

1. Tired all the Time

Many of us feel bone-achingly tired occasionally, but usually a good night's rest is all that's needed to get back to normal.

But what if you feel tired all the time, however much sleep you've had and however relaxing your day? Doctors have now identified TATT as a genuine symptom of certain underlying health problems. Nobody should feel tired all the time and if they do, that means there is something wrong.

The first thing is to try and identify what is causing the extreme tiredness, together with your doctor.

The extreme tiredness could be caused by medication such as beta-blockers or anti-histamines, or a chronic lack of iron. Or it could indicate a quite serious health problem such as a thyroid problem, diabetes or post-viral fatigue syndrome.

If the tiredness comes from taking prescription medicines, it may be possible to reduce or change your medication.

If you or your doctor suspects a thyroid problem – and this is a particular risk for women over 50 – you can have a thyroid function test, and hormones prescribed to get the body functioning normally again.

Again, if diabetes is suspected, you can have a diabetes test and if confirmed, take immediate action. Symptoms of diabetes can include overweight, constant raging thirst and increased need to pass urine.

Treatments can include a strict diet and exercise regime for weight loss, tablets to reduce blood glucose levels and, as a last resort, insulin injections.

Post-viral fatigue is now a recognised condition and although there is no cure, the trick is to take things very gradually until the after-effects of the virus work themselves out of the system.

Whatever the cause, don't put up with TATT.

2. Sleep improves memory and learning

A new American study has found that a good night's sleep improves memory function, and also aids positive thinking.

The study, published in the American journal *Neuroscience*, discovered that sleeping helps memories to 'stick' in the brain, and increases learning ability.

It also appears that parts of the brain which control speed and accuracy are most active when people get a good night's sleep. At the same time, negative emotions such as stress and anxiety are damped down during sleep.

The results of the study, which investigated the role of sleep in a process called memory consolidation, found that memories and new information take time to establish themselves in the brain.

Margaret Thatcher was famously a 'short sleeper', supposedly getting by on three to five hours' sleep a night. But recent research coming from sleep laboratories suggests that is NOT a practice to emulate.

3. Eye exercises for better vision

About 80 years ago, the Bates Method for better sight without glasses, was developed. Now there is a new version of these famous eye exercises available for the technology age.

A DVD, accompanied by eye charts, takes you through a series of daily eye exercises designed to improve or reverse the kind of vision loss experienced in middle age.

From about the age of 45, most people with previously perfect sight become unable to read small print, maps such as A-Zs and instructions on food packaging. For most of us, the answer is reading glasses, but these do not, of course, improve actual vision.

The need for reading glasses to decipher small print also means you are in a (literal) blind panic when you have lost or mislaid your specs. So exercises which give you back your vision cannot be too highly recommended.

The exercises take around six minutes daily, and must be practised without glasses. For the method to work, you need to have two fully-functioning eyes, and previously perfect vision.

The method is not suitable for those with eye problems such as short sight, a lazy eye or a squint. Neither can it help medical problems such as cataracts or macular degeneration.

The Read Without Glasses method costs £19.99 for the DVD and charts, and is available from many high street stores and supermarkets, such as Tesco, Woolworths, Smiths and Sainsbury's. Also available online from www.withoutglasses.co.uk or by calling 01480 450 006.

4. Gum Disease and Smoking

By the age of 65, around 20 per cent of the non-smoking population no longer have any teeth of their own. But almost half of all smokers – 41 per cent – have lost all their teeth by this age.

The reason? Smoking exacerbates gum disease which results in damaged tissue and wobbly teeth which then fall out. Smoking encourages gum disease to develop as it interferes with natural healing mechanisms in the mouth.

The symptoms of gum disease are perpetually sore gums and an unpleasant taste in the mouth. Gengigel is specially formulated to combat gum disease and its active ingredient, hyaluronan, speeds up the healing of inflamed and damaged tissue in the mouth.

Gengigel is available either as a tube of gel or a mouth rinse. The gel costs £6.47 and the rinse, £7.99. Or, you can get it slightly cheaper online at www.oraldent.co.uk.

5. Natural Migraine Remedy

Migraine sufferers are all too painfully aware how debilitating attacks can be. And although strong painkillers will relieve the agony, they can also have very unpleasant side effects if used regularly, such as causing permanent liver damage or stomach bleeding.

There is a new natural remedy available for migraine which contains a host of herbal ingredients known to relieve migraine-type pain. The New Chapter Headache Relief is a potent blend of californian poppy, feverfew, rosemary, lavender, wintergreen and purple willow.

Tests with sufferers have already shown this remedy to be as effective as strong analgesics, but without the unwanted side-effects. It is not cheap, though, with prices starting at £14.99.

Available from most health stores, it can also be obtained online at www.wisofnature.com