, and a comfortable pair of shoes.

Many carers experience anxiety, depression, and back niggles. You can reduce these problems with regular exercise, sport, or other physical activities such as walking.

Spring is an ideal time to make a lifestyle change! To maximise the benefits of any aerobic exercise, you must sustain an activity for 20 to 60 minutes at each session.

Start a gentle walking program with a 10 minute workout, and gradually add two minutes a week until you reach your goal. Before you begin your walk, take a few moments to warm up by stretching major muscles. Then, if you would like to transform a leisurely stroll into a bona fide workout, follow these guidelines from famous marathon walker Ruth Artz:

- Take long strides using buttock muscles to propel you forward.
- Bend your arms slightly, swinging them as you walk.
- Stand up straight with your abdominal muscles tucked in.
- Maintain a pace at which you are breathing deeply but can still carry on a conversation,

although you would prefer not to.

- If your breathing becomes laboured and conversation difficult, you are working out too hard. Any time you feel out of breath or have any pain, slow down or take a break. If these problems persist, consult your doctor.

You don't have to train and look like an Olympic athlete to reap the health benefits of walking. Even a leisurely walk for 20 to 30 minutes a day is beneficial. If you don't have 20 minutes to spare, try for two 10 minute walks.

Just do it! The key to your success lies within yourself, so lace up your gym shoes, put one foot in front of the other, and voila! you have begun your own walking program for better health.

New Zealand Walking Holidays

www.coromandeldiscovery.co.nz

www.heaphytracknz.com

www.hollyfordtrack.com

www.kahurangiwalks.co.nz

www.marlboroughsounds.co.nz

www.ultimatehikes.co.nz

www.walkgisborne.co.nz

www.walknewzealand.com

**A reminder to
yourself that you count too!**

**Do you care for yourself as well as
you do for others?**

Soothing Smoothing



Yvonne Zimmermann of The Herb Cottage has been making face and body creams for years. Here is her recipe for a rich family cream that contains no chemicals, keeps well (especially in the fridge), and can be made from ingredients you may already have in the pantry. Choose herbs with the properties you most want in a face or body cream: healing, soothing, softening, toning, and/or cleansing. This is a fun activity by yourself or with friends or family. Find decorative label ideas for your special jars of cream at www.marthastewart.com (search for 'labels'). Try Martha's recipes for homemade lip balm!

Herbal Infusion

Gather different herbs to make an infusion: parsley, lettuce leaves, rosemary, aloe vera, lavender or violet flowers, comfrey, mint, cucumber skins, apple skins, chamomile flowers or tea bags, lemon balm and calendula flowers (any combination).

Place in a pot, cover with boiling water, stir, then simmer on low heat for at least 15 minutes. Turn stove off.

When liquid is cool, strain through sieve with muslin cover and discard herbs. Refrigerate your infusion until you are ready to use it.

Plant Properties

Aloe Vera Heals, soothes, softens. Use leaf gel.

Calendula Anti-inflammatory, healing, use flowers and leaves.

Chamomile Heals, soothes, anti-inflammatory. Use flowers.

Comfrey Heals, anti-inflammatory, astringent.

Use leaves and fleshy root.

Cucumber Soothes, softens. Use skin and flesh.

Lavender Soothes, cleanses. Use flowers.

Lemon Balm Heals, soothes. Use leaves.

Rosemary Tones, heals, soothes, astringent. Use leaves.

Other ideas for herbal infusions can be found at www.holisticonline.com

Lavender Herbal Heat Pack

Traditionally used to help release pain from sore joints, and relieve muscle tension and stress. Heat in microwave for several minutes, or place in a plastic bag and keep in your freezer to use as a cold pack. We have two to give away, from The Herb Cottage.



Deodorising Sachet

Hang in your wardrobe, bathroom or car or place in your vacuum cleaner. Available in four fragrances: lavender, frangipani, peach, or pine. We have four sets to give away!



Inquiries about Herb Cottage products can be made by email to yvonne@ixnz.com. Giveaway entry details are on page 11.

Making the cream

Bring some water to the boil in a large pot. Place another pot inside the first one to make a 'double boiler'.

Add:

2 1/2 tbsp vegetable or emulsifying wax (see suppliers, this page)

2 1/4 tbsp oils (try sweet almond, apricot, peach, calendula, or wheatgerm)

3/4 tbsp glycerine*

Simmer ingredients slowly for several minutes until almost boiling. Remove from heat. Count 8 tablespoons of herbal infusion into a small pot. Bring to boil, then remove from heat.

