THE WEEK

MAY 2020

SMART life

LIVE HEALTHY, STAY FIT

Quarantine **fitness**

Sustainable menstruation

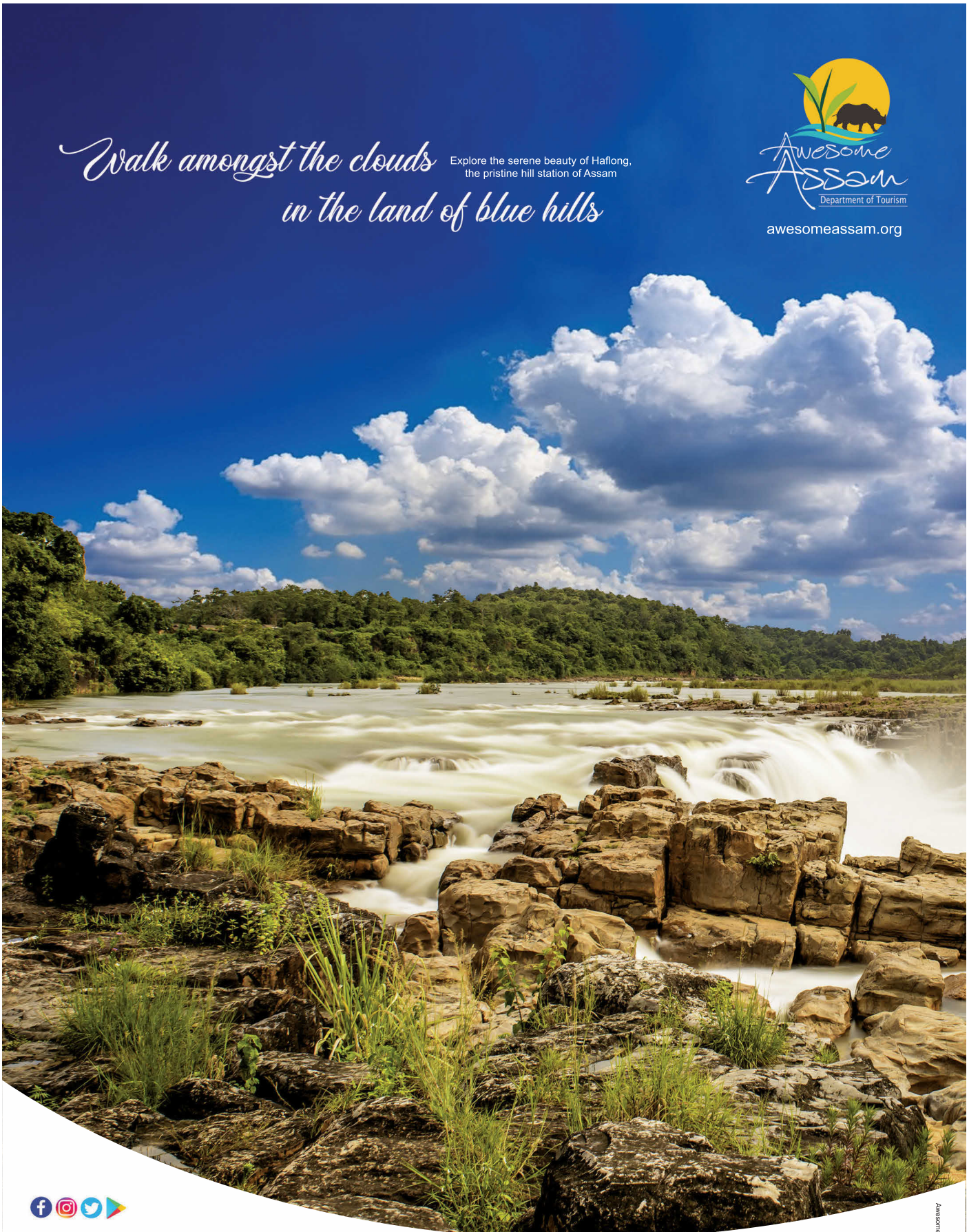
Understanding **sepsis**

One on one with **Chef Chinu Vaze**



Nidhhi Agerwal

Ready for action



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SMART life
LIVE HEALTHY, STAY FIT
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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

Confucius once said, "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." The lockdown may have flattened our spirits but it gave us space to introspect, take a breather and, probably, come out stronger. With quarantine trending on social media, many are trying to stay peachy amid the tension. From daily vlogs on skin care, cooking hacks and even long-forgotten hobbies, celebrities have made use of the opportunity to pick up new interests and, in the process, increase their fan following. Apart from the glitterati, athletes are also into vlogging quarantine workout and diet regimes. Head to Fit Bit to read about how some of the Red Bull athletes are spending their time during the lockdown. From their diet to even their reading list, we have got it covered.

Apart from the panic associated with the virus and the frustration of being stuck at home, this period also brought about a lack of fresh food supplies. Although many have spoken about sustainable living in the past, it is only now that most people got the complete essence of the concept. Read about gourmet chefs who have made sustainable cooking their mantra and how they have reduced their carbon output by acquiring food locally. And it is not just cooking, we also have a story on sustainable menstruation—menstrual products which do not produce waste.

In this issue, we have our cover girl Nidhhi Agerwal talking about her journey into the film industry. From her first movie *Munna Michael* to her box office hit *iSmart Shankar*, the 25-year-old actor has evolved both personally and professionally. "People's opinions constantly change with time and it is mostly based on one's last performance. I think it is about time we rise above it. Everything is a journey. It is never about the destination, so just enjoy your journey," she says. Her Kollywood debut *Bhoomi* was supposed to be released on May 1, but the lockdown has delayed it. "I can confidently say that I performed excellently well in *Bhoomi*; it is a kind of role that I have never done before. I can't wait for people to watch it," she says.

In One Shot, chef Chinu Vaze talks about her favourite season and some food memories associated with it. She has also shared some summertime recipes.

So, get your chef cap on, make yourself some mango colada and enjoy this issue of *Smart Life*.

Stay safe, stay healthy and, most of all, stay at home.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY **FARROKH CHOTHIA**

MAY 2020



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Clean slate

Do you have a tattoo that you are not proud of? There are ways to get rid of it

BY SUNNY BHANUSHALI

The stigma of having and getting tattoos seem to have disappeared in the last decade, bringing tattoos into the mainstream culture. But there are some who are still worried about getting a tattoo because it is permanent. However, with the advancement of technology, tattoo removal is not only becoming more effective but also a lot more accessible and affordable.

Although there is an initial adoration of the tattoo, some regret getting inked later in their life. Especially if the person had the name of a partner inked and then they break up, the tattoo would seem like a big mistake. So, if you are a not-so-proud owner of some regrettable ink from your teens or you just want to get rid of an old tattoo to make room for a new one, there is a way.

But before you book your appointment, you should probably know what you are getting yourself into.

Tattoos are easier to remove than you actually think

A tattoo is a form of body art where ink is inserted into the layer of skin where the pigment is retained. Contrary to popular belief, in most cases, tattoos are not permanent. However, this does depend on the ink and colours being removed as well as the technique and technology used.

How exactly tattoo removal works

Unlike a laser pointer that produces a continuous beam of light, tattoo removal lasers produce pulses of light energy. Each pulse of energy goes to the skin, making contact with the tattoo ink. The ink is broken down to particles small enough for the lymphatic system to dispose of it and the body then begins to absorb the broken ink and flush it out.

It generally takes 10-20 sittings for the tattoo to be removed, but there is always a possibility that the results could be less than satisfactory. However, you should know that there are many factors that could affect how the tattoo will react to the treatment. Some of the reasons can include the age of the tattoo, its placement and the ink used .

The treatment might sting a little

Tattoo removal is not completely pain-free. Mentally prepare yourself for sittings which are more than just laser treatments. Tattoo removal is uncomfortable, but there are a lot of methods to minimise this, like numbing creams and ice. The placement of the tattoo determines how much pain and discomfort you may feel.

In the past, tattoo 'removal' just meant leaving a weird outline where the tattoo used to be hoping for the best. Thanks to new and growing laser technology, they can now be fully erased.

What to expect once your tattoo is removed

After the treatment, it is normal to expect the area to be red, swollen and bruised. Some people experience blistering and crusting as well. People go through discomfort for about a week post the treatment. The area needs to be covered in a salve and bandaged for a few days and then they start to scab and peel.

Bhanushali is founder and celebrity tattoo artist at Aliens Tattoo Studio, Mumbai.

KARNAVATI CLUB LTD.

2020 FUN RUN



The Run and Fun Combo



The first edition of the Karnavati `Fun Run 2020' in collaboration with many partners, kicked off on a pleasant day in Ahmedabad on the 1st of March, 2020 on a remarkable note from the Karnavati club. The Fun Run is different and unlike other marathons only has two distances of 5kms and 10 kms to run. The run began after some warm up dance and aerobics. The ones who had registered were provided with interesting registration kits. This open for all event has been created with the aim to bring about fitness awareness people of the state. It is an exciting format of run open to two categories in age, above 18 and below 18 years of age. More than 1000 runners participated in the fun filled event amidst a lot of cheer.



"Karnavati Club is expanding to join the league to become one of the largest clubs of India, with an emphasis on sports."

Mr Ajay Patel
Chairman of the
Karnavati Clubs & Resorts

"Giving more information on the upcoming club, Mr Ajay Patel, Chairman of the Karnavati Clubs & Resorts says, "Karnavati Club is planning a 2.83 lakh sq metre club Mulsana Village on the Kadi Sanand Road, a distance of 25 kms from the existing club. It will be one of the largest clubs of India and the membership will be complimentarily extended to all its existing members. We are planning a very good children's theme park in the new club and our focus is to promote all major sports. The new club that is coming up on the Kadi-Sanand road will have badminton, volley ball and lawn tennis courts and gymnasiums. There will be a cricket and football ground as well. Spread over a vast expanse, the number of rooms in the new club increase in number and it will also house villas and restaurants.

Says Mr. Viral G Patel, Director of the club and Chairm an of the gym committee, "Every fitness enthusiast can't take part in the 21 kms and 42 kms marathon, as it can sometimes get beyond their capacity. That is why we have kept it short distance so that run can become fun and a maximum number of those interested don't lose out on participating, for lack of exercising or gymming. He continues, "This was the club's first experience. And the response was tremendous. In fact, we had to refuse participation to at least 150 runners, keen on participating. The event had become the talk of the town and was trending on social media also. We promise, the event will get bigger and better every year. We plan to organize this event every year with more attractions and prizes. It is expected that more than 50% participants will increase their running capacity for next year. Clubs usually have the reputation of mainly being there for entertainment. But we at the Karnavati Club lay emphasis on sports too. We hosted the state Khel Mahakumbh 2018 Kabaddi tournament for girls and boys. The club ambience to play kabbaddi only enhanced their experience. We are always ready to support any kind of sports activities.



Mr. Viral G Patel
Director of the club
and Chairman of the gym

The `Fun Run 2020 w as a huge success and received a lot of appreciation. There were many takeaways, this being our first experience. They will be incorporated in the next edition. Karnavati Cub is open to supporting all kind of sports and sporting activities as part of the club as w ell as special events.

While, the build up to the club and the run takes place during the year, enjoy and explore the new Karnavati club, track the runs and the miles, get encouragement to go a little farther, bring your friends along and be sure to be there for the 'Fun Run' next year.

Quick bites



Registry for emotions

A new study by the Molecular Mind Laboratory (MoMiLab) at the IMT School for Advanced Studies, Lucca, Italy, unveiled a 3cm-area of the brain where emotions are registered. The study examined the correlation between data from two experiments measuring participant responses to the same movie. The first experiment gathered self-reported emotional responses to each scene in the movie. The second gathered data from a brain imaging study that measured activated regions within the cortices of participants while they watched the movie. The ultimate aim of their study was to map and locate cortical regions where emotions are encoded. A topographical map was generated by plotting the emotions of the participants. The map plots the arrangement of neural receptors within the body—which sense physiological sensations of emotion—with the distribution of neurons that represent the same functions within the cortical sensory regions of the brain. This provided a picture of where certain bodily sensations are encoded in the brain.

