

7 WAYS TO GET BIKINI-READY NOW

Want to avoid this year's panic about stepping out in a swimsuit? Start these easy body rituals now and reap the benefits by summer. By Anne Eastham

Whether you call them togs, swimmers or cosies, one thing's for sure: the prospect of putting one on can cause some serious navel (and butt and thigh) gazing. Over winter, almost half of us are likely to put on weight, according to recent research by the NSW Food Authority. It found that 53 per cent of men and 38 per cent of women anticipate a weight gain of at least 2kg over winter.

Add to that the increased likelihood of cellulite and dry skin in the cooler months – plus the return of ingrown hairs once we start removing that body hair with gusto – and you can end up with some serious body panic once beach weather hits.

The solution? Make a few simple changes to your routine now, and you'll be enjoying a healthy body and glowing skin well before the mercury rises above 30°C. That's the advice of b+s personal trainer Kirsty Welsh and skin care therapist Naomi Nahoum. Read on for their seven key steps towards becoming body confident from today.

KEEP A FOOD JOURNAL

This is Welsh's number-one rule for her clients: "You have to keep one if you're serious about losing weight. It helps you recognise where you're overeating, which is the first step to setting up new habits."

Alcohol, desserts and snacks are the common areas where people don't realise how much they're consuming, Welsh adds.



3 BIKINI BODY TIPS FROM A SWIMSUIT COVERGIRL

"I work hard to maintain my body and health, and I believe everybody should do the same," Danish model Nina Agdal says.

So what does the Sports Illustrated regular and new face of Mambo do to be swimsuit-ready all year round? "I work out four times a week. I'll do cardio one day, like running and spinning, and toning the next, like barre, yoga and Pilates."

When it comes to food, her motto is "everything in moderation", but she sticks to veg and lean protein before a shoot.

However, her final tip for body-confidence is one that any of us can do: "Get a spray tan. That will immediately make you feel 10 pounds lighter!"

And while keeping a food diary used to be time-consuming, calorie-tracking apps and software such as MyFitnessPal and *body+soul revolution* make it easy. Welsh advises keeping one for as long as it takes to make your new eating habits stick.

2 CUT DOWN ON CAFFEINE AND ALCOHOL

Reducing your booze intake is one of the most effective ways to eliminate unnecessary calories, Welsh says. Alcohol is a diuretic, so cutting back helps to keep your body better hydrated, and also helps to fight cellulite. Reducing caffeine assists on that front, too, Nahoum says. "Imagine a juicy, plump grape – that's a skin cell's membrane when it's hydrated and getting the right nutrients," she explains. "When it doesn't get enough of either, the cell becomes dry and brittle like a sultana, trapping toxins inside – which leads to cellulite."

Aim to replace one cup a day of coffee or black tea with green tea, Nahoum says. For alcohol, try to steer clear on weekdays and only have a few on weekends. Plus, try to drink at least two litres of water a day.

3 MINIMISE REFINED SUGARS AND CARBS

"Your intake of these two things is directly related to the amount of tummy fat you have," Welsh says. Nahoum agrees, adding that these also contribute to the production of cellulite. "When foods

are refined or processed, they're generally high GI, which means more sugar. And when sugar isn't burnt off, it's stored as fat – which, over time, can become cellulite."

Easing up now on your intake of things such as chocolate, pastries, white pasta and rice and chips will prevent you from having to make drastic and hard-to-keep diet changes closer to summer.

4 DO PLANKS, SQUATS AND LUNGES TWICE A WEEK

"Most people think that weight loss is just about cardio workouts, but you have to balance it with strength training," Welsh says. "Cardio can burn more calories in the short-term, but building muscle helps burn calories in the long-run, as it improves your metabolism every day."

So, why these specific moves? Planks, squats and lunges are Welsh's favourite moves for sculpting the abs, butt and legs, respectively (visit bodyandsoul.com.au for videos of the correct technique for these moves). Welsh recommends including them in a strength-training session twice a week, as well as doing a few cardio workouts. Just remember to stretch properly at the end.

5 EXFOLIATE REGULARLY

Nahoum recommends using a natural-fibre body brush on dry skin to stimulate your body's lymphatic system, which she says is key to getting rid of cellulite, and attaining a



Sculpt your abs, butt and legs by including planks, squats and lunges in your strength-training workouts twice a week

healthy glow. "Start at the sole of one foot and gently brush upwards towards the heart until you reach your armpit, do the other side, then finish with each arm, again brushing towards the heart," she says. Do this several times a week, before showering.

Using a loofah can get rid of and prevent ingrown hairs, as it will gently exfoliate and help the hair follicle push through the skin. "Do a few quick, fast strokes backwards and forwards on the affected area for a few seconds in the shower," Nahoum says.

6 TAKE AN OMEGA-3 SUPPLEMENT

Omega-3 is vital to your skin cell's health, and is something many of us don't get enough of from our diet, Nahoum says. "Just like water, omega-3 keeps cell membranes flexible and supple, which helps to draw nutrients in and push toxins out."

She recommends having either 5ml of high-quality liquid fish oil or 3000mg of fish oil tablets a day, and says that in as little as a month you may start to see an improvement in your skin's texture.

7 USE A NATURAL-OIL BODY MOISTURISER

"Many creams based on mineral oils such as sorbolene or poor-quality glycerine act more like a barrier cream than a moisturiser," Nahoum says. "They're not going to do you any harm, but they stop your skin's oil glands from working properly, which may create more dryness."

If you suffer from very dry skin, try using a moisturiser that contains vegetable and plant oils, such as Crabtree & Evelyn Avocado, Olive & Basil Skin Nourishing Body Butter (\$40, crabtree-evelyn.com.au).

If you regularly get ingrown hairs, look for a moisturiser that contains tea tree oil, as its anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory properties will help to protect and heal. And don't forget to also hydrate from the inside with fluids and good fats from food sources such as avocado, fatty fish, seeds and nuts, Nahoum adds.

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