Run some cold water into the sink and add ice cubes from the freezer.

Place pot with oils into the sink and add herbal infusion.

Stir constantly for a few minutes until the mixture has cooled slightly.

Add 3/4 tablespoon of vodka or gin as a preservative.

Stir constantly now to combine ingredients as they thicken. This takes a bit of time.

When cream is quite thick, leave the covered pot sitting in

the cold water for awhile.

Transfer cream to the fridge to cool completely, then stir again. Refrigerate overnight, stir again, then transfer cream into jars with airtight lids (sterilise first if re-using old jars).

The cream is now ready to use and should last for about two months, as it is chemical free.

It is wonderful on your face and body ... soothing and healing for those with sensitive or troubled skin.

Add fragrance if you wish, and enjoy!

Homemade lip balm, infused with your favorite scented oils, will make your lips delicious while smoothing and softening them. Using essential oils (such as lime, lemon, tangerine, grapefruit, or peppermint), you can customise this basic recipe, which consists of unscented oil and wax. Recycle old lipstick tubes and balm jars, or buy from a specialist supplier such as www.aromaticsandmore.com

Ingredients 3 teaspoons grated natural beeswax; 5 teaspoons carrier oil (sunflower, castor, or jojoba); 6 or 7 drops essential oil; 1 teaspoon honey, for flavour.

1. Melt the beeswax and oil together in the top of a double boiler, stirring to combine. Remove from heat; add honey and essential oil. Mix thoroughly so the honey does not clump.

2. To add a little colour, stir in a tiny dab of lipstick with an iceblock stick or bamboo skewer. Pour the mixture into containers; let sit 20 minutes before covering or moving. For glossier lip balm, use 2 teaspoons wax and 8 teaspoons carrier oil.

Variation Peppermint-Eucalyptus Lip Balm Use 6 drops of peppermint essential oil and 4 drops of eucalyptus essential oil.

Variation Vanilla-Rose Lip Balm Use 10 drops of rose oil, also called rose otto, and 5 drops of vanilla oil, also known as vanilla absolute.



CARER TIP

Leave hand cream at different places around the house. I don't just care for my hands, but give myself shoulder, feet, and leg massages with it at times when I sit for awhile. This is very soothing.

B Simmonds, Hamilton

Suppliers

Glycerine Supermarkets, chemists

Oils Supermarkets, chemists, health food shops

Jars & Containers Recycle old ones! or see website below

Vegetable Wax

www.aromaticsandmore.com



Ho Ho Ho!

*Christmas is coming ... and it can be a tricky time of year for carers.
Start planning now so you can be of good cheer this year.*

If you're not sure the words 'happy' and 'holidays' automatically go together, you're not alone.

While others relax and indulge, family carers often find that Christmas is the season of extra work, extra stress, and extra health or support costs.

Don't let the holidays sneak up on you this year. Reflect on Christmases Past and consider what made them special ... or

especially difficult. How can you avoid or minimise the stressful bits, and have more of what you found relaxing, joyful, tasty or fun?

Consider your loved one's needs too. Noise, clutter, and interrupted routines can be distressing for people who are ill, or have conditions such as dementia.

Include your family member in the holiday preparations. Listen

to holiday music together. Hang decorations. Invite old friends around for afternoon tea, or an early meal.

Ask for help. Or pay for help, if you can. A few hours here and there can guarantee a well organised, peaceful holiday season.

Talk to care workers and respite services now so you can manage any disruptions to everyday routines. Here are other ideas!

SHARE

Write your Christmas cards well before the holidays. Don't make it a chore ... do a few each week, then post them together in mid December. A brief handwritten message is fine! Don't feel you have to write a letter to everyone, or write just one letter with news from the year and make copies to insert into your cards. Update your address book as you go. Have you thought of sending cards online this year? There are many free or low cost services. Here are options for e-cards and other ideas for the holiday season.



Design your own family Christmas stamps! Create stamps to match an occasion or your personality by uploading a favourite photo at NZ Post's website, www.nzpost.co.nz. You can then design your stamp and post it far and wide. From \$20.90 for a sheet of 20.

www.allthingschristmas.com
www.bluemountain.com
www.donnasholidaysentiments.com
Load this site into your Internet browser for continuous play Xmas music (45 songs)
www.free-christmas-cards-online.com
www.greetingcardinsanity.com
www.jacquielawson.com
www.scrapbookscrapbook.com
Download colour graphics and instructions and make your own cards
www.theholidayspot.com
Cards, carol lyrics, Christmas games, decorating ideas
www.thespiritofsanta.com



PLAN

Encourage everyone to be honest about what they want to do this Christmas. You may learn that your family don't really want to visit you every year, would be happy for you to come to them, or to have a year when everyone has a quiet Christmas on their own. What do *you* want to do this year?