A new beat

Most people tend to listen to music when they are stressed. It is even played during surgeries and other painful medical procedures as it is said to reduce pain-related distress. Going a step further, a new sound wave therapy is in the market—binaural beat therapy. It makes use of the fact that the right and left ear each receive a slightly different frequency tone, yet the brain perceives it as a single tone. The therapy is recommended for the treatment of anxiety, stress and related disorders. The pattern of the beats is divided into five categories—delta, theta, alpha, beta and gamma—based on the frequencies (0.5-50Hz). Each category has a specific benefit. For example, theta patterns (4-7Hz) contribute to improved meditation, creativity and sleep in the rapid eye movement phase while alpha pattern (7-13Hz) promotes relaxation. Beta frequency range (13-30Hz) promotes concentration and alertness.





Lucid dream

Half asleep, half awake. You know that you are dreaming and also managed to get control over the narrative of that dream. This is called lucid dreaming. Typically, when we dream, we are not conscious that the dream is not real. However, some of us are able to enter a dream and be fully aware of the fact that we are actually dreaming. Experts define a lucid dream as a dream during which dreamers, while dreaming, are aware they are dreaming. Lucid dreaming is certainly an attractive and fascinating prospect—being able to explore our own inner worlds with full awareness that we are in a dream state is intriguing and has an almost magical flavour about it. It is also therapeutic as it has the potential to help people with phobias, such as fear of flying or animal phobias including arachnophobia (the fear of spiders).

super FOOD of the month



Mung beans

- Commonly eaten in China and India, these beans have a tender texture and a sweet nutty flavour. It is high in potassium, iron and fibre; it is also 24 per cent protein.
- It is high in antioxidants, including phenolic acids, flavonoids and cinnamic acid, that reduces the risk of chronic diseases. The antioxidants neutralises potentially harmful molecules known as free radicals.
- Some experts say that mung beans prevent heat stroke as it is believed to have anti-inflammatory properties that protect the body against high body temperatures and thirst.
- It lowers bad LDL cholesterol levels and reduces heart disease risk. It is also rich in potassium, magnesium and fibre which reduces blood pressure.



Cat's playlist

A new research finds that 'cat-specific' music, which speaks to the feline's preferred tempo and vocal range, is best at reducing the animal's stress levels. Researchers at the School of Veterinary Medicine at Louisiana State University, in Baton Rouge, found that cats are responsive to the sound of music even when they are under general anaesthesia. They also found that cats prefer music made with cat vocalisations such as purring; they also have their own tempos and they prefer a normal vocal frequency. As part of the study, the researchers enrolled 20 domestic cats and played them 20 minutes of cat-specific music, classical music and no music. They also kept a check of the level of stress. The results showed that those cats that heard the cat-specific music had lower stress levels than the others.



"The best way to guarantee a loss is to quit."

—MORGAN FREEMAN

Don't resist change

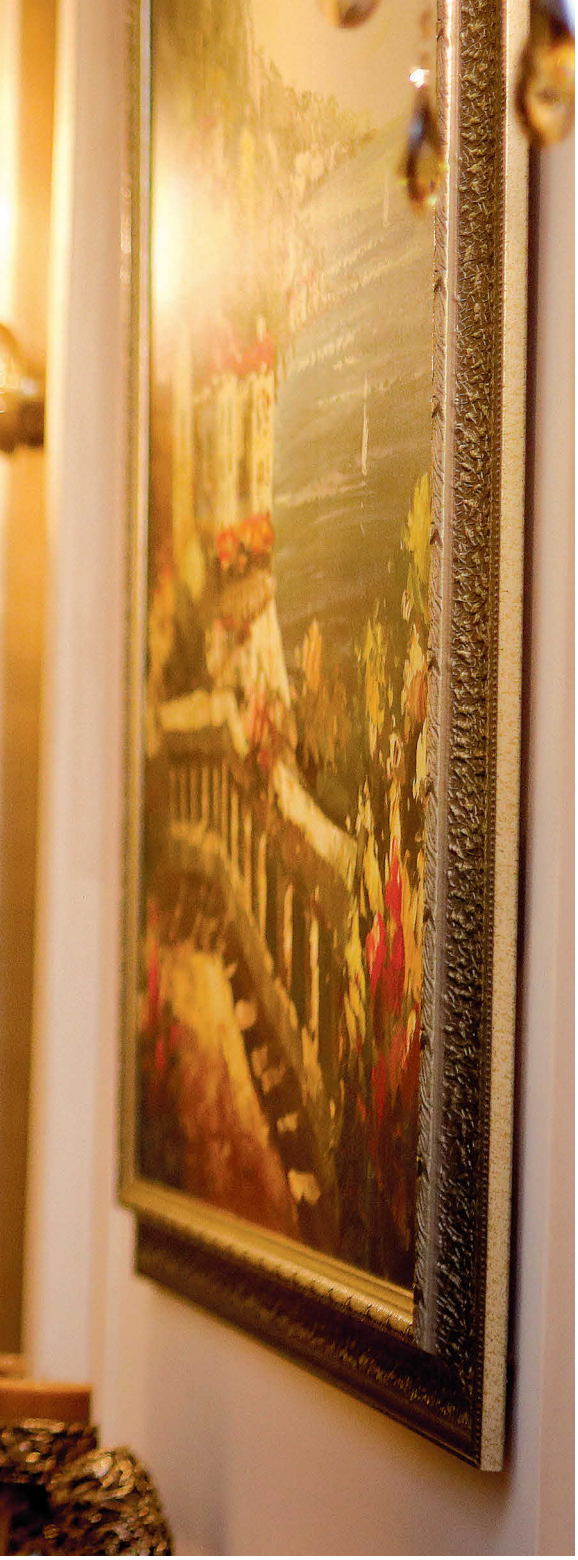
Singer **Rahul Jain** says he keeps evolving, both musically and personally

why my life is smart



His journey

I grew up in a music-loving family. When I turned five, I had already started performing on stage. Then, I continued being active in cultural programmes during my school and college days. On my last day of college, I decided to move to Mumbai to pursue music more seriously. Within no time—almost five days after I arrived in Mumbai—I signed my first film as a composer, singer and songwriter. It was the Bollywood movie, *Fever*, starring Rajiv Khandelwal and Gauhar Khan. Then opportunities kept flowing in. There were films like Vikram Bhatt's *1921*, *Jhootha Kahin Ka* starring Rishi Kapoor and Jimmy Shergil and then, Satish Kaushik's award-winning regional film *Choriyan Choro Se Kam Nahi Hoti*. I also did music for web series like *Maya 2* and *Spotlight 2*. Even TV shows were on my list—*Bepannah, Beyhadh, Tu Aashiqui, Gathbandhan, Internet Wala*



Love, Ye Pyar Nahi To Kya Hai and *Mariyam Khan Reporting Live*. I got popular mainly with my recreation on YouTube for songs like 'Tere Jaisa Yaar Kaha', 'Ye Dosti', 'Jab Koi Baat Bigadh Jaaye', 'Pardesi' and 'Do Dil Mil Rahe Hai'. I also got the opportunity to tour globally for my concerts.

Current projects

I'm working on Salman Khan's film *Kaagaz, Gaziabad Ki Saroj* starring Sana Kapoor (sister of Shahid Kapoor) and a few other films. I'm coming up with a lot of independent music from my own YouTube channel, the first one being 'Badnaam' starring famous tiktoker Adnaan Shaikh and me.

Memorable times

I think it is the time that I spend with my family. There have also been so many fan moments which were totally unexpected. Once when I was travelling in a flight, one of the members of the cabin crew gave me a handmade card with some sweet messages and my pictures. Apart from this, I consider every journey involved in making new music, memorable.

The greatest challenge

It is to compete with myself every day. I set my own standards and never try to compare myself with anybody else. Another challenge is to keep delivering good quality and fresh music for the listeners.

Strengths

My biggest strength is my family and their unconditional support. My fans are also my strength; I am who I am because of them. I am also confident and I think that is very important in the music industry.

Weaknesses

I can get a tad too emotional at times. Another weakness is food; I cannot resist good food. Then there are clothes and gadgets.

What do you binge-watch?

I hardly get time to watch anything amid all my travelling, shows and work. But sometimes, when I get some time to take a breather, I enjoy watching some thrillers on Netflix. I also love cricket, so I try to watch matches whenever I can.

Lessons learnt

The best lesson I have learnt and implemented in my life is that determination and hard work are pivotal when it comes to success. One should just focus on their goals and not let any failures of the past slow them down. My advise is—keep going and don't look back.

Staying fit

It is very simple—I walk whenever I can and I have also started working out in the gym. I am trying to spend more time doing some strength conditioning.
I have also changed my diet completely. Now I try to eat more healthy food. But once in a while I have my cheat days.
I think the key is to eat good food and sleep more.

A typical day

Every day is different for me. One day I might be just travelling; boarding a flight from one city to another, listening to some good music, making new music and meeting music lovers. Otherwise I spend a good portion of my time playing my guitar at the studio, trying to figure out new things.

Ways to unwind

I try doing some mindful meditation and listen to soothing music. Eating chocolate also helps me unwind.

Dream for the future

My dream is to create excellent original melodies and bring about a breakthrough in the current recreation culture. There is so much to offer and I will do it.

Why do you think your life is smart?

My life is smart because I am smart. I try to keep up with the changing times both musically and personally. I don't resist change, I keep adapting to new things, without losing my own essence and that is what I guess makes my life smart.

As told to Oshin Grace Daniell

THE BATTLE INSIDE

Here are some tips to boost your immunity

BY NAINI SETALVAD



Hydro power

Water is at the top of the list. Touted as the elixir of life, drinking water throughout the day helps in fighting the virus. Time to make warm water your best friend. The hydration will allow mucous to flow freely, moisten your throat and flush out all and any toxins from the body. My tip is to gargle through the day with hot water and natural salts to keep the throat squeaky clean.

Covid-19 has got us all on our toes and a lot of things are out of control. With the lockdown and telecommuting, most people are heading towards an erratic lifestyle. Surely, everybody is aware about social distancing and measures to be taken in order to prevent any form of infection but most people have overlooked an important factor—immunity. Now, the question is how do we boost our immunity? The answer is quite simple—through our diet. A strong immune system will not only aid in withstanding the virus attack now but also in the future.

Here are some ways to bring some order into what might be now a shambolic immune system.

The king of all fruits

It is mango season. Raw mango or ripe mango, melon, phalsas and many other summer fruits are all packed with vitamin C; just munch on them throughout the day. Squeeze lemon juice over the food that you consume or in your water as it is your best natural source of vitamin C and it aids in strengthening your white blood cells; it is truly one of the essential nutrients to help in fighting this virus.





The great Indian masala box

Fret not, for all that you need can be found in your kitchen. No household in our country will be without a masala box—the treasure chest of good health. Don't think of it only as a flavour enhancer, these spices are also your immunity boosters. Be it cumin, turmeric, tiny coriander seeds or fenugreek seeds, all of it works; just toss these spices in your food. Cook them in a good quality fat such as cow's ghee to increase their bioavailability. Cow's ghee eases a sore throat as it is a natural balm. Just sip on warm water with a bit of ghee and turmeric powder before sleeping. It coats your throat, keeping infections at bay.

Turmeric infusion

Ingredients:

- Water- 50 ml
- Turmeric powder- ½ tsp
- Honey or jaggery- 1tsp

Method:

- Boil the water.
- Add turmeric powder and honey.
- Serve hot.

It is a natural remedy for a sore throat and chest congestion. It also has anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial properties.

Ginger infusion

Ingredients:

- Water- 50ml
- Fresh ginger root, grated- ½ inch
- Lemon juice- 2-3tsp

Method:

- Grate fresh ginger roots and toss it in boiling water.
- Serve hot in a cup, garnish with a squeeze of lemon.

Drink this everyday

Salt water

Ingredients:

- Warm water- 1 glass
- Natural salts- 3-4 tsp
- Turmeric powder- a pinch

Method:

- Mix the natural salt and turmeric powder in the warm water

Gargle with this 2-3 times a day.





