

perfect match

denise corlett



Meet a match

Q. I'm unsure about how to meet someone special – all the circles I move in are the same – what would you recommend?

A. You can either go the direct way, indirect way or a combination of the above. There are myriad services out there catering for those who are dating. These include internet dating sites, introduction agencies and formalised events for singles. (You can find some of these options on the resources page of my website, www.datingadvice.co.nz.) This puts you in direct contact with other singles, although you will need to check out what stage they are at and what they are looking for. Alternatively, the indirect way is by increasing your social networks and activities. Although you say your circles are the same, don't forget that even these people have connections that you don't know about. They, too, have more extended family members, friends, colleagues, neighbours, sporting and other interest contacts. Consider how you

might be able to have more contact with some of these people with the assistance of your circle of friends.

Otherwise, you need to increase the activities and interests you are personally involved in. This could include joining night classes, clubs, attending events that not only interest you but could potentially have the kind of person who interests you attend as well. Have you thought about the people you cross on a daily or weekly basis but don't socialise with? It's also a good idea to be clear about what you are looking for too!

Q. I'm really shy – can you recommend any tips or tricks on how to be more confident in social situations?

A. There are lots of things you can do but they all require you to be ready to look at your thoughts, take yourself outside of your comfort zone and to practise as much as you can. To start with, you may find it's easier to be involved in social outings where you are doing something as an activity, like hiking, kayaking or



some other interest. This enables you to be busy with the activity while you come in and out of conversations with people, so it's not too much of a pressure situation.

As your comfort increases in these scenarios,

Walk tall: Copying the confident works. Photo: Reuters

you can expand your skills by meeting with people socially where the emphasis is on communicating directly.

You will need to develop a repertoire of phrases, questions, responses and more that you can use when meeting people and to keep conversations going – and keep practising them until they become second nature.

When you begin this you need to give yourself positive feedback and congratulate yourself for what you have achieved and be able to keep a record of your improvement. If these situations do make you anxious you can use some positive affirmations and thoughts and learn some breathing or other quick relaxation techniques that can enable you to manage those tricky times.

You can also start by taking on the persona of someone who is confident – for example, the way Gwyneth Paltrow holds herself – and try to mimic their behaviour. Practise it at home in front of the mirror, then go out and act confidently, even if at first you have to fake it. If you act confidently others will see you in this light as well.

■ Do you have a question for Denise Corlett? Email escape@star-times.co.nz with Dating Coach in the subject line.
■ www.datingadvice.co.nz

ASK THE DOCTOR

Each week,
Dunedin doctor
Paul Trotman
answers your
health questions.

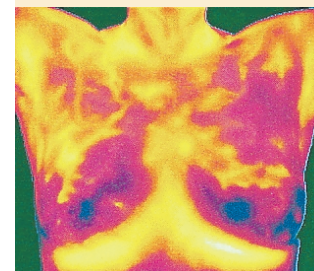
Q. Why do I lose my sense of taste and smell when I've got a cold?

A. What a great question. The reason you lose your sense of smell when you have a cold isn't just that you're stuffed up and not shifting any air in and out through your nose. It's also that the cold virus can infect and damage both the smell receptors inside your nose and the delicate nerves that carry that message to your brain. If you use a natural zinc nasal spray, not only is it unlikely to help, but the zinc can also contribute to the damage. And the reason you lose your sense of taste is that most of what you think you taste you aren't actually tasting, you're smelling. When you chow down on that sandwich tiny molecules of food travel up the passages connecting your mouth and your nose, if those passages are blocked, the smell can't get through. Your mouth really only gives you the basics of taste hot, cold, bitter, salty, sweet and sour, and three quarters of what you think is taste is actually smell.

Q. I heard about a new way of getting a breast check – something called a thermography. Can you tell me anything about this?

A. Thermography is a system where digital infra-red photographs are taken of the breast. Very early stage cancers can cause minute changes in temperature because they need extra blood flow to feed them. Thermography is supposed to pick up these changes and so show the cancers far earlier than they could be picked up by mammography or breast examination. That's the theory anyway. Websites promoting thermography make some quite remarkable claims for the process, but more mainstream medical sites (such as the Mayo Clinic) say it hasn't been proven yet. So have the pictures taken, it can't do any harm – but don't forget to have your usual screening as well.

■ Do you have a question for Doctor Paul? Email escape@star-times.co.nz with Doctor in the subject line.



petra bagust



What's really in our bread?

AS A woman there is nothing like receiving a fabulous bunch of flowers – which is rather different to what happened this morning. I was rudely woken at 6.20am to receive a bunch of flour. To be precise, 50kg of organic wholemeal flour from Ashburton.

We (the royal “we” you understand) are now making

our own bread. He bought a bread-maker and I watched as every second loaf failed. After about a week I became a sceptic. “How do you feel the new breadmaker is going honey?” But while filming for the show at Venerdì organic bakery in Auckland I was given the secret ingredient that has turned every loaf into a winner, a pinch of ascorbic acid (I believe it's a natural emulsifier). I am now a convert. This bread is delicious, the smell, the taste, the homely warmth – honestly, I can't resist, and it's preservative-free so there is no guilt on that count.

Walk into your local bakery and you will be greeted with a plethora of options: grain, wholegrain, rye, white, gluten free – the list goes on. With bread being such a staple food, I wanted to know what the differences really are in all these varieties and what effects they have on

consumers. These days it seems as if everyone is either gluten intolerant, knows someone who is gluten intolerant or is wondering if they are gluten intolerant.

One third of us are now thought to have some sort of reactivity to gluten, and although gluten is naturally occurring in wheat, extra gluten is often added to our bread to increase the volume and elasticity. Could the added gluten in our diets be one of the reasons that so many more people now have an adverse reaction?

And what are the differences between grain and wholegrain bread? Obviously, one is more likely to get stuck in your teeth than the other, but is there any real health difference between the two? Yes. Whole grains help protect against heart disease, diabetes, and may even protect against some forms of cancer, but when you grind the grain, you lose

some of the health benefits associated with it. To get the very best out of your bread you are better off to keep those grains whole.

Of the 155 million loaves of bread sold in New Zealand each year, only 20% of that is heavy grain, while a whopping 55% is white bread. It has a high glycemic index (GI), meaning it converts the carbohydrates into glucose much faster, giving you a short burst of energy rather than gradually releasing it. Wholegrain generally has a much lower GI. So if you wake up half an hour before kick-off on game day, maybe reach for white bread, but otherwise, the whole or heavy grain bread is a healthier option.

Regardless of the colour of your bread, you need to look out for salt. All breads have roughly the same amount and on average – about 1/10 teaspoon per slice.

■ What's Really in our Food, TV3, Tuesday, 8pm

Bread and butter

■ 155 million loaves of bread are sold in New Zealand each year. White bread makes up more than half of these sales.

■ The acceptable daily intake of salt for an adult is less than half a teaspoon, yet the average male intake is more than twice that, and the average five or six-year-old child has more salt than the acceptable daily intake for an adult.

■ Most of our salt intake comes from bread, contributing to around 35-40%.

■ The glycemic index (GI) is a measure of how high different foods raise blood sugar or glucose levels. Foods with an index of 70 or more are considered high, 56-69 medium, and 55 or less is low. Whereas Vogels ancient grain bread has a really low GI of 36, a slice of white bread sits between 70 and 80, or sometimes even higher.