

Health

Dr Michael Mosley said that the most sustainable changes are the ones we can slot into our lives quickly and easily. His simple ideas will help transform your health...

Small change, BIG benefit



When Dr Michael Mosley died last year, he left a legacy of health and wellbeing wisdom for us to live by. Here, we share some of his best advice and easy-to-adopt tips and habits.

Eat an apple a day

It seems there is truth in the old saying, 'An apple a day

keeps the doctor away'.

Dr Mosley said, 'We know the skin of apples is rich in fibre and flavonoids, and research has shown that apples feed the good bacteria in your gut and help stop sugar cravings.'

He also explained that flavonoids from fruit can increase the production of a molecule in our body called nitric oxide, which regulates blood pressure and maintains blood vessel health.

'Most of an apple's flavonoids lurk in or just under the skin,' said Dr Mosley. 'So, ideally, you should eat your apples unpeeled to gain the maximum benefits.'

Stand up regularly

This change is especially significant for those with more sedentary lifestyles,

'The average person sits on their bottom for nine-and-a-half hours a day and we aren't designed to be that way,' said Dr Mosley. 'Our ancestors would have been roaming around a lot more. We know from many studies

that sitting a lot is increasing our risk of heart attacks, strokes and other health issues, so get up and move around for a few minutes every half-hour.'

Dr Mosley suggested finding ways to slot more standing into your life, including standing on public transport or getting up every time you receive a phone call.

Breathe away anxiety

'Deep breathing is a perfect example of something that is simple, quick and completely life changing,' explained Dr Mosley, who recommended the 4-2-4 technique when you're feeling stressed.

'Slow breathing is an incredibly potent way of giving yourself a mild tranquilliser. You breathe in to a count of four, hold for two, then breathe out to a count of four. Do it for a minute and it slows your heart down and makes you feel less stressed.'

Take exercise 'snacks'

'The idea of exercise snacking is that you fit short periods

of exercise into your day. We think we have to do 30 minutes in one go but we don't,' explained Dr Mosley, who suggested fitting in short bursts of exertion throughout your day.

This might include going for a brisk 10 to 15-minute walk, running up and down the stairs a few times, or dancing enthusiastically to a couple of songs.

Exercise snacks can boost your energy, too. 'When you sit there lethargically, your blood sugars can go up and your blood pressure might rise, so getting up and moving pumps more oxygen into your brain and stirs you up,' said Dr Mosley.

Fast overnight

Research suggests that fasting overnight for 14 hours – known as Time Restricted Eating (TRE) – can help weight loss and reduce blood pressure, as well as improving sleep and blood sugar levels. It's thought it may lower your risk of heart disease, too.

'TRE switches on "repair"

mode in the human body,' explained Dr Mosley. 'Your body clears out old cells, and they are then replaced by new cells when you pick up eating again. Try having your last meal of the day by 8pm, and not eating again until 10am,' he said. 'You can drink water and, when you wake up, black tea or coffee.'

Eat SMASH foods

We know oily fish is good for our heart and brain health, thanks to omega-3 fatty acids, but it can boost your mood, too.

'Our brains need omega-3 fatty acids,' explained Dr Mosley. 'Studies have even shown that giving prisoners supplements which include omega-3 led to less violence.'

Dr Mosley said we would all benefit from including plenty of oily fish in our diets. 'Think SMASH,' he said. 'Salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines and herrings.'

• For more ideas, check out Dr Michael Mosley's books *Just One Thing – How Simple Changes Can Transform Your Life* and *4 Weeks To Better Sleep (Short Books)*.

Read it

Bigger Than the Moon: A Parent's Journey with Autism is a powerful story of how having a child diagnosed with autism transformed author Syreeta N Brown's life. Blending emotional depth with practical insights, Brown addresses the isolation parents often face and the systemic gaps in support, all while celebrating the unbreakable bond between parent and child and the lengths we will go to to protect them. £9.99, Whitefox Publishing.



OW Health SOS

I was collapsing every time I ate. What was wrong with me?

'A kiss could KILL ME'



From Caroline Cray, 24, address supplied

Spotting the ice-cream van on campus, my friends and I ran over.

'Ice cream sandwich, please!' I said.

It was our first week at university and everything felt exciting.

But after just a few mouthfuls of ice cream, I felt my tongue swelling, followed by a head rush and tunnel vision.

As my throat began to close up, I told my friend, 'I think I'm going into anaphylaxis.'

We'd been at school together, too, so she knew all about my allergies. Immediately, she gave me my EpiPen and called an ambulance.

Thankfully, after treatment, I was allowed home later that day.

I'd always been careful about my nut, peanut and sesame allergies, and hadn't had a reaction since I was two. But it reminded me to be even more cautious.

Only, the next day, after eating some crackers I'd had before, I found myself back in hospital.

Soon, I was reacting to all kinds of foods that had been absolutely fine previously. Even kissing my

boyfriend after he'd eaten proved near-fatal!

In the end, I had to move off campus and back home so my parents could keep an eye on me.

But when a family meal left me in intensive care for almost two weeks, I was sent to a specialist for tests.

The results showed I had a rare and chronic illness called mast cell activation syndrome, or MCAS, which causes repeated severe allergy symptoms.

The doctor told me the only thing I could safely eat was porridge made with a milk formula for babies

with allergies.

'Is that it?' I asked, devastated.

I thought about all the foods I loved and wouldn't be able to eat any more.

But now, I've got used to it. I'm on medication and doctors are trying to see if I can slowly reintroduce certain foods back into my diet, so I feel more hopeful.

And I haven't let my food restrictions affect my life.

I still go out to eat with friends – I just take my oatmeal and infant milk with me, much to the relief of the waiters!

Mast cell activation syndrome (MCAS)

• **What is it?** MCAS is a recently defined condition that causes severe allergic symptoms.

• **What are the symptoms?** These range from severe itching, swelling and vomiting, to anaphylaxis. Patients with MCAS can either develop symptoms spontaneously or after exposure to substances

to which they are allergic (for example wasp stings).

• **What's the treatment?** There is no cure available, and management is based on the avoidance of triggers, along with medication to help to control symptoms.

• **Where can I find out more?** Visit potsuk.org



Shop Spy
Aldi is making it easier than ever to keep bugs at bay with the launch of its super-affordable Vitawell Roots gummies range, which includes trending wellness must-haves and superfoods. Try Lion's Mane, which is thought to support the improvement of memory, focus and concentration, or Ashwagandha, widely thought to offer potential benefits including better sleep and helping to reduce stress and anxiety. £4.99 for 60, Aldi.