Enter the plant kingdom

Starting from the tiny leafy greens to a rainbow of vegetables, whole grains, pulses, nuts and seeds, nature has graciously given human beings an army to fight any infection. It is very important to eat plenty of food from the vegetable kingdom. I strongly endorse the statement, "Eat from the plant kingdom and not what is made in a plant." So, it is time to say goodbye to processed foods. Organic is the way to go.

We have always fed our families with love, but now focus on feeding them with immunity boosting food. Focus on local and seasonal Indian food as they can help in strengthening your immune system by fighting any viruses.

Setalvad is a nutritionist based in Mumbai.

Got a question for Naini? Write to us at slife.theweek@gmail.com



Sepsis, the killer

One of the main reasons of maternal death is sepsis which kills young women with no obvious symptoms. But early detection can result in full recovery

BY DR PRATHIMA REDDY

Did you know that women can die during one of the most joyous events of their lives? Losing a young, fit and healthy woman during pregnancy and childbirth can be devastating for her loved ones. Maternal death, as this is called, refers to the death of a woman while she is pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes.

The maternal mortality rate (MMR) in India is 130 maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births. In the western world it varies between three to 18 deaths per 1,00,000 live births.

The main killers of women in this country are:

Haemorrhage: Excessive bleeding after the delivery of the baby (or in pregnancy) can be life threatening. If this is not recognised and treated promptly, it can lead to severe damage.

Sepsis: It refers to infection which enters the blood and can happen during pregnancy or post-delivery. Sepsis is very insidious and can kill very quickly unless it is recognised early and treated aggressively.

Anaemia: It refers to the haemoglobin or blood count being low. After delivery, a woman loses a certain amount of blood naturally. If the woman is anaemic even this normal blood loss is not well tolerated. Especially if she bleeds excessively, she is at grave risk of succumbing to the blood loss.

Preeclampsia and eclampsia: These are conditions which are associated with high blood pressure, fits, damage to the kidneys and the brain.

Abortion: If it is performed by untrained personnel, it can give rise to infection, bleeding and death.

Sepsis and its dangers

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that arises when the body's response to infection causes injury to its own tissues and organs. If sepsis develops during pregnancy, during or after giving birth, or after an abortion, it is called maternal sepsis.

If not recognised early and treated aggressively, it can rapidly progress to multiple organ failure and death. One third of the people who develop sepsis die. Amongst those who survive, many are left with chronic pain and fatigue, post-traumatic stress disorder and organ dysfunction.

Despite being highly preventable, maternal sepsis continues to be a major cause of death and morbidity for pregnant or recently pregnant women.

Indian scenario

Maternal sepsis is common in the developing world but is also a significant cause of maternal death in the developed world. Worldwide, it accounts for 15 per cent of maternal deaths. It is estimated that maternal sepsis accounts for 11-16 per cent of maternal deaths in India. A study in rural Maharashtra put it down as

Risk factors

Some of the factors that trigger sepsis are:

- Wrong handling of miscarriages. Especially if it is performed in unsterile conditions outside a health care facility
- Cervical cerclage or "stitch"
- Prolonged rupture of membranes
- Prolonged or obstructed labour
- Complications of caesarean section
- Infection following vaginal deliveries, especially if conducted in unhygienic conditions outside a health care facility, possibly due to repeated unhygienic vaginal examinations
- Assisted vaginal deliveries (forceps, vacuum)
- Manual removal of placenta/ retained bits of placenta after delivery or abortion
- Mastitis
- Poor standards of hand washing and general hygiene in the days following delivery
- Urinary tract infection
- Pneumonia
- Viral or bacterial illnesses



the second largest cause of maternal mortality after haemorrhage. Studies conducted in referral hospitals in Andhra Pradesh concluded that it was the main cause of maternal deaths in their series.

Case study

Thirty-year-old Beena Mathew, pregnant for the third time, was at our outpatient clinic in her 10th week of pregnancy. The previous two pregnancies had ended in a spontaneous miscarriage at 18 weeks of gestation. A diagnosis of cervical incompetence (a condition in which the mouth of the womb—cervix—shortens and opens early, leading to miscarriages) was made and she underwent a cervical stitch at 16 weeks. At about 26 weeks of pregnancy, she complained of pain in the abdomen and was hospitalised as there was a risk of pre-term labour. She was monitored closely and the pains settled.

At 27 weeks, routine bedside examination revealed an abnormally fast heart rate and a low blood pressure. She was also breathing faster than normal and her oxygen level was suboptimal. Her temperature, however, remained normal and she did not complain of any alarming symptoms. A working diagnosis of sepsis was made and relevant investigations were performed. The blood tests confirmed sepsis. Appropriate medical treatment was started immediately and aggressively. She later delivered by a caesarean section. She was monitored in the ICU by a multidisciplinary team and after four days, she made a full recovery. The baby stayed in the NICU for six weeks and was discharged in good health.

The above case illustrates how insidious sepsis can be. Here the patient did not have any obvious complaints but close monitoring and a low threshold for diagnosing sepsis helped make early detection and avert a poor outcome. The cause of sepsis in this case was most probably the cervical stitch.

As the WHO puts it: "One of the greatest tragedies of the thousands of deaths caused by sepsis is that many of them could have been prevented." It is clear from several studies that in the majority of women that died from sepsis, there was delay in diagnosis, treatment and in the escalation of treatment. Most women did not have a fever, possibly delaying the recognition of the presence of sepsis.

The WHO recommends the following measures to prevent sepsis:

- Access to clean water and sanitation
- Access to quality care during pregnancy and birth
- Responsible and timely access to the right medicines
- Proper infection prevention and control in hospitals and clinics
- Adequately trained and skilled health workers who can recognise the signs of sepsis and treat the condition effectively

In addition to the above, good personal hygiene, regular changing of sanitary napkins, not using tampons until advised to do so and washing hands before and after going to the toilet will help reduce the incidence of sepsis.

Reddy, MBBS, MRCOG (London), FRCOG (London), FACOG (USA), is the director, senior obstetrician and gynaecologist at Fortis La Femme Hospital, Richmond Road, Bengaluru.

Warning signs

Some of the symptoms of sepsis are:

- Chills and shivering
- High temperature (over 38.3°C)
- Very low temperature (less than 36°C)
- Fast breathing or breathlessness
- Headache
- Severe abdominal pain
- Excessive bleeding or foul-smelling discharge
- Productive cough
- Urinary symptoms like frequent urination, pain while urinating, blood in the urine
- Extreme fatigue
- Dizziness

» inhale

ABREAST OF LATEST TRENDS, DEVELOPMENTS



Myrrh not only smells good, but it is also used to treat a whole range of medical issues. It is widely used as an antiseptic in mouthwashes and toothpastes, keeping the mouth clean and smelling nice. Ancient Egyptians used myrrh and other essential oils to embalm mummies, as the oils not only provide a nice scent but also slow decay. In the Biblical times, myrrh incense—often in combination with frankincense—was burned in places of worship to help purify the air and prevent the spread of contagious diseases, including those caused by bacteria. Tests over the past decade or so have shown that myrrh can, in fact, lower LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) in humans, whilst increasing HDL cholesterol (good cholesterol).

High on energy

Stuck at home but still want to stay fit and do something productive? Here's what some of India's top athletes are doing during the lockdown

COMPILED BY OSHIN GRACE DANIELL



Ankit Panth

Counter-Strike gaming professional, also known as 'V3nom'

"Good at household chores"

For starters, the lockdown has taught me to take household chores very seriously. I have been washing the dishes and sweeping the floor regularly. When it comes to fitness, I focus on my core strength and cardio now. Unfortunately, I cannot work on my muscles as I don't have heavy weights at home so I am trying to increase my stamina and core strength during the lockdown. I also do a lot of pushups, burpees and practise *surya namaskara*.

Diet: I have stopped eating eggs at the moment due to availability problems. I have increased consumption of paneer (cottage cheese), lentils, chick peas and leafy salads.

Reading list: I don't read a lot of books

What to watch: *Money Heist*, *Bard of Blood*, *Made in Heaven* and *Narcos*.

One recipe that you whipped up during the lockdown: Aloo khichdi



Ashwini Ponnappa

Badminton player who represents India in international circuits

"A good cook now"

I think the lockdown has helped me improve my cooking skills. I do give in to junk food here and there, but in moderation. I keep a tab on my diet as I don't burn as much as I would if I had access to the gym and court. I work out once in a day and I have got a set of 11 exercises that I have been regularly doing. I mix that up with some badminton drills.

Diet: I don't really do prior preparations for a meal. I pick a vegetable or lentils at home and figure out a recipe that I can do. Since I'm cooking at home, it is mostly healthy with a bit of junk occasionally.

Reading list: *The Champion's Mind* by James A. Afremow, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen

What to watch: *The Last Dance*, *Contagion*, *Free Solo*, *The Dawn Wall*, *She Was Pretty* (Korean)

One recipe that you whipped up during the lockdown: The one I was most thrilled about was a radish chutney I made recently.



C. S. Santosh

Indian off-road and enduro motorcycle racer

"Better on-screen presence"

I'd say the one thing that I did pick up during the lockdown is to be better on camera with the various promotional videos that I had to work on. I'm used to being active all day and it was essential for me to train sometimes two times a day. I happen to live on 45 acres and this allows me the freedom to be out in the sun.

Diet: The only difference to my meal plan has been that I have primarily been a vegetarian during the course of the lockdown.

Reading list: *The Rise of Superman* by Steven Kotler, *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse, *A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking, *A Shot at History* by Abhinav Bindra, *Jaya* by Devdutt Pattanaik

What to watch: *Troy*, *Gladiator*, *Rush*, *Million Dollar Baby*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*

One recipe that you whipped up during the lockdown: Almond milkshakes with local fruits and nuts and berries.

Mira Erda

Formula 4 racer

"Finding new things to do"

The one thing that I have picked up during the lockdown is that it is really easy to feel lazy every day because you don't have much to do at home and after a while you start getting bored. Now I feel I keep pushing myself to find different things to make my time productive. So, this is something that has changed for me, how I look at things in this period of lockdown and this just made me want to try different things every day.

I try to do all kinds of body-weight training and few days in a week, I use light weights to keep the strength up. In the last few days, I have also been trying to work on my flexibility and sometimes I do yoga to relax the body.

Diet: I have been recently trying to eat light and nutritious food. There is not much change in my diet but I am having a lot of fruit and juice to keep myself hydrated and mostly I am eating green and beans.

Reading list: *The Magic of Thinking Big* by David J. Schwartz, *My Olympic Journey* by Amit Bose and Digvijay Singh Deo, *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind* by Joseph Murphy

What to watch: *Formula 1: Drive to Survive*, *Blacklist*, *The Game Changers*, *Gokarts*, *The Good Doctor*

One recipe that you whipped up during the lockdown: Caramel custard pudding





Manpreet Singh

Captain of the national men's field hockey team

"Fitness first"

I have been focusing on maintaining my strength and body weight. I enjoy working out at home but hate that I don't have the required equipment. Nevertheless, I have been trying several body-weight exercises to keep my strength at peak levels.

Some exercises that I follow regularly:

Push-ups: This is one of the simplest exercises that can be performed on an open floor. The starting position is to support your body on your palms and toes with arms at full extension. Slowly lower your body till your chest is a few inches off the ground with your elbows tucked comfortably into your body. Lift yourself back up to the starting position and repeat. This helps me build my biceps and strengthens my arms.

Lunges: From a standing position, extend one foot behind you and drop your body till your front knee is at a 90-degree angle and back knee is a few inches above the ground but not touching. Lift yourself back up, return to the standing position and repeat with the other leg. I love this one because it helps me maintain strength in my lower body and builds up my quadriceps.

Crunches: They tighten my abdominal muscles and help build core strength. I do a standard crunch by laying on the floor with my knees bent and feet planted. From here, I use my abs to lift my upper body and bring it close to my knees, dropping back slowly again.

