

# food for thought

by Caroline Hardy

**M**ARY had suffered from migraine and exhaustion attacks for 23 years. At 47, she also wanted to know how she could avoid succumbing to degenerative diseases as she grew older.

Jane's nails were constantly breaking and she had developed arthritis in her wrists over the past few years.

Mary and Jane were both seen by nutritional therapist Fleur Brown from Pembury, who was able to assess what lay at the root of their problems.

Now, both women are making steady progress and are well on their way to recovery. Their chronic conditions both responded to nutritional therapy, identified and treated by simply changing their diet.

"Mary had food intolerances and vitamin and mineral deficiencies that were upsetting the balance in her body," Fleur said.

"It appeared Jane was not digesting her food properly and this had left her deficient in many vitamins and minerals including calcium which is essential for healthy nails.

"Also her constipation had led to a build-up of toxic acids in her body, which can contribute to arthritic conditions."

While most of us have diets that provide us with more than sufficient calories on a daily basis, the growing consumption of refined and processed foods means many nutrients are often lacking in our diets.

Combined with an increase in stress, sedentary lifestyles and rising pollution it's not difficult to see how a range of health problems can develop.

Fleur's interest in nutrition started about 15 years ago while she was suffering from high blood pressure. "It was a busy period in my life and I was very stressed," she said. "My blood pressure was high, which concerned me greatly as my parents had both died from heart attacks. My sister recommended me to visit her nutritional therapist who put me on a strict regime with supplements. The results were amazing, my blood pressure came right down."

Fleur studied for her diploma at the Institute of Optimum Nutrition in London, graduating with distinction in 1992, and now has a wide client base. She treats a range of ailments, at her consulting rooms in Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks, including

Is what you are eating making you unwell? Nutritional therapist Fleur Brown says if you're not eating the right food, your body will soon tell you



migraine, high cholesterol, menopausal problems, hypertension and lack of energy. Many of the clients she sees have weight problems, allergies or intolerance or complaining about lack of energy. As a registered Foresight clinician she also treats women with infertility problems.

"For the majority of people, the problem is diet-based," said Fleur. "Much of my job is advising people, teaching them about what they eat and even seeing how they shop, while giving them the motivation to change their lifestyles."

Fleur asks each client to complete a detail questionnaire which includes their medical history, symptoms of illness, lifestyle and typical daily diet. She can then devise a treatment regime comprising an individual diet and a programme of vitamins, minerals or herbs to balance the body. Exercise, relaxation techniques and other complementary therapies may also be recommended.

Not all problems can be treated with nutritional therapy, but as Fleur says, if your diet isn't right, other treatments, be they medical or complementary, may fail because you are what you eat.

Fleur Brown can be contacted on 01892 616621. ■