



Fitness with Tracy Griffen

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June 2006

Welcome to the new look of your monthly fitness newsletter! I've been meaning to reformat this newsletter for awhile.... Speaking of procrastination, my husband and I recently started flat hunting for a bigger space. We adored the second flat we saw and moved like lightning to secure it. In less than a week we had our current flat ready for sale. In two days we has prepared our flat from top to bottom, cleaning the oven, the walls, mowing the lawn, painting the window panes and replacing broken bits and pieces.

It was amazing how much we got done, and with every job we said "we should have done this years ago". Now our flat looks spic and span and we are leaving it.

Unlike a flat, you only have one chance with your body, so why procrastinate? In the time it takes to procrastinate, you can have finished your workout and be relaxing with a cup of herbal tea. And you'll feel much better for doing it...

What's in season

It's good to cook seasonally, and here's the pick of the crop for June - elderflowers, lettuce, strawberries, gooseberries, tayberries (a Scottish cross of blackberries and raspberries), redcurrants, courgettes, broad beans, peppers, asparagus, cherries, aubergines and peas.

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Oatcake topping of the month

Heap some rocket salad (see [recipe](#) below) on an oatcake with a sliver of feta cheese, or low fat soft cheese spread. Yum!

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Urban Walk of the Moo-nth



You might have noticed a number of artistically decorated cows grazing around Edinburgh recently. They're all participants in this year's CowParade, an arts event that has been moooving around the world. Spend a sunny Sunday walking around the city looking for these cows and pick your favourite.

Email me your favourite cow (and where it is) and I will compile a **'Best in Show'** tour for the next newsletter. The Cow Parade is on until July 23 and more info can be found at www.edinburgh.cowparade.com. You can find a map of all the cows on the Forth One Radio website, by clicking [here](#).

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Recipes

Spanish Omelette

Protein is an important element of any diet, and even more so if you are exercising regularly – it's the building block of muscle and tissue and is required to help the body repair itself. The humble egg has had bad some press, however is a great source of protein, especially for vegetarians. It's recommended not to eat more than a couple a week. This omelette is perfect for four people, or for two for dinner and lunch (it's also tasty cold).

1 kg fresh potatoes
salt
1 spanish onion (or a brown onion, or one leek), chopped
1 tab olive oil
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tab chopped fresh parsley
4 organic free-range eggs (available in health food shops – much better than supermarket eggs)
100mL milk
60g grated cheese (optional)
sea salt and pepper

1. In a jug, whisk the eggs together with the milk, salt and pepper and most of the parsley. Set aside.
2. Wash and chop the potatoes into 1cm thick slices. Use fresh good quality waxy potatoes and leave the skin on. Par boil / steam / microwave until they are slightly cooked, but still firm. Drain.

3. Heat the oil in a non stick frying pan over a medium heat and sauté onion and garlic until transparent, add the potato and cook for a few minutes.
4. Turn the heat down to medium low, add the egg mixture and let cook on medium heat until omelette starts solidifying and browns on the bottom.
5. Sprinkle the grated cheese on top, the rest of the parsley and pop the pan under a grill to brown the top.

Serve with rocket salad - recipe below

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Rocket Salad

Rocket leaves have recently become a common sight in our shops, and are full of iron and nutrients. You can grow rocket easily in a window box, and it will provide you with fresh leaves for about a month. One of the tastier salad leaves around, they're also versatile for use in cooking (wilted rocket with pasta, garlic, a little olive oil and pine nuts is a divine and easy dinner).

Colander full of rocket leaves, rinsed and drained
Handful of really ripe cherry tomatoes, halved
Some pinenuts, lightly toasted (optional)

Toss all in a bowl and drizzle with a splash of balsamic vinegar and a tiny bit of good quality olive oil. Other additions could include roast garlic, roast red peppers, olives or a (tiny bit of) shaved parmesan cheese.



A Thank You

I'd like to thank Susan from The PA Exchange for her help and support over the last year with spreading the fitness word. Thanks to her fantastic network, this newsletter now has an extra twelve readers each month.

If you work in an office, I urge to subscribe (for free) to The PA Exchange, an invaluable information service for everything and anything the indispensable PA or small business requires. Free membership entitles you to the informative emails, and you can always upgrade your membership to be included in the events and special offers. See www.thepaexchange.co.uk or email Susan at info@thepaexchange.co.uk for more information.

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Article of the month: Cardiovascular fitness – what's in it for me?

All of my regular clients are aware of the need to raise their heart rates regularly, however I thought I'd write an article on exactly why this is important.

Cardiovascular (or cardio) fitness refers to the kind of exercise where you get active and raise your heart rate. By raising your heart rate, you are effectively exercising your heart. Your heart is an amazing muscle, throughout your life it is responsible for the circulation of freshly oxygenated blood to your entire body. Your body tissue requires oxygen to function, and your heart is the pump that gets it there. If you start to imagine your heart as a muscle, you can easily understand why you need to exercise it.

By going for a fast walk / jog / cycle you increase your bodies oxygen requirement, therefore your heart needs to pump faster. This is why your heart rate increases when you exercise. All of my clients will have learnt how to feel their pulse and count how many times their heart beats per minute. By raising your heart rate to a safe but effective level, you can train your heart to work more efficiently. The outcome? A fitter, stronger heart with an increased output; overall a healthier organ with a lower resting heart rate (as your heart is working better, so needs to pump less). Cardio exercise also helps to increase the capacity and effectiveness of your lungs, and can help to lower blood pressure.

Cardiovascular exercise can also help speed up your metabolism (see the bottom of [November 2005 newsletter](#) by clicking the link), which is great news for burning calories easier. So how much is enough? It is recommended that we all undertake cardio exercise for at least 20 minutes on a minimum of three days per week. Of course, it is always possible to do longer, and the 20 minutes is really a bare minimum (for example an aerobics class usually lasts 45+ minutes, but incorporates the building, then lowering of heart rate).

Everyone also has a heart rate range at which they are burning fat the most efficiently – please do book in a session if you would like me to calculate your ideal range, which varies depending on your age and fitness. We can also work at how we can get you exercising within this range.

If you have any heart problems or any health issues you feel might be affected by raising your heart rate, please do check with a Doctor before pushing yourself!

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