Squats: Start with a standing position and your feet hip-width apart. Keeping your upper body braced, slowly lower your hips till your knee is about 90 degrees (but not locked). Slowly lift yourself back up and repeat to complete the workout. This exercise has the ability to challenge most of the muscles in my body.

Chin-ups: This exercise will require a pull-up bar. Chin-ups are performed with your palms towards you while pull-ups are performed with your palms outward. Allow your body to hang and then using your bicep, shoulder and upper-back muscles, pull yourself up until your chin is in line with the bar or over it. Slowly lower yourself down and repeat. This one improves my grip strength, posture and strengthens my muscles. □

The athletes are sponsored by Red Bull.

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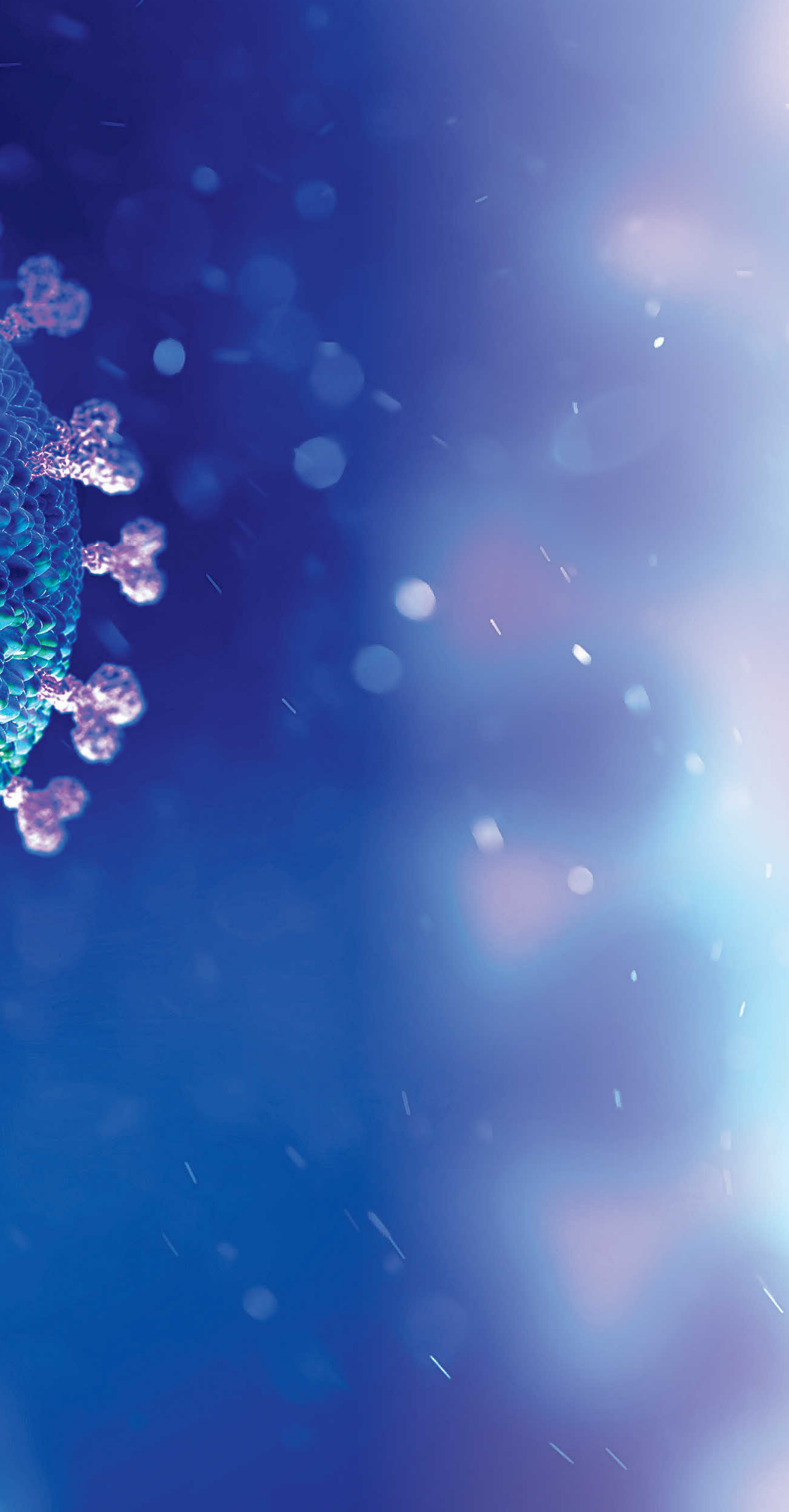
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Beyond the pandemic

The biological battle with Covid-19 may soon end, but its onslaught on our psyche may have just begun

BY DR SUNIL CHANDY



The Covid-19 virus is here to stay albeit in a subdued manner, says the World Health Organization. Pandemics of the past left varying trails of destruction depending on their virulence. The Covid-19 pandemic, too, shall pass, aided by the salvage efforts worldwide. The collective human resolve to fight the virus is unprecedented and has helped us renew faith in our ability to restore the human race to its full potential.

At the peak of any crisis, it is natural to focus on the present. The entire world is focused on containing the progression of Covid-19. The worldwide restrictions and lockdowns intended to flatten the curve will eventually weaken the leading edge of the viral wave. Vaccine development and various drug therapies are being fast-tracked as specific measures to conquer the virus. But whether or not life would return to the old normal is open to question.

The biological battle with the virus may soon be over, but its protracted onslaught on our psyche may have just begun. This pandemic is distinctly different in the overall impact on the lives of people. Its impact on our social, professional, financial and emotional lives will by no means be small. As the lockdown gets lifted, a whole new world awaits us in our workplaces and social spheres for which we are unprepared. The adaptive responses that will evolve will initiate a new order of life. From the highest levels of thought leadership to the lowest levels of administrative action, a concurrent initiative to understand, address and manage the social challenges of the pandemic must start now.



PHOTO AFP

Post-pandemic social dysfunction

The psychosocial distress after the pandemic dies down will mimic the post-traumatic stress disorder seen in other disaster situations. Public fear psychosis has already manifested in the gruesome event around the funeral of a doctor in Chennai. Although anecdotal, it exemplifies an outburst of contained panic and uncertainty in the community. Uncertainties about safety of travel, crowded public spaces, cohabitation and interaction are set to throw the social order into disarray. Travel and tourism will have to be redefined. The altered seating arrangements in airplanes, buses and sports stadiums will negatively impact the revenue flow of these businesses. Religious places, too, will bear the brunt of social distancing, which will have its own impact on spirituality. People are going to be in fear of anyone who coughs, sneezes or yawns in close proximity. Many are likely to be obsessed with hand washing, sanitisers and masks. For some time, these panic disorders will drive people either into social isolation or unnecessary hospital visits. Both extremes will be difficult to cope with. Social media, it is feared, will only worsen this panic disorder through its misinformation diarrhoea. Even mainstream media is unable to look beyond the numbers and opinions to prepare the community for the social dysfunction ahead. Already a large number of people are seeking counselling help to tide over Covid-19-related somatic illnesses. Thus, a new social pandemic is germinating under the shoots of the exiting Covid-19 virus. The government must think it prudent to channel the entire machinery into disseminating proper public awareness. This must start now, given the long learning curve needed to sensitise the public mind.

Health care resource crisis

This pandemic has unmasked the deficits in our health care system. The grossly neglected primary health care has taken its toll in the acute phase. The deficit in the pool of secondary care physicians, family physicians, mental health care providers and counsellors will become evident in the post-Covid-19 phase. Rather than accumulate ventilators, a rapid augmentation of this rehabilitative layer is needed. For a specified period, a temporary realigning of our entire health care system, redeployment of specialists to basic services and reemployment of retired medical personnel should be considered. The shutting down of major hospitals in Mumbai and Delhi at the peak of the crisis must prompt the authorities to set up standalone makeshift field hospitals to manage the residual caseload. The medical misinformation campaign arising out of superstition, cultural practices and quackery must be curtailed with zero tolerance. In the long term, this is also an opportunity for the government to reorient the entire health education and service towards a more need-based one. The

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heightened sensitivities of the public today will make them compliant to any change management that is deemed necessary.

Cleanliness drive

The rapid recovery of the environment with the lockdown clearly points to the human contributions towards unhealthy living. The air is cleaner, the roads are less littered, there are lesser accidents and waste production has minimised. This period has been a 'servicing' time for urban India. The need for better hygiene and social etiquettes has been underlined. The lockdown has added a new dimension to the vision of our prime minister. The Swachh Bharat graph will see a spontaneous upswing, suggesting the measures to be adopted to take Swachh Bharat to its logical conclusion. As the world returns to normal, should we not use these embargos to redefine a desirable lifestyle? Should we wait for nature to revolt again to induce these transformational lifestyle changes? People now know how not to sneeze, cough, spit and interact. Can this awareness help reorder our lifestyles for a better tomorrow? There is no better moment than now.

Leadership and governance

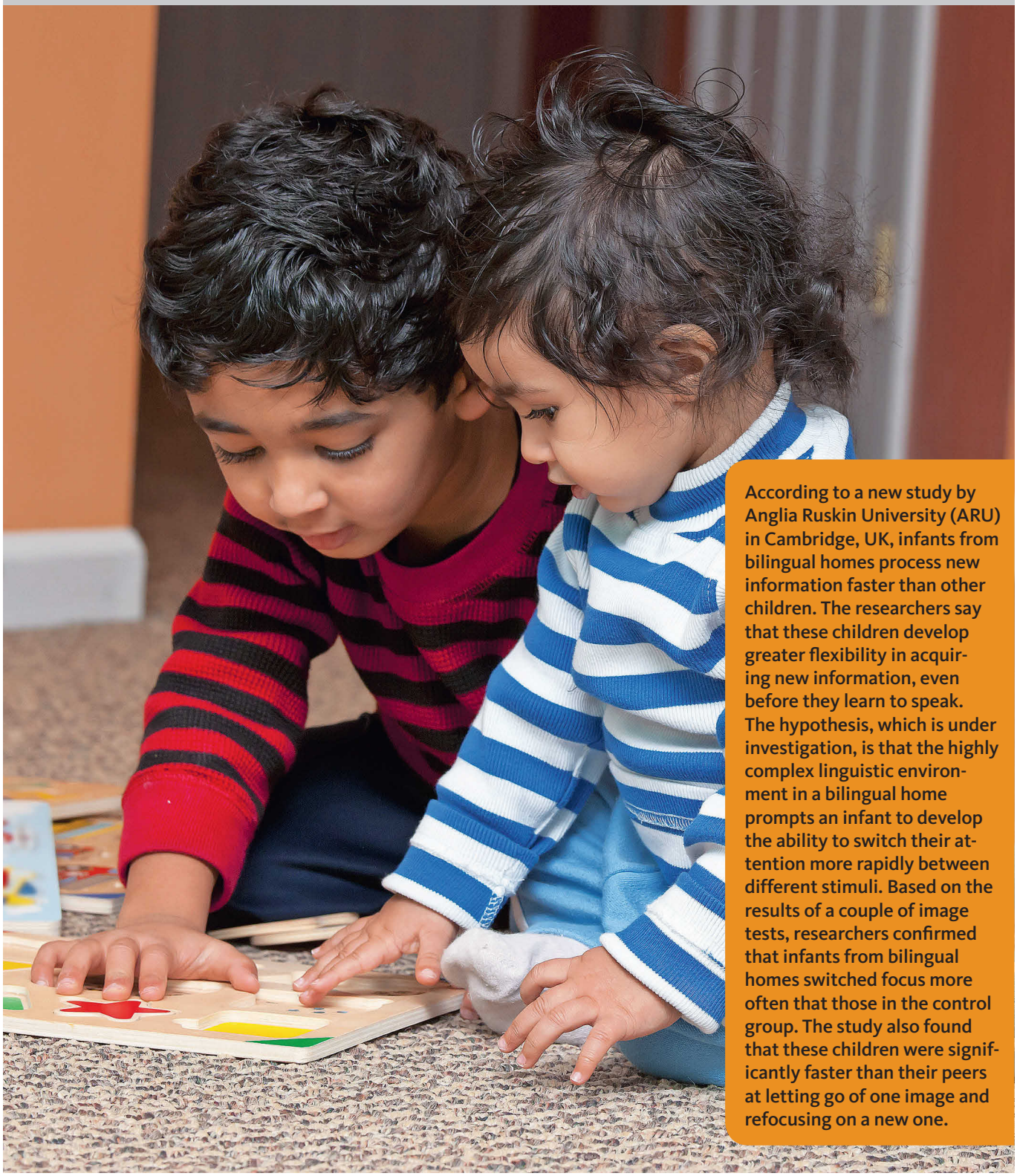
India has fared well in this crisis because of good leadership. Proactive and preemptive measures taken early have stemmed the tide. Recovery of the corporate and business world will hinge on the principles of empathetic leadership rather than on outcome-oriented leadership. All leadership styles will be put to test in this post-Covid-19 horizon. The lockdown offered a six-week holiday from the nerve-racking, high decibel debates on issues that seem so insignificant in relation to this existential crisis. This pandemic offers a new window to our political leaders to commence on a new pathway of good governance.

