



fit women's **ess**

ONLY Australia only
\$6.50

FEBRUARY 2015
*AUS \$6.50 NZ \$7.50

Best. Abs. Ever.

TOP MOVES TO KICK
OFF THE NEW YEAR

Get 'em on p48

WHY LIFTING
WEIGHTS =
**A KILLER
BODY!**

Win!

A LUXE ACTIVE
ESCAPE WORTH
OVER \$5000

Conditions apply,
see page 130

hello, fast burn!

**4-MINUTE
TONE-UP**

SHORT TIME,
BIG RESULTS

sneaky

**The skin
stressor**

AND HOW
TO BEAT IT

**17 INSTA-
WORTHY
SUMMER
COOK-UPS**

**Sporty
(not skimpy)
swim buys**



Print Post approved
PP100009282

*** SIMPLE HACKS FOR A SUPER HOT + HEALTHY YOU**



AN AFTERNOON IN THE GARDEN can lower your risk of chronic disease, boost your mood and banish stress – but why not double its body-loving benefits by planting a mix of medicinal flowers and herbs? Whether you've got a vacant yard or an old pot to repurpose, you can sprout your own health haven with just a little sunshine and water.

Sleep troubles



YOU NEED: LAVENDER

If you haven't been catching many zzzs, try a cup of lavender tea before you hit the pillow. This potent bud has long been used to settle restless sleepers, and research has confirmed its ability to promote a calm state. To make your own brew, Carla Oates, naturalist and founder of The Beauty Chef, recommends you sprinkle 3 tbs of fresh lavender into 500ml of boiling water, then leave it to steep for five minutes.

GROW IT: Before you break out the seeds, be sure you're armed with the right type of lavender, advises Byron Smith, co-founder of Urban Growers. "The medicinal lavender in tea is English lavender. It's a compact silver-blue ball in winter, then it shoots spikes of small flowers in spring and summer. Plant it in well-drained soil and don't water it too often." Lavender's not much of an indoor plant, so pop it in a spot with full sunlight.



Backyard remedies

Weed out your health woes with some de-stressing gardening

Relax fit

Power shortage

YOU NEED: DANDELION



Feeling sluggish more often than not? Chances are your liver's in need of a little TLC. "When the liver is congested or overworked, you'll feel tired, lethargic and bloated. One of the simplest ways to regenerate the liver, boost your energy and improve gallbladder function is by drinking dandelion tea," says Oates. Put the spring back in your step by brewing some dandelion leaves in boiling water.

GROW IT: You might have seen this unwelcome yellow flower creeping around the garden before, but it doesn't have to be a weed. "Sow seeds in a deep pot or garden bed as dandelions have a long taproot which shoots straight down. You'll find the leaves taste much better if the soil is rich and well-watered," advises Smith.

Skin issues

YOU NEED: THYME



Suffer from breakouts? Make your own detox treatment with this herb. "Known for its potent antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties, thyme can be used to kill acne-causing bacteria instead of – and perhaps better than – benzoyl peroxide," says Oates. Place 1 tbs of fresh or dried thyme leaves in a glass jar with a light carrier oil such as jojoba. Leave the blend to rest for three to four weeks, but shake the jar daily. Once time's up, strain the oil for a natural face cleanser.

GROW IT: "Thyme doesn't do well indoors, so grow it in a pot outside in full sunlight," says Smith. Water it regularly and remember to snip the leaves back every now and then if you're after fresh tips.

Digestion discomfort

YOU NEED: PEPPERMINT



"Peppermint can relieve the pains and spasms of belly aches, indigestion and nausea by calming the stomach muscles," says Oates. Sip on a mint tea between meals and you'll not only settle your tum and aid digestion, you might boost your fat burn, too. "If you suffer from gastroesophageal reflux disease, be wary of peppermint as it can worsen your symptoms," Oates cautions. Fresh leaves will liven up any dish, but if you're whipping up a tea, steep them in boiling water for around 10 minutes, strain, then cool.

GROW IT: Peppermint likes to wander, so if you're not keen on letting this eager plant run riot in your garden, keep it in a pot, says Smith. Remember to trim it regularly and ensure the soil is moist and rich. Like most herbs, peppermint loves full sunlight, but partial shade or indoors will work, too.

Bag of nerves

YOU NEED:

LEMON BALM



Feeling anxious? Lemon balm leaves steeped in hot water can keep your nerves in check.

Thanks to the active ingredient of rosmarinic acid, a cup of lemon balm-infused tea can inhibit the transmission of chemicals that cause us to feel tension and worry.

GROW IT: This hardy plant will make anyone look like a gardening whizz. "Plant lemon balm in either the sun or the shade," says Smith. "It's great indoors, too." Make sure you've got a bit of space to play with though, since this baby can shoot up to lengths of 70cm!

YOUR TOOL KIT

You'll be sprouting green thumbs before you know it with these garden helpers



- 1 Cut back your blooms with these super-sharp snippers. Thoughtful Gardener pruners, \$32.95, myer.com.au
- 2 A playful watering can makes giving your plants a shower extra fun. Twigz watering can, \$29, hardtofind.com.au
- 3 Collect your bounty of healing leaves in a cute basket. Zillpa rope basket, \$35, hardtofind.com.au

Weak defence

YOU NEED: GARLIC



This do-it-all flavour maker is one of nature's best antibiotics and immune boosters. If you're prone to coming down with a cold or flu, try adding some crushed cloves to your lunches and dinners to stop sickness in its tracks. "Garlic contains many active ingredients such as allicin, alliinase and other sulphur compounds. When garlic is crushed, it undergoes a chemical reaction which produces allicin, a powerful antiviral and antifungal compound," says Oates.

GROW IT: Buy some Aussie garlic from a local farmer's market, then plant each clove 20cm apart in a garden bed or pot. "The cloves like a lot of sunshine and a good amount of water," explains Smith. When the top leaves die down, your fresh garlic's ready to collect. Just remember to save some cloves to plant next spring.