Avoid tensions by reaching a compromise about holiday plans. Don't let one person have their way, or stick to traditions that are a lot of work or add to feelings of stress. Simplify menus and decorations; try dining out instead of cooking; buy readymade foods; ask others to do their share.

Start stocking up on books, DVDs, and little treats (relaxing tea, aromatherapy oils, favourite tipples, music, a new hammock). Think about how you might have breaks each day. Plan for some R&R instead of leaving it to chance.

Get enough sleep. Plan for late nights and early nights in advance so you can pace yourself over the holidays.

It's easy to 'self medicate' during the silly season. Do you really want to drink more, smoke more, eat more, or exercise less? Try to stick to your usual routines.

Breathing exercises can aid relaxation. If you are tense, breathe in to the count of four, then out to the count of five, relaxing your shoulders and tummy. Repeat until you feel calm.

SHOP

Gift-buying can be a hair-tearing holiday activity. Try to do your Christmas shopping early (in the first week of December or even in November). Buy gifts online so you can spend less time in

heaving shops. Make a list of the gifts you wish to buy before you go shopping (if you wait for inspiration, you may wander aimlessly around the shops for hours). Buy a few extras, such

as chocolates, in case you forget someone or have unexpected guests. Stick to your budget to avoid financial stress after the holidays. Would you enjoy making some gifts this year?

ACCEPT

If you and/or certain family members bicker all year long, you can be sure there will be tension at Christmas lunch. Be realistic ... don't expect miracles just because it's Christmas!

Avoid conversations that cause tension in your family. If politics is a touchy subject, steer conversations into neutral areas. If someone brings up a taboo subject, agree to change topics.

If you start to feel depressed, angry, impatient, or withdrawn, remove yourself from the situation. Have a rest ... watch a movie ... go for a walk ... phone a friend ... or just sit quietly with your family member. These simple things may quickly restore your equilibrium.



Win our monster gift box from Unilever worth \$200!
Family toiletries, pantry staples, and fun stuff. We have one to give away.

For give away entry details see page 11.

HOME COMFORTS

Peace Pillows were designed by an osteopath and are made from memory foam in New Zealand! Contoured for maximum support and comfort. We have three to give away! The pillows can be purchased for \$99 each at www.peacepillows.co.nz or phone 0800 1 PEACE



Today I carted a load of washing

up Everest...in my second best pinny

weighted with pegs

On the top
Light-hearted, laughing.
Having weathered the odd falling rock
I hung my washing (fluttering prayer flags
Vibrant coloureds and snowy whites)
Between two twigs to dry.

(Yes thanks, it's dry.)

I zigzagged down to base camp
To scrub potatoes
My neighbour parted her Persil white nets
To pass judgement with the time of day ...
"You look so tired," she chided,
"So peaky, so ... white!
NOT ENOUGH IRON IN YOUR DIET.
EAT SILVERBEET!"

I longed to tell her my amazing feat
I longed to tell the whole street
I climbed Everest today.

One day
The prayer flags
Of carers of the world
United under the label
NEVEREST
Will fly high on Everest.

By Mary-Lynn Boyes

It is only possible to live happily ever
after on a day to day basis.
Margaret Bonnano

"In the spring, at the end of the day,
you should smell like dirt."
Margaret Atwood

No matter how long the winter, spring
is sure to follow.
Proverb

"The world is mud-luscious and
puddle-wonderful."
e.e. cummings

"Be like the flower, turn
your face to the sun."
Kahlil Gibran

CARER TIP

I often have the grandchildren along when I am doing caring duties. I have found that their intermittent statements along with giving constant support made my brain buzz like a tin of bees! A neighbour suggested that I simply echo the children's chatter back to them. It does not tax the brain and they are very satisfied with this trick. Another tip she gave me is to blend fresh fruit in water and drink it, as I often don't have time to sit and eat fresh fruit. Some mixes were marvellous: apple, pear, lettuce leaves, and a little flax seed oil. A tasty energy booster during the day!

Meg Simmonds, Te Puke