

With health

A matter of health

The downside of snoring, and the lowdown on food allergies...

Words **Rachel Newcombe**

Natural approach for cold comfort

Children are particularly susceptible to colds during the winter months, with those at primary school catching an average six to eight per year. The people behind Dr. Greenfingers believe, "children's less developed, delicate immune systems shouldn't be exposed to too many chemicals," so they've got a 100 per cent natural range of cold-fighting products. Winter Cheek and Nose Soother, Breathe Easy Spray and Cough Soother are bursting with healing ingredients, including Calendula, Marshmallow roots, Eucalyptus and Juniper, and cost from £3.95 to £5.95. For stockists, ☎ 020 8408 0422, www.drgreenfingers.co.uk



Coping with food allergies... and letting people know

Many people are affected by food allergies, which can certainly make life tricky. *Living With Food Allergy* by Alex Gazzola (Sheldon Press, £7.99) takes an in-depth look at what allergies are, why they occur, how they can be tested, and the treatments available. Packed with practical information and advice, he suggests ways of coping with allergies, from careful shopping and checking labels to coping emotionally and when travelling. It's an essential read for anyone whose life is touched by the difficulty of allergies. Letting schools or nurseries know about children's allergies is crucial and a set of 'My Nametags' could help. These hypoallergenic labels are ironed onto clothes or stuck to items, and won't come off in the wash.

A mixed set of 75 iron-on and 75 stick-on nametags costs £9.95. Order online at www.mynametags.com



Yawning divide

One in four couples sleep in separate rooms because one partner snores, a survey has found. The Great British Snoring Survey polled 2,000 people: 48 per cent said snoring affected personal relationships, and 81 per cent of women complained about snoring men. Denise Knowles from Relate said: "When people are deprived of sleep they suffer physically and emotionally. Sleeping apart is one way of dealing with it, but a long-term solution so you can share the same bed is the best way." The partial collapse of soft tissue at the back of the throat is one cause of snoring. Snoreeze make oral strips, which dissolve into the throat tissues, and a throat spray. **Snoreeze Oral Strips, £14.99 for 14 strips, Snoreeze Throat Spray, £12.95 for 50 uses.**

Glue ear comes unstuck

Half of all children under one are prone to glue ear (otitis media), which causes inflammation in the middle ear and a glue-like discharge. A third of one to three-year olds suffer regularly and it can cause hearing impairment. A team from the Medical Research Council has discovered a faulty gene could be to blame. The Evi1 gene may affect the cells lining the middle ear when there's inflammation, causing glue ear. Dr Mark Downs from the RNID described the research as exciting and said it "highlights the role genetic factors play in many forms of hearing loss."

A bone to pick with cola

Women who regularly drink cola could increase their risk of osteoporosis. That's the conclusion from a new study of 2,500 people, which linked cola with low bone-mineral density. Drinking four colas a week lowered bone mineral density in women, but strangely not men, and other carbonated drinks were fine. "We think phosphoric acid in cola, especially when drunk daily, creates an acidic environment in the blood. Calcium is then taken out of the bones to balance it out," said lead researcher, Professor Katherine Tucker. To protect your bones, especially if you've drunk lots of cola, eat a healthy diet with calcium-rich foods, don't smoke and get plenty of exercise.