What matters

The lessons learnt from this pandemic must transform us beyond it. We have learnt how little we need, how much we actually have and the value of human connection. In distancing us socially, we have learnt that relationships are far more valuable than religiosity. That our obsessions with caste and creed will not see us through an existential crisis. We have understood what it feels like being hungry and in detention. We may have understood freedom anew. We have realised how wasteful political debates are, when food and drinks do not reach our doors. We have also learnt that it is the street vendor who will suffer to provide us food and material at our doorstop when the online services say their services are suspended. So, when life returns to normal, we need to stand again on our balconies and clap for these unsung heroes who held our lives together. Beyond that, we need to redefine our social lives altogether. This is our opportunity. □

pause

HOLD THAT THOUGHT, INTROSPECT, QUESTION



According to a new study by Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) in Cambridge, UK, infants from bilingual homes process new information faster than other children. The researchers say that these children develop greater flexibility in acquiring new information, even before they learn to speak. The hypothesis, which is under investigation, is that the highly complex linguistic environment in a bilingual home prompts an infant to develop the ability to switch their attention more rapidly between different stimuli. Based on the results of a couple of image tests, researchers confirmed that infants from bilingual homes switched focus more often that those in the control group. The study also found that these children were significantly faster than their peers at letting go of one image and refocusing on a new one.

Gourmet done right

Food should never be a threat to sustainability but should rather promote sustainable development. Here are five top chefs who have blended sustainable practices with a grand dining experience

BY RUPALI DEAN







Prateek Sadhu

Executive chef, co-owner, Masque restaurant, Mumbai

Born in Jammu in 1986, Prateek grew up around family farms, leading him to the kitchen by his 10th birthday. He learnt his basics from his aunt and mother and spent weekends picking veggies and then cooking them for lunch before attending a hotel management college, although his initial plan was to become a commercial pilot.

Menus at Masque are entirely driven by the farmers, given the seasonal, tasting-menu format of the restaurant, and this works well for it! "One of our farmers is working on an indigenous pumpkin variety of which each one weighs about 2kg, and he can produce only about 30kg of it at a time. This works well because we can buy out his entire supply, serve it at the restaurant for a week and then change it around once supplies run out. It is a system that is important to us because we get to both support these small-scale farmers and create awareness around the kind of work they are doing," says Sadhu. The initial legwork for Masque involved a lot of travel around India to meet farmers and suppliers. It began with online research, which actually really helped, and then developing relationships and networks. "Build a good relationship with one farmer and he will connect you to ten more – that's where it all starts. It was obviously crucial to us that we visit the farms and see where they're growing their crops, meet them personally, and make an effort to understand and respect the nuances of growing a vegetable," says Sadhu. "After that, we have a logistics partner that enables us to cut out the middlemen and pay the farmer fairer wages for his produce. I think when working with these farms it's crucial to develop a relationship where you both understand what you want out of it. We work with our farm just outside Pune as well as a consortium of different farmers from Uttarakhand and in and around Maharashtra."



Jayanandan Bhaskar

Executive chef, Karma Lakelands Golf Resort, Gurugram

The realisation of going organic was inherently inculcated in Bhakar's roots as he began his culinary journey. That being said, he always enjoyed solving the puzzle of completely replacing wholesale market products with organic goods especially ones that are grown right in front of his eyes.

Bhaskar's dream turned to reality at Karma Lakelands, where he could include his passion of natural, organic ingredients in his daily processes in the kitchen. This has actually fanned his inner fire to take the word organic to the next level. "Making efforts to learn their way of farming first, I discuss and observe how they do things their way along with the products they grow in a particular season and conditions. After discussing the basics, I eventually move on to knowing how they innovate with it and how we can further work upon the products. While knowing about all these aspects, I also like to take note of the technical issues that one might face, to address them better", he explains. Generally, he discusses all the do's and don'ts prior to starting his research. The research is usually based on the information farmers get from their counterparts and from other places. "All my associate farmers are competent and are clear about their basics and hence have a strong foundation. I simply work on helping them churn out ideas that they can absorb completely. I do it by being consistent with appreciating them for their work and motivating them to give their best as they innovate," says Bhaskar.



Abhishek Basu

Executive chef, JW Marriot Juhu, Mumbai

Basu's father has always been a faithful gardener and meals at home always had something or the other from his vegetable patch. Being an Army officer, they travelled quite a bit, which meant that Abhishek was exposed to seasonal vegetables and all the excitement of sowing and watching them grow.

In 2013, Basu started working with Indian farmers who grew everything from rice to gherkins and vegetables. He has inspired many to follow the organic movement in Delhi in his previous stint. Basu's contribution to the community and efforts to help the farmers are well known. As an ambassador of JW Marriott and their organic movement as well as a fellow chef from the fraternity, Basu has spoken at different forums and panels to encourage others to join and work with farmers for healthy living. "We must lead in our own spaces to generate the momentum towards the global call for sustainability. The Tasting India Symposium brought many of us together to sign India's Food Manifesto to bring about a change in the food system. We have in our individual roles made a difference and will continue to work towards the larger goal of achieving food security, zero waste, improving nutrition and supporting sustainable agriculture. We must make more and more people aware of the benefits of being part of a healthy community. This is my personal movement to change the world around me to enjoy a smart life with my people. You can start small at your end too. Teach your children not to waste food. Let them be part of your weekly shopping. Weave stories around farmers, produce and more. They are our future and we must instil in them a love for Mother Earth when they are young. We have to protect our people and our planet and it's the next generation that can do this and continue our work." says Basu.



Harish Rao

Brand chef, Sea Salt, Chennai

Rao's intervention in the seafood market began with in-season fishing when his collaboration with Sea Salt took place. In-season fishing is a conventional method that aims to promote seafood diversity, healthy oceans and sustainable fishery. To ensure the restaurant received the freshest catch of the day, as well as what the season has to offer, Rao had to personally get involved with the fishermen community to learn more, and to communicate to them his needs.

The in-season fishing community works closely with small trailer boat fishermen by educating them and learning from them about the available fish that season. Collaborating with the in-season fishing community gave Rao the opportunity to work directly with local fishermen. "With great understanding and mutual respect, we are glad to say that some of these fishermen have been hired by us to work in-house with our kitchen to create some authentic recipes as well,", shares Rao. To his surprise, the fishermen community was more welcoming than he expected. They were interested in the initiative and were extremely supportive of the cause. Moreover, they felt important as Rao would listen to their stories, concerns and fishing practices. They also understood what is required for the consumer in small and large scale. "I believe when you are interested in something, you go all the way to make things happen. Of course, it was a completely new environment for me as I was completely unaware of fishing practices, methods and available in season fish. Interacting closely with the fishermen not only made me understand more about seafood and their community, but also the need of the hour in terms of sustainable food", adds Rao.



Neeraj Tyagi

Director of culinary, Pullman and Novotel, Delhi

Tyagi comes from an agricultural background. He belongs to the fertile belt of Muzzafarnagar, in the western part of Uttar Pradesh. Sustainability and localisation are in his DNA.Under Tyagi's leadership the culinary team works with NGOs and third parties who supplies it with ingredients from local farms.

With the increased usage of synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilisers in farming, the produce is no longer healthy for daily consumption. To tackle this growing concern, Tyagi emphasises the importance of organic farming. He sources fresh and safe produce. The Signature Buffet restaurant, Pluck, at Pullman is committed to offering fresh and safe ingredients that are locally sourced. The menu is decided by the seasonal availability of produce. "We have an in house farm of 5,000 sq. ft. The herb garden already grows vegetables such as lettuce, lemon, brinjal, tomatoes and herbs. We plan to build a facility that takes care of all our vegetable needs .We have recently introduced Rooted in Nature buffets that focus on microgreens, fresh seasonal produce, sustainable farming and endless varieties of greens. It is meant for weight watchers, vegan lovers and those who prefer sustainable and guilt-free selections of regional dishes", he shares. □

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No more trash, period

Say goodbye to menstrual waste with reusable cloth pads

BY OSHIN GRACE DANIELL

As I reflect on my menarche, I distinctly remember how my grandmother handed me a folded cotton cloth instead of a normal plastic pad. She did not say anything and I was confused by her reaction to the news of my first period. Isn't it unhygienic to use a cloth? I thought. Thanks to the menstrual hygiene sessions in my school, I knew how to deal with the situation. I grabbed a packet of the synthetic pad from my mother's cupboard and walked away, smirking at the folded cloth. My grandmother did not say a word probably because back in her days, the topic of periods had been so hush-hush. Twelve years ago, I felt so empowered by the thought that I knew better than my grandmother. But now that I think of it, I feel I should have just taken that folded cotton cloth. It would have saved me from years of suffering from rashes and chafing because of those plastic-backed, bleached out, white cotton disposables.

According to tests conducted by several consumer watchdogs, most of these synthetic pads are made from plastics and synthetic fibres like super-absorbent acrylic polymers. These disposable pads are also treated with chemicals like chlorine dioxide, synthetic chemicals and artificial fragrances which lead to production of harmful pollutants like dioxin. This



Cloth pads by Eco Femme

remains in the body for years together leading to hormone disruption, allergic reactions, reproductive and gynecological disorders like endometriosis. The plastic layer on the pad blocks airflow to the vagina which can cause painful rashes and cramps.

Another huge problem is sanitary waste disposal. Did you know that a woman can generate up to 125kg of non-biodegradable waste through her menstruating years alone? And studies have shown that it takes about 500 to 800 years for a normal plastic sanitary pad to decompose. As per an estimate by the Menstrual Hygiene Alliance of India (MHAI), there are 336 million menstruating women in India, of which 36 per cent (121 million) use disposable sanitary napkins. If we were to calculate the number of pads used by these women in a year—probably seven to eight pads per cycle—it is about 12.3 billion disposable sanitary napkins that our country has to take care of annually. A whopping number indeed. At a time when the environment is being brutally degraded due to anthropogenic activities, the need of the hour is to do our bit to reduce our carbon footprint.

There are many sustainable products in the market that one can use instead of a synthetic pad. Most notably, the menstrual cup. But, many women cannot use these cups due to disorders that cause pain in the opening of the vagina such as vulvodynia and vaginismus. These conditions can cause extreme discomfort and many avoid using the cup as it can result in more pain. Then there are many who are petrified by the idea of inserting something into the vagina. And the remaining are simply disgusted about the whole thing. The switch to sustainable menstruation is highly essential considering the amount of waste we generate but it need not be painful or scary.

For Kathy Walkling who moved to India 23 years ago, her biggest challenge at the time was not culture shock or language barrier, but disposal of sanitary waste. She had moved to Auroville, Tamil Nadu, from her home country, Australia, to start a new life. "Where I had come from, there is at least the appearance that these products go 'away' when tossed into that conveniently placed 'sanitary bin' that was next to every toilet. Arriving in India, with its highly visible mountains of garbage, I was forced to recognise that my sanitary waste was not going 'away' after all!" she says.

