58 Diet, sport and fitness

A Cholesterol and health

Cholesterol[1] only becomes a problem when you have too much of it and it starts to promote the production of a fatty **plaque**[2] that can clog the arteries. Interruption of blood flow to a main heart vessel can cause a heart attack; a blocked blood vessel on the way to the brain could cause a stroke.

Some say that cholesterol-rich foods such as eggs, shellfish and **offal**[3] should be banished from the diet, but these foods don't significantly raise cholesterol levels. The cholesterol in them is broken down quite efficiently and then **excreted**[4], so they are fine to eat in moderation.

Fibre[5] produces substances that help to clear the blood of bad cholesterol and acts as a '**buffer**'[6], so less fat is brought into contact with blood vessels and less is absorbed. Fibre also keeps bad cholesterol within the **gut**[7] from where it can be excreted.

1 fatty substance found in the body tissue and blood of all animals
2 unwanted substance that forms on the surface of the arteries
3 organs from inside animals which are eaten as food (brains, heart, kidneys, liver)
4 got rid of from the body
5 substance in food that travels through the body as waste, helping digestion
6 something (or someone) that helps protect from harm
7 tubes that carry food from the stomach

B Running and calories

Running, or swift walking, uses the major muscle groups, making it the most efficient form of **cardiovascular**[1] exercise. It has been shown to have a positive effect on blood fats by reducing cholesterol levels. It also lowers blood pressure and helps **diabetics**[2] by improving **glucose**[3] tolerance and reducing **insulin**[4] resistance.

Running is a very efficient way to burn calories. Converting your weight into **pounds**[5] and then multiplying the result by 75 per cent will give you the amount you burn per mile. The average is about 500 calories for every three miles. If you did this three times a week, you'd lose $\frac{1}{2}$ lb a week, 2 lb a month or 24 lb a year.

This all-round form of exercise is used in the treatment of mental illness and depression, because it is thought to raise levels of the **mood enhancer**[6], serotonin.

1 affecting the heart and blood circulation
2,3,4 people suffering from diabetes, an illness in which the body cannot cope with **glucose** [sugar] because it does not produce enough **insulin** [hormone that controls the level of sugar in the body]
5 measure of weight, 1 pound (lb) = 454 grams
6 hormone that makes you feel happier

C Sport and fitness metaphors

I scored an own goal when I told my boss it had only taken me a day to write the report. Now she wants me to write several a week. [made things worse rather than better]
My boss always seems to be **moving the goalposts**, which makes it very difficult to know what he wants. [changing the rules]
The new EU laws aim to provide a **level playing field** for all member states. [fair situation]
He's too young to be **in the running** for such a job. [seriously considered]
The two main parties in the election are still **neck and neck** in the opinion polls. [level with each other and equally likely to win]
Politicians often **skate around** a subject. [don't talk directly about]
The students all **sailed through** their exams. [passed very easily]

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Exercises

58.1 **Answer these questions about text A.**

1 What two health problems may be caused by too much cholesterol?
2 Plaque can also form on teeth. Do you try to encourage or prevent this?
3 What do eggs, shellfish and offal have in common?
4 What sorts of food contain fibre?
5 Why is fibre useful?

58.2 **Answer these questions about text B.**

1 For what three conditions might doctors recommend running as a form of exercise?
2 How far on average does someone have to run to use up 500 calories?
3 In what way does this vary from person to person?
4 What mental health problem is also improved by running?
5 Why does running help with this problem?

58.3 **Suggest opposites for the underlined words using vocabulary from A and B.**

1 can <u>unblock</u> the arteries
2 glucose <u>intolerance</u>
3 to <u>lower</u> serotonin levels
4 a mood <u>depressant</u>
5 <u>gentle</u> walking
6 <u>gain</u> 2 lbs a week

58.4 **What sports do each of the metaphors in C come from?**

58.5 **Rewrite these sentences using metaphors from C.**

1 Sarah passed her exams without any difficulty at all.
2 I wish he'd get directly to the point.
3 I've been told that they are seriously considering me for the job of supervisor.
4 Although he meant it as a compliment, Rick didn't improve his chances with Helen when he told her she looked as if she had put on some weight.
5 The situation is hardly fair when 18-year-olds take the same exam as 15-year-olds.
6 It's hard to know what to do when the regulations seem to be constantly changing.

58.6  **These words from texts A and B can also be used in contexts different from diet and fitness. Write them in example sentences showing their use in different contexts. Use a dictionary if necessary.**

1 interruption
2 banish
3 efficiently
4 buffer
5 vessels
6 tolerance
7 resistance
8 convert
9 burn
10 depression

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58.6
Write 10 sentences with given words:

58.7 Write five pieces of advice relating to diet and fitness. In each sentence use at least one vocabulary item worked on in this unit.

FOLLOW UP

Find a magazine article on the theme of diet and fitness. Read it and write a summary of it.

58. 7 Write 5 pieces of advice realting to diet and fitness or you can write a summary of the article you have read.

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