



The Linden method

Having suffered from anxiety since the age of four, Charles Linden's condition peaked when he was 23, resulting in severe anxiety, panic attacks, agoraphobia and obsessive-compulsive disorder. He has since cured himself and now works as a stress and anxiety specialist, helping more than 136,000 people worldwide with his Linden method – a drug-free solution to stress and anxiety disorders used by psychologists, doctors and psychiatrists.



'The Linden method is a structured programme for the elimination of high-anxiety conditions,' he says. 'I spent 12 months researching the reasons for people's recovery and found it wasn't due to medication, counselling or psychotherapy, as they thought, but actually a group of life circumstances that had conspired to create an environment for recovery.'

'This changed the way the brain perceives its environment and, once that happens and the brain receives a safety signal, it turns the anxiety and stress off. Simply changing the way you structure your day and the way you perceive the things that you do in life creates an environment for recovery. It's that environment that forces the brain to believe it is safe and causes it to switch off the anxiety response.'

'Very often you get caught up in day-to-day life and rarely perceive the truth. The truth is, we live and we die and we need to make the best we can of the bit in between.'

www.thelindenmethod.co.uk

Body Matters

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Worked into a frenzy

It's official: we're a nation of stress heads. The pressure of trying to achieve the perfect career while maintaining the perfect house and managing the perfect relationship is taking its toll on our health.

In a survey of 2,372 people, 99 per cent admitted feeling stressed out at some point every day. The survey, conducted by herbal treatment brand Rescue Remedy, found one in four people felt stressed for up to 30 minutes a day. Plus, because of stress, 49 per cent said they gained weight and 42 per cent reported relationship trouble.

It seems those in their thirties are the worst affected, as they are fraught with anxiety about heavy workloads, job security, childcare and fear of failure, according to research by Karma, another manufacturer of herbal remedies.

National Stress Awareness Day, which falls on November 3, is organised by the International Stress

Under pressure: HOW often do you feel stressed by the demands of daily life? Most days? You're not alone, as VICKI-MARIE COSSAR discovers

Management Association. It is designed to highlight strategies for coping and advertise help that is available for sufferers.

'We're in our 12th year, which shows that the management of stress is still highly relevant today, both in the workplace and society,' says the association's chair, Ann McCracken.

'The day allows us to reflect on the excessive pressures in our lives and how we as individuals and employers can cope with them.'

It is estimated that 13.5million working days a year are

lost as a result of stress. Ian Barratt (pictured right), a corporate stress management consultant for Mind Strengths, says workplace stress costs businesses thousands of pounds each year.

'It's important for businesses to ensure they have adequate measures in place to identify, reduce and manage the problems associated with stress,' he says. 'In Britain, it is estimated that one in six workers suffers with stress and those same people underperform at work by more than 30 per cent. That can have an impact on the financial state of your business, as well as the health and well-being of your employees.'

Dr Nerina Ramlakhan (pictured left), a sleep and energy coach at the private Capio Nightingale Hospital, specialises in e-didiction – the inability to switch off from the virtual world. She is also author of *Tired But Wired* and runs programmes on stress.



'There's been a huge demand for these programmes in the last six months due to people pushing themselves too hard during the recession,' she says.

'We talk about sustainable energy on a global level but I talk to people about how to sustain energy on an individual level. I focus on old-fashioned practices: don't log on at the weekend, take your holiday days and make sure you take your lunch breaks, particularly if you're a manager. They are the ones who should be setting an example.'