In the initial days of her stay, she lurked around like a fugitive in the bushes, looking for a place where she could discreetly dig a hole to bury her used pads and tampons. "Throwing them in a bin for others to handle or burning these wet products with their plastic liners was unimaginable," she says.

It was during a trip to New Zealand that she came across her first washable cloth pad in a small village shop. "The pad was made of colourful soft flannel cotton, unbranded and obviously homemade by a local woman. I instinctively knew this was what I had been looking for and for the first time ever, felt excited about getting my next period! From the day of first use, I was converted! One by one all the benefits became apparent," Kathy says.

The right blend

Last year, two IIT Delhi boys Archit Agarwal and Harry Sehrawat came up with a better version of the cloth pads. They used banana fibre for making biodegradable pads that can last for up to 120 washes or two years. Banana fibre is known to have excellent absorption properties. The pads made out of this fibre are hygienic, easy to wash and quick dry. The extended life of these sanitary napkins can help in curbing the environment hazard of disposed sanitary pads to a great extent.

A patent has also been filed for these reusable pads.

The sanitary napkins are made up of four layers of different fabrics:

- Polyester pilling fabric which is highly wicking and gives a dry experience throughout the day time
- Terry and banana fibres including viscose and polyester fibres which make these napkins highly absorbent
- Cotton polyurethane laminate which is a breathable layer in the pad with water-resistant properties to offer leak-proof experience.



PHOTO EDOARDO GRASSI

The challenge was the washing part. Most women get disgusted by the thought of washing a blood-soaked cloth. "I would be lying if I said I was perfectly at ease with the idea of washing. But the reality was better than I imagined. After dropping the pad in a bucket of cold water to soak, most of the blood came out so, washing took almost no time at all," says Kathy.

This changed Kathy's life and made her question the aversion she had to her menstrual blood. After coming back to Auroville, she started making cloth pads for the community she lived in. Surprisingly, many showed interest and made the switch to cloth pads. She also encouraged women to talk openly about menstrual problems and hygiene aspects associated with it.

In 2010, she met Jessamijn Miedema who also loved cloth pads. And together they came up with a social enterprise called Eco Femme. "We were both very concerned by the growing mountain of sanitary waste which we knew was increasing rapidly due to increased adoption of disposable sanitary napkins and a lack of proper solid waste management systems in India. With Eco Femme, we dream of a cloth pad revolution," says Kathy.

The EcoFemme cloth pads are made of layers of organic, absorbent cotton and function exactly like a synthetic pad. It has features like wings and leak-proofing; it comes in four different sizes to cover all kinds of flow. The pad has a polyurethane laminate (PUL) which acts as a leak-guard. The pads are certified by the Global Organic Textile Standard. "We have ambassadors across the country who explain to buyers how the pads function. It is not a pickle that can be just put up for sale anywhere; it is essential that buyers are sensitised about the impact of their switch and the benefits of it," says Kathy. Cloth pads can cost more up front than a pack of disposables, but they last longer. "The pad can be used for up to 75 washes. Most people think that hot water is better for washing but in case of blood, avoid a hot wash as it can set stains," she says.

Washable sanitary napkins are breathable hence there will be no sweat and discomfort during its usage. Even in case of white discharge, cloth is much better than synthetic pads.

Cloth pads have been instrumental in not only reducing waste but also eliminating disgust associated with menstruation. As for Kathy, the pads have really helped transform her relationship with her body and establish a restorative relationship with the earth. Ladies, it is time to make the switch. □

Take your pick

Soch: The pads are made of soft fabric, combed cotton and microfibre. They also sell inter-labia pads.

Jaioni: Available in many colours and pretty prints, these are 100 per cent vegan and handmade. Even the snap buttons are made from coconut shell and wood.

Peesafe: Made with breathable fabric, the pads are soft enough to prevent any kind of itching or rashes which usually happens in case of synthetic pads.

UGER Pads: Hundred per cent cotton pads in bright hues. It also comes in a kit with multiple products called 'potli'.

Unipads: Easy-to-wash, long lasting pads with powerful soaking layer.

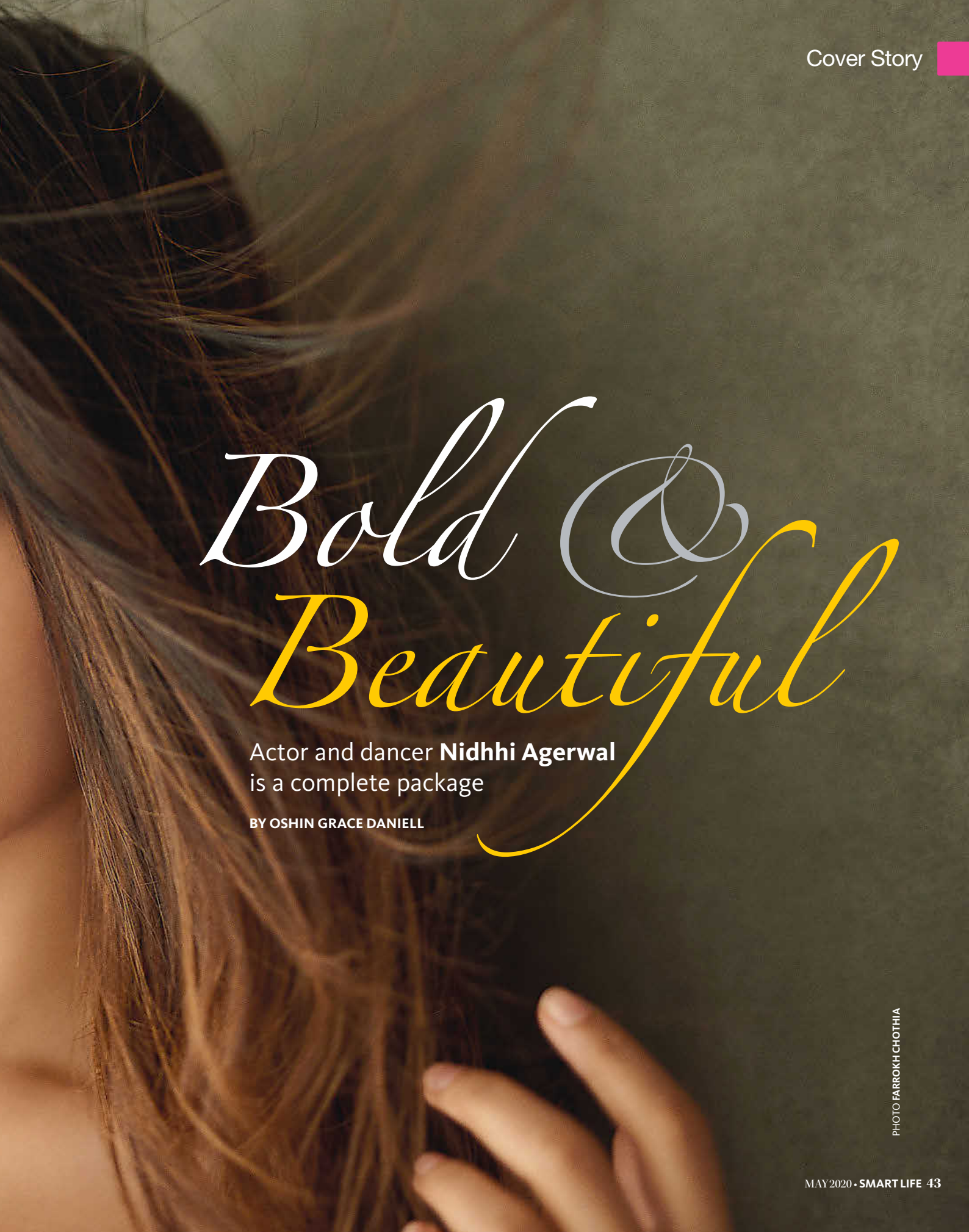
exhale

CELEBRATE LIFE, CHOICES AND CHALLENGES



A study by researchers from Yale University in New Haven, CT, shows that mixing artificial sweeteners with carbohydrates alters a person's sensitivity to sweet tastes, which may impact insulin sensitivity. Our sensitivity to sweet taste allows our body to release insulin into the blood when we eat or drink something sweet. If we lose this sensitivity then we might lose the ability to regulate metabolic responses that prepare the body for metabolising glucose or carbohydrates in general. This is mainly because the gut, which is sensitive to sucralose and maltodextrin, must have constantly signalled the brain that there are twice as many calories as are actually present. After some time, these wrong messages must have produced negative effects by the altering the way the body responds to sweet taste. So, think twice before you gulp down that can of coke.





Bold & Beautiful

Actor and dancer **Nidhhi Agerwal** is a complete package

BY OSHIN GRACE DANIELL

PHOTO **FARROKH CHOTHIA**

Nidhhi Agerwal was 11 when she came up with her first business model—a DVD rental enterprise. "I got a person who worked at my father's company to get a billing book printed with my photo, name and address; I labelled all the DVDs I had at home and went to every flat in my building to market my new venture," she recalls. It could have been a profitable model, but it was short-lived. The moment she got back home after her door-to-door marketing run, Nidhhi's mother gave her an earful. The movie rental business died an instant death, but not the passion for moving images. Many years later, she became part of the showbiz that she once tried to milk.

As a child, Nidhhi adored the 'Khans' of the Bollywood. And those DVDs with all the hits of the 90s and the first decade of the new millennium stoked a passion for acting inside her. "I have always wanted to become an actor. Always. I used to play dress up and try to imitate the actors and practise dialogues in front of my mirror," says the 25-year-old Bengaluru girl. Though Nidhhi had the will, she did not know which way to go at that time. "I did not know how to get into the industry; I did not have any contacts either. People who knew me suggested that I take up modelling. And that is exactly what I did. And before long, I won the Yamaha Fascino Miss Diva contest in 2014. It was a fluke and I did not have an idea as to what I was doing," she says. Call it luck or fluke, the title definitely got her some attention and it also gave her clarity on the profession she aspired for.

According to Nidhhi, there have been many incidents and signs that made her feel like acting is her calling. "Once, when I went to Mumbai with my family to visit the famous Ganapati temple there, I was surrounded by a group of girls who wanted to click a picture with me like I was some celebrity. The interesting bit is that this happened even before I started modelling. I was so confused at that point. But I took it as a sign that I should probably get into acting. Since this happened on temple grounds, I felt it was God pointing me to that direction," she recalls.

While most people around her thought the desire to be an actor was just a phase in her life, Nidhhi could feel the calling get louder and louder. And it reached a point where she decided to pack her bags and head to 'the city of dreams'—Mumbai. "My parents were sceptical about my decision but they gave me a year to figure out things and then return home if it didn't work out," she says.

There were a lot of uncertainties and setbacks initially but she kept swimming against the current and made her acting debut in the 2017 film *Munna Michael* alongside Tiger Shroff. Though the dance-action movie did not do well at the box office, Nidhhi definitely got noticed in the glitterati circle for her drop-dead gorgeous looks and dancing skills. She also bagged the Zee Cine Award for Best Female Debut in 2017. "I absolutely love dancing. I think it is my forte. Growing up, I trained for ballet, kathak and hip-hop.





PHOTO RAHUL JHANGIANI

At a glance

A hobby that you once had but not anymore.
Playing the piano. I took classes for about five years. I have a grand piano at my home in Mumbai.

Your favourite sportsperson.
Virat Kohli.

A show you binge-watched.
I recently watched this series called *You* on Netflix. It is super creepy.

Midnight indulgence.
Belgian chocolate ice cream

Your biggest strength.
My positivity. I am a very optimistic person and I think it is mainly because of my immense faith in God.

Your nightmare.
I have scary dreams every now and then. I recently had one where a pigeon attacked me.

Genie's granted you three wishes. Your pick
I want to wish for uncountable wishes. My second wish would be to keep me and my family safe. And third one will be to grant me super stardom.

Your most prized possession.
A watch my mother gifted me.

A lie you told your parents that you distinctly remember.
I have told a couple of lies to my parents in my teenage years. Just small things like where I am going or whom I am meeting. I don't lie anymore because it gives me a lot of anxiety.