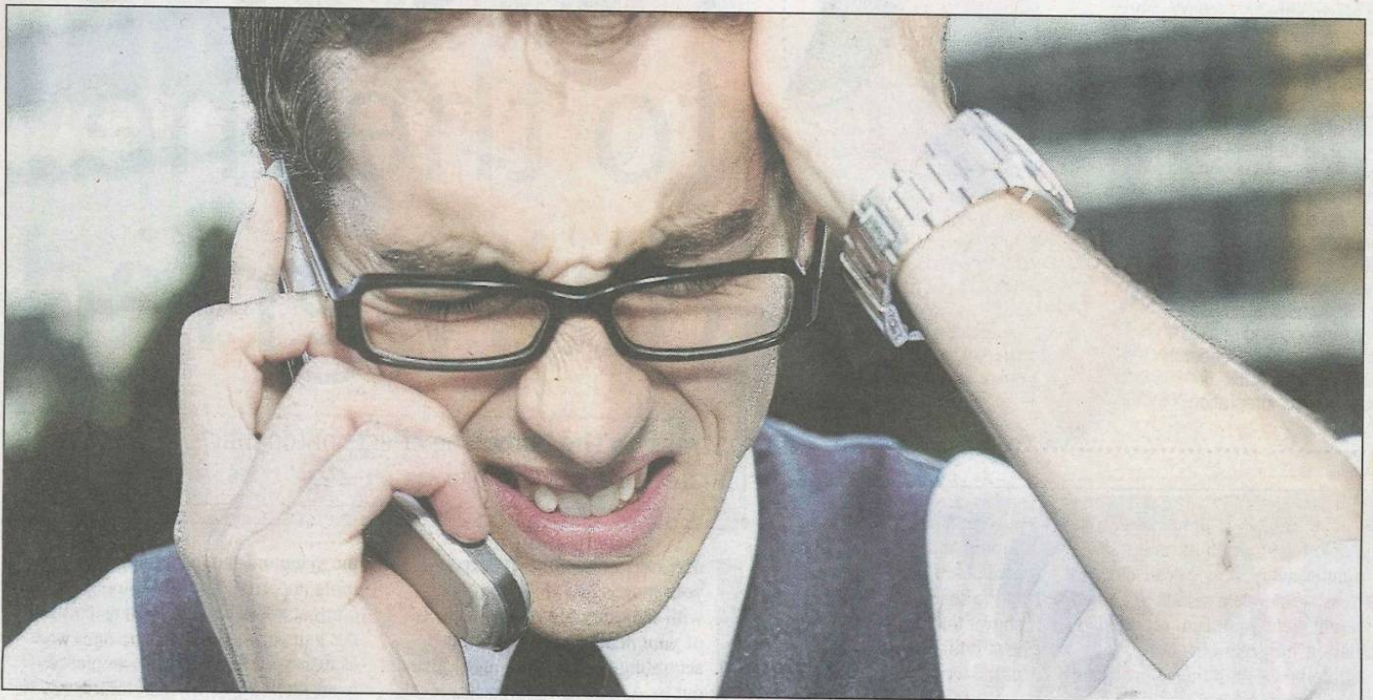
So how can we inch towards a stress-free life? Firstly, there's our diet. Zana Morris, nutritionist at Educo-Gym Harley Street, says: 'Certain foods cause the body to act as if in a state of stress, providing a energy high but leaving the body depleted of essential nutrients. This in turn makes it even harder for the body to cope, leaving you feeling more stressed, tired or irritable.'





This hand-held gadget deploys microcurrent technology to reduce anxiety and depression

Alpha-Stim SCS, £299, www.themicrocurrentsite.co.uk



I recommend nuts and seeds, which can have a positive impact on blood sugars, mood and energy. Almonds are particularly high in calcium, an alkaline mineral that helps the body relax.'

Equally, exercise can release endorphins (the happy hormone) into your blood stream. Nick

Hudson, a personal trainer at Virgin Active, says a certain amount of stress is good because it challenges us but when this rises above a certain level it becomes unhealthy.

'The key stress hormone, cortisol, is released between 6am and 9am,' he says. 'It's what wakes us up and gets us going but it's also released at

times of moderate to severe stress. Cortisol is actually catabolic and breaks down bone and muscle tissue. So while a certain amount of stress is good for us, long term it can reduce your metabolic rate by literally eating away at our bodies.'

Before choosing a new fitness regime, Hudson suggests

considering the type of stress you're under first. 'Someone who has a poor diet and isn't sleeping should avoid high-impact, physically demanding workouts which could work them into a greater frenzy but yoga and Pilates are good as they bring balance.'

www.isma.org.uk