Suppose you have only a day to live. What would you do? Where would you go?
I would stay at home, spend time with my family and donate all my wealth.

If you were given a billion dollars what would you do?
I love the thought of it. I would buy a big farm and build a lovely bungalow there. I would also set up an NGO to rescue street dogs and help people get their medical treatments done. I would also probably take a shopping trip and save whatever is left.

Suppose your house is on fire, what are the three things that you'd take with you?
My phone, my dog and my shoes. I have the most amazing collection of shoes. I would probably take them first and run away.

One memorable fan moment.
A fan got my name tattooed. I had just become an actor and I was super shocked to see it; I was very moved.

A celebrity crush.
There are many but if I had to tell one name, it would be Ryan Gosling.

If someone dead were to reincarnate, who would you want it to be?
Michael Jackson. I think he is a true legend. I love people who can sing and dance.

An interesting troll that you thought was creative.
There are many but right now I can't remember any. Sometimes the trolls seem like a compliment; it is confusing.

Horror movies or romcoms? Why?
Definitely not horror movies; I am super scared of the dark. I love romcoms. Everything about comedy fascinates me. I love thrillers.

Your take on nepotism.
Nepotism is a reality. But there is no point complaining about it. My father has a tyre business and if I was part of the tyre industry, I would have been the 'tyre queen'. If your parents are in a field, they would do everything to help you. I would do it for my kids.

If not an actor, then?
Nothing. I only wanted to be an actor.



What's on Nidhhi's plate

My diet keeps changing. I am a vegetarian by choice and healthy eating is something that I am very strict about. Even on shoot days, I make sure that I consume nutritious food. When I am at home, I eat a very filling breakfast; it is my favourite meal of the day. My father keeps saying, "Breakfast like a king and supper like a pauper." My family has followed this for many years now. I have a very light dinner and I make sure that I sleep seven to eight hours when I am not shooting.

Shoot day diet

Early morning: A lot of water (about half a litre). I also drink green juice made of spinach, bitter gourd, gooseberries and kale.

Breakfast: An omelette made of two eggs.

Lunch: One jowar roti, a little rice, some dal and boiled vegetables.

Evening snack: Tea and a mix of nuts.

Dinner: One Spanish omelette.

> I have always wanted to become an actor. Always. I did not know how to get into the industry; I did not have any contacts either. People who knew me suggested that I take up modelling. And that is exactly what I did.

It is amazing how *Munna Michael* is a blend of two of my favourite things—acting and dancing," she says. And it is not just dancing that our girl is good at, she is also into gymnastics. She has been working with Shroff's team of trainers to improve her flexibility and strength. "I feel stronger now. I hope someone casts me in a super intense action role soon," she says.

After her debut in Bollywood, she made an entry into the Telugu film industry with *Savyasachi*, in which she shared screen space with Akkineni Naga Chaitanya. "My mother is from Hyderabad and I have about 500 relatives there. So, doing a movie in Telugu meant a lot to me," she says. Probably one of the reasons why she took up more projects in Tollywood. Her role in the 2019 release *iSmart Shankar*, which was helmed by Puri Jagannadh, garnered a lot of praise; the film was a super-hit at the box office as well. "Puri sir was so patient with me. I used to keep asking a lot of doubts and he kept telling me to be calm and not overthink. My father always wanted me to be a scientist or a doctor. So, he was quite happy to see me play the role of a neuroscientist in *iSmart Shankar*," she says.

But everything was not always peachy for Nidhhi. She says that there were days when she questioned her dreams and aspirations. She used to keep fretting about one thing or the other. "One of my films had not done well and it felt worse than a heartbreak. People's opinions constantly change with time and it is mostly based on one's last performance. I think it is about time we rise above it. Everything is a journey. It is never about the destination, so just enjoy your journey," she says.

Nidhhi believes that with time one learns to adapt to putdowns and setbacks. Something that tags along with fame is criticism. "I have had a lot of people troll me. I don't react to it a lot. At the end of the day I know that there are many idiots in the world who have fingers to type nonsensical stuff," she says.

Recently, the actor has been busy clearing the air on rumours about dating cricketer K.L. Rahul. "He is a really good friend of mine. We both are from Bengaluru and our friendship started much before he became a cricketer and I became an actor. We just happened to meet up in Mumbai for some coffee and the media linked us," she says.

Having said all that, the fashionista loves social media. Her Instagram page recently hit five million followers. Besides giving her fans a glimpse into

My fitness regime

As a child, I was chubby. But, I grew up to be a skinny teenager. Just like how people make fun of fat children, they make fun of the skinny ones, too. I was a victim of that. That is when I decided to hit the gym and work on my weight and also my muscles. Now I am happy with my body and how much muscle I have gained as a result of working out.

I mostly do weight training, which includes heavy weights and high-intensity functional exercises, for five days a week. I also do cardio-dancing three days a week. On the sets of *Munna Michael*, I got in touch with Tiger Shroff's fitness training team. I also picked up some gymnastics. I am fit now to do some action roles now; I hope someone casts me for an intense action movie.





PHOTO SASHA JAIRAM

My skincare hacks

I am very careful when it comes to my skin. It is a very sensitive part of the human body and you need to be patient when it comes to taking care of it. I don't use face wash in the morning.

Before makeup: I apply Dior moisturiser and La Shield sun block.

At night: Dermatologist-recommended face wash and an under eye cream from Clarins.

DIY face packs:

Mix some curd, turmeric powder, honey and lemon and apply it on your face. Leave it for about 10-15 minutes before washing it off with water.

Combine some fresh aloe vera gel, turmeric powder and coffee powder. Apply it on your face and let it rest for some time. Scrub gently while washing it off with cold water.

> One of my films had not done well and it felt worse than a heartbreak. People's opinions constantly change with time and it is mostly based on one's last performance. I think it is about time we rise above it. Everything is a journey.

her workout routine and personal life, Nidhhi is a regular when it comes to posting pictures from her photoshoots. "When I go through the comments on my Instagram posts, I find a lot of pick-up lines—both good and bad. One of the really weird statements that I distinctly remember is 'so hot, sis'; he was calling me his sister and also calling me hot," she laughs.

These comments might seem funny to her now, but as a child, she used to get angry quite fast. She calls her younger self a rowdy. "I have slapped so many boys and girls during my school days. I remember the first time a boy told me that he likes me. We were in the school bus on our way back home. I was eating an apple and he was sitting in the seat behind mine. He said something like, 'hey, you are very beautiful! I like you a lot'. I threw the half-bitten apple at his face," she says. Roses, chocolate boxes and other cheesy gifts that screamed 'I love you Nidhhi' also found its way into the trash. "I was one hyper child. But I have evolved a lot in the recent past," she says.

Currently, Nidhhi is in Bengaluru with her family and is making the most of the lockdown. She is busy learning online—an acting course from the prestigious New York Film Academy and a script writing course from an American online education platform.

"I don't want to be just content; I want super stardom. And I want to work for multilingual projects," she says. It may seem a tad too ambitious but the actor is definitely working towards it. Besides Hindi, Kannada and Telugu, Nidhhi picked up some Tamil for her recent project *Bhoomi*, which marks her debut in Kollywood. The action-drama starring Jayam Ravi was supposed to be released on May 1, but has now been postponed due to the lockdown. According to her, *Bhoomi* is one of the best projects she has worked on. "I play a fun role in the movie. I have always played sober characters but Bhoomi is the closest to who I really am as a person. I am a very crazy person and this movie lets me bring out the best in me. I can confidently say that this has been my best performance so far and I can't wait for people to watch it," she says.

She also dreams of entering the Malayalam film industry. "I think they have some amazing stories and excellent cinematographers. Picking up Tamil was a little difficult, which means Malayalam will be even more challenging, but I am ready. I will never let language limit my potential," she says. Well, as they say, sky is the limit. ☐

Nothing down about lockdown

One hobby you picked up during the lockdown.
Mopping. I mop my house every day now; it is a great exercise and it keeps my house clean.

Once everything is back to normal, what is the first thing in your list of things to do?
I want to go for a shoot; I miss the sets. Last year, I took 163 flights as part of my work. This year, I don't think I will take even half of that.

One dish that you whipped up during this period.
I baked a chocolate cake under the supervision of my younger sister. Since we both are into healthy eating, we used maple syrup instead of sugar. It was absolutely tasty. I am not someone who craves for sweet stuff but lately, I have developed a sweet tooth.

You're given a minute to pick out groceries. What are the five items that you would pick up?
Organic eggs, yoghurt, gluten-free bread, avocado and lemon. It would make a great breakfast. Did I mention that I love drinking lemon water?

Lockdown reading list.
Autobiography Of A Yogi by Paramahansa Yogananda, *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne, *Ikigai* by Albert Liebermann and Hector Garcia. I read a lot of self-help books and I also listen to a lot of motivational speakers.

Movies that you watch over and over again. *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Lion King*.

Series that keep you awake.
F.R.I.E.N.D.S, *The Big Bang Theory*, *Gossip Girl*.



I am a simple eater

British-Indian actor **Alina Rai** talks about her diet and fitness

I started my journey in 2017 as a model and a fashion blogger. I came from England with an agency to work in Mumbai. After coming to this city, I fell in love with the people, culture, food and just everything about it. I instantly felt at home here and accepted. I made my debut with Badshah in his music video 'Kamaal Hai'. I got an amazing response for my performance. I am currently shooting for the Bollywood movie, *Lucknow Junction* that will mark my debut on the silver screen. I also have a couple of film projects in the pipeline and I am super excited about them.

Most people call me the doppelganger of Katrina Kaif; some even go to the extent of calling me her long-lost twin. Apart from acting, I also do a lot of fashion blogging and regularly post images of the latest trendy outfits on Instagram; I got spotted there as well. For me, exercising is important to keep myself active and fresh. I believe it re-programmes your whole body. I love food but I am also a simple eater. I sometimes sneak into my kitchen at night to have some chocolate, biscuits or anything sweet for that matter. I do miss home and the food that my mother cooks. She used to feed me a lot of Indian food despite the fact that we lived in England. Its taste is beyond words, probably because she put her secret ingredient in it—love. Family is everything for me and I constantly stay in touch with them throughout the day; it almost feels like I'm not so far away from them.

As told to Oshin Grace Daniell

Healthy eating is a lifestyle and not a diet. Including real whole food aids optimal functioning of the body and helps you live a fuller life.

Karishma Chawla, nutritionist and lifestyle educator.



Alina Rai's diet

Early morning: I drink a lot of water in the morning.

Breakfast: I start my day with cornflakes and some fruits.

Mid-day snack: I usually have a fruit, crackers or a protein bar to keep me going.

Lunch: A sandwich or a vegetable roll.

Dinner: It pretty much depends on my mood. Sometimes I have vegetables and roti, or I go overboard and have an Italian pizza or Thai food.

Nutrition advice:

- Start the day with some vegetable juice which helps to kickstart your daily routine with better energy levels
- Drop the cornzflakes. It is high on sugar and is also a gut inflammatory. Try homemade breakfasts like buck-wheat upma or red rice poha. Also consume plain muesli without any sugar or dried fruits twice a week to minimise fat storage.
- Switch to a fruit like apple, pear or papaya along with protein powder like whey or pea and brown rice mix. The quantity of carbohydrates in protein bars may not meet the body's protein needs.
- For lunch, avoid bread as it contains sugar and trans fat even it is whole-wheat. Indian rotis like jowar or amaranth with a bowl of vegetables and dal is an ideal lunch. Raw salads are also great.
- For dinner, try having roti, brown rice or quinoa with two servings of fibrous food.

smile

INDULGE YOUR SENSES, HAVE FUN



Forget energy bars and shots, just pop a tablespoon of honey before your next workout. It has been proven to boost athletic performance. We know that a drop of honey in tea is good for a sore throat, but you can add it to most drinks for an extra energy boost. Also, it is a whole lot better than tossing in a few Sweet 'n' Lows. Honey is also loaded with fructose which aids the metabolism of alcohol—perfect hangover cure. Apart from the benefits it offers through consumption, it does wonders when used topically. Add a few tablespoons of honey to your bath for sweeter smelling, softer water. In the shower, after you wash your hair, coat the ends with a bit of honey. Let it sit for a bit and rinse it off. You'll find that your hair is less frizzy and extra conditioned. Time to get that jar of honey!

Miss sunshine

Celebrity chef Chinu Vaze shares her journey into the culinary world and also some of her favourite summertime recipes

BY OSHIN GRACE DANIELL



My first memory of summer is the smell of mangoes," says chef Shilarna Vaze aka chef Chinu who runs the Gaia Gourmet in Mumbai. "Although I eat mangoes whenever I get them, my mother wouldn't touch them until April 14, which is her birthday. My grandfather used to bring her a crate of mangoes on that day. Even though he is no more, we still continue the tradition," she says. According to Chinu, mangoes taste the best when they are plucked and eaten in the right season. "As a caterer, I wait for the mango season to incorporate it in all my dishes; everything from coolers and pickles to salads and desserts," she says.

The Bombay girl who is obsessed with food says her childhood has played a big role in her culinary journey. "I come from a family of fabulous cooks. I was exposed to brilliant seafood as well as the best of international cuisine by them. Although I took up political science in my undergraduate programme, I decided to pursue my dream of becoming a chef after my graduation. And what better place to learn the basics of gastronomy than the food capital of the world—Paris!" she says. Chinu got her diploma de cuisine from the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu, Paris, alma mater of the world-renowned cook Julia Child. With her diploma in hand, she got back to India and moved to her soul-town Goa while also working for kid's television channel Pogo. "In Goa I worked for highly-creative stand-alone restaurants and learnt a lot by assisting chefs. I also learnt the intricacies of running a restaurant by working in these places. And the best part is that this is where I met my husband chef Christophe Perrin. It was quite serendipitous," she says. Aside from being a chef, Christophe is also a trained horticulturist and word has it that he knew how to whip up a pasta when he was eight. "Christophe and I met at a rave party in Goa. He thought I was 12 years old and asked for my ID card. I was 25 at the time for the record!" Chinu says.

In 2009, the duo opened their first restaurant in Goa called Gaia, named after the earth and all the bounty she offers. From Christophe's father's signature morel sauce to Chinu's prawn khichdi, their restaurant became a big hit in the sunshine state. This was probably because they brought an Indian-Swiss twist to everything they prepared. They served everything from Mexican, Maharashtrian and Japanese to Burmese and authentic French cuisine. While setting up the restaurant, Chinu hosted her first show 'Firangi Tadka' for Food Food channel featuring food from all over the globe; this was the first of many shows she hosted for the channel. Chinu attained the 'celebrity chef' tag with shows such as 'Style Chef', 'Sunny Side Up' and 'Tiffin Box'. Brushing aside all the accolades, the



culinary couple decided to move to Mumbai to expand their business. They started Gaia Gourmet, a gourmet, eclectic catering company. It is now one of the most popular catering services in Mumbai for people who are looking for something unique, authentic and international. And their clientele consists of mostly the glitterati crowd, starting from Bollywood biggies like Alia Bhatt, Sonam Kapoor and Karan Johar to international brands like Gucci, Christian Louboutin and Hermes.

Chinu believes that chefs learn only by taking risks and working inside busy kitchens. They must experiment with different ingredients and bold flavours. But she also adds that it is not all that serious all the time. "We also have a lot of funny incidents inside and outside the kitchen. I can't tell you everything but one of the incidents that I distinctly remember was a brownie situation. It was during Holi and we were catering for a client. We served them brownies and after some time the guests started feeling strange; they started feeling very hungry. One of the guests got so hungry that he started having dal makhani in the shot glasses that were placed on the banquet table. It was only later that we realised that they had the bhang-coated brownies. It was hilarious," she recalls.

Last year, she launched her first cookbook for Penguin Random House on "How to throw a party like a star" which is a collection of recipes as well as some kitchen hacks. "I take inspiration from the trips I take with my family to the wild and beautiful places of earth where people cook with their hearts and hands using traditional wisdom and knowledge. I love cooking authentic and luxurious food but lately I have been into a lot of healthy organic dishes as both Christophe and I are big on holistic lifestyle," Chinu says. No wonder she is fit as a fiddle! □

Ragi lavash

Ingredients

- Ragi flour- 1 cup
- Whole wheat flour- ½ cup
- Salt- 1 tsp
- Butter- ¼ cup
- Water- ½ cup
- White sesame- 1tsp
- Black sesame seeds- 1tsp
- Poppy seeds- 1 tsp

Method

- Weigh all the ingredients in a mixing bowl except the black sesame and poppy seeds. Using the dough kneading attachment, make a soft dough. Rest the dough for 20 minutes under a damp cloth.
- Divide the dough into six equal portions and roll each portion into very thin circles. Cut each circle into six triangles and place on a baking tray.
- Spray each triangle with water and sprinkle some sesame seeds and poppy seeds on top.
- Bake in a pre-heated oven at 200°C for 10-12 minutes until golden brown.





Pickled jalapeno hummus

Ingredients

For pickled jalapenos

- Vinegar- 1 ½ cups
- Olive oil- 1 cup
- Sugar- 1tbsp
- Salt- ½ tbsp
- Jalapeno- ½ kg

Method

- Mix vinegar, olive oil, sugar and salt and keep it aside.
- Slice the jalapenos into rounds and add these to the mixture(the liquid should cover the jalapenos completely). Transfer all of it to a bottle or covered bowl and keep it outside in room temperature for two days. After that refrigerate it.

For hummus

- Kabuli channa- 200g
- Tahini sauce- 1tbsp
- Garlic clove, roasted- 2 whole heads
- Salt- 1tsp
- Olive oil- 1 cup
- Lemon juice- 1tbsp

Method

- Soak the channa overnight and remember this doubles in size once cooked. Rinse the channa the next day and add three cups of water. Cook it in a pressure cooker at medium flame until the whistle goes off thrice. Strain the channa and keep the channa water aside.
- In a mixer, add the channa, the strained water, roasted garlic, salt, lemon juice and olive oil.
- Once mixed well by hand, add 20 slices of the pickled jalapenos and mix it again. Blend it until it becomes a paste. Drizzle some olive oil on top of it and if needed, also sprinkle some chilli powder.
- Garnish it with moringa powder, few slices of pickled jalapenos, a few slices of plums and some cherry tomatoes.



Mango colada

Ingredients

- Hapus mango- 1, peeled and cubed
- Sabja or basil seeds (soaked in 3tbsp of warm water)- 1tsp
- Goji berries (soaked in 3tbsp of warm water)- 1tsp (optional)
- Ginger, grated- 1/2tsp
- Shatavari- 1tsp (optional)
- Tender coconut (1/4 cup coconut flesh + 1/2 cup coconut water)- 1
- Pineapple (cored, sliced and tough bits removed)- 1
- Moringa powder- ½ tsp (optional)

Method

- Soak sabja seeds in a bowl and goji berries in a separate bowl.
- Combine pineapples slices, ginger and coconut water in a juicer (if you are using a regular blender, you might need to strain). Add mango, strained goji berries, shatavari and coconut flesh to pineapple-ginger juice and blend it again.
- Strain sabja and mix into smoothie or add on top with moringa powder. Serve chilled.
- Chef's tip- Investing in a good smoothie blender can make your breakfast life much easier. Depending on your budget, you could either go for top of the line (Vitamix) or more affordable ones (Hamilton Beach). It saves you from having to strain and waste time with juices and can get a nutritious brekkie ready in minutes.

Spanish paprika prawns

Ingredients

For aglio olio sauce

- Olive oil- ½ l
- Garlic, finely chopped-2 heads
- Chilli flakes-¼ cup
- Oregano- 2tbsp
- Sea salt- 1tsp
- Crushed black pepper-1tsp

For paprika prawns

- Aglio olio sauce- 5tbsp
- Big prawns- 8 pieces
- Lemon juice- ½ tsp
- Fresh cream- 1tbsp
- Parsley- for garnish
- Add on- Goan sausages

Method

- To make the aglio olio sauce, add olive oil and garlic in a pan at very low heat and keep mixing for about 15 minutes. Add in chilli flakes, oregano, salt and pepper. Cook it for five minutes and take it off the heat.
- Defrost prawns and marinate in salt, pepper, oregano, chilli flakes and lemon juice
- Toss prawns and the Goan sausages in aglio oil, lemon juice and fresh cream mix. Garnish with chopped parsley and lemon wedges.





Orange almond cake

Ingredients

- Malta orange- 1 (after paste- ¾ cup)
- All-purpose flour- 1/8cup
- Almond powder- 1 ¼ cup
- Castor sugar- 1 cup
- Baking powder- ½ tsp
- Eggs- 4

Method

- Pre-heat the oven at 180°C.
- Pressure cook the whole orange with peel for three to four whistles till it is cooked and soft. Let is cool and remove the seeds. Blend it into a paste and measure ¾ cup and keep it aside.
- Sieve and weigh the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl.
- Start whipping whole eggs and add sugar gradually till soft peaks are formed.
- Slowly add the dry ingredients to the orange paste. Also add the egg mix and mix it all together with a spatula using the cut and fold method until it is a homogenous mixture.
- Line the baking tray with butter paper and pour the batter into it. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes. Insert a toothpick at the centre of the cake and see if it comes out clean. If it does, the cake is ready.
- Glaze the cake with orange marmalade.



It's a wrap



Height of freedom

Oshin Grace Daniell talks about overcoming her fear of heights

I was nine when I first realised that I had a fear of heights. It was shortly after my cousin pushed me down a flight of stairs. Although there weren't any injuries, the incident affected me adversely. From that day, I refused to do anything that involved climbing or being on higher ground. When it came to friends, none of the girls included me in their ground games like playing with their kitchen sets or dressing up their dolls since I had a boy-cut and pretty much looked like a boy in my round-neck tees and boyish shorts. A bunch of meanies, I say.

But to my surprise, the boys received me into their gang with open arms. Little did I know that most of their games involved climbing. From trees to walls to tall gates, they just wanted to climb everything. While they did all the climbing, I stayed down and simply watched them enjoy the heights. Deep down, I really wanted to be up there and just enjoy the view. Once, two of them got me up on the wall but I started trembling and breathing so heavily that I almost passed out. The day I turned 11, I made a decision to find a way to overcome this fear. "How about a flight journey?" my mother said. I got excited about the plan instantly as I had never experienced it before. That night I dreamt of flying and how I would finally get to break the leash of fear that had me bound for years..

The next day, I told my best friend about it and instead of being happy about my plan, he smirked. "I don't think it will help. The glass window shields you from feeling the wind on your face; it does nothing," he said. I got really upset at what he said, however, I knew that he was right. That afternoon he brought a pamphlet for a 15-day paragliding camp by the NCC (National Cadet Corp); he also got two registration forms. Before we knew it, we were in line for the fitness check and then on the train to Tamil Nadu where we had the training. Although my parents were doubtful about the idea initially, they gave in after a lot of whining and wallowing.

"Run as fast as you can"—these words of my paragliding instructor still echo in my head. I was the last person in line for the flying session. I had seen many who went before me stop running midway because they were scared; I expected my case to be the same. As I gathered up all my energy and started running, the chute inflated. Before I knew it, I was up in the air. There was panic initially but that turned into exhilaration within minutes. I saw the beautiful Western Ghats, the valleys and my tiny friends who watched me scream and laugh hysterically. There was no heavy breathing or trembling; I felt free. About five minutes into flying and I was completely calm. As a matter of fact, I absolutely loved it. Those 15 minutes up in the air changed my life completely. On the last day of our training, we lined up for our final flying session. And guess who was first in line? Me! □



Pray at the temple of Kamakhya Devi that is one of the oldest of the 51 Shakti Peeths



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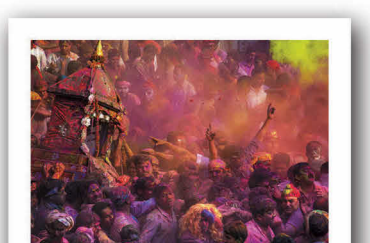
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