

ask the Doc



**Craig Lennox**  
Our GP expert will answer your questions every week

**Q My new girlfriend says she has scoliosis and I'm too embarrassed to admit I don't know what it is.**

**A** Some people have a spine that curves from side to side and this is called scoliosis.

It can be C or S-shaped and ranges from mild to severe. Your girlfriend may have one shoulder blade or one hip higher than the other, or rounding of her rib cage.

Depending on the severity she may have back pain. Find out some more at [sauk.org.uk](http://sauk.org.uk) so you feel more confident if she wants to tell you about it.

**Q I use green apples to cure warts and want to share this with readers.**

**A** Thanks, you may have something there as warts can be quite stubborn. You may be surprised to learn that wart creams from the chemist contain a natural product called salicylic acid which comes from the bark of a willow tree.

I use freezing treatment in my surgery but it can be painful.

There is evidence covering warts with silver "gaffer" tape works too. It pays to be patient and persistent with whatever you use.

What's the alternative?



**Dee Atkinson**  
of Napier's Herbalists gives the alternative solution

This is great. The fruit acids are similar to those used in mild cosmetic facial peels, and can treat warts.



White juice from a dandelion stem, or Greater celandine, applied daily will also work.

Warts are caused by viruses, which is why children whose immune systems are not fully developed often have them.

I tend to use herbs to support immunity and traditional blood cleansing herbs, as well as using creams on the wart itself.

Treating this way can prevent them from coming back as your body can fight the virus.

GOT A HEALTH PROBLEM?

... then ask our experts. Write to Vital, Daily Record, 1 Central Quay, Glasgow G3 8DA

# Fighting fit for baby bid

WHEN DOCTORS TOLD SHARON RENWICK TO SLIM BEFORE THEY WOULD HELP HER GET PREGNANT, SHE LOST WEIGHT WITH A TRAINER ... AND THEN CONCEIVED NATURALLY



▶ **JOY** Sharon with husband Phil, right, her trainer Paul, and Alfie



**HAVING spent four years trying for a baby, Sharon and Phil Renwick were convinced IVF would be their only way of starting a family.**

But office manager Sharon, 41, was told she needed to lose weight before IVF could be an option.

It proved to be a stressful time for Sharon and IT manager Phil, 31.

But after she enlisted the help of a personal trainer in an effort to shed some pounds, she never looked back.

Much to the couple's surprise, Sharon became pregnant naturally just months after starting a new health regime with personal trainer Paul Gow.

Now Sharon and Phil, of Kirkcaldy, Fife, are the proud parents of seven-month old Alfie and they're loving every single minute of family life.

Sharon said: "My husband and I got married in 2006 but it hadn't happened yet.

"I'd been told by doctors that it could happen naturally but I was quite overweight, time wasn't on my side and it felt like I was under a lot of a pressure as it was really a vicious circle.

"I was miserable and I felt that I

**By Craig MQueen**

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couldn't go on any more like that, so I needed someone to help pull me out of that hole."

After searching online, Sharon phoned Paul Gow of personal training firm Motiv8 Trainer, who have a network of personal trainers available across Scotland.

She now admits that the move was the last roll of the dice.

She explained: "I had tried diets in the past only to give up after about six weeks.

"The problem was I had no-one else to keep me going. And I was too

embarrassed to go to the gym as I was the biggest I'd ever been.

"Paul came out to see me. He discussed how it would work and then at a free induction course took my blood pressure, weight and height, and asked a lot of questions.

"He also created a diet sheet for me and asked me to keep a seven-day diary, before coming back and working out an exercise plan.

"It sounded like a lot of work to me and I wasn't sure if I would be able to do it," she added.

"But Paul gave me confidence as I needed someone to believe in me."

And rather than having to go to a gym for training sessions, Sharon was

able to do them in the comfort of her own home.

"I had a cross-trainer indoors so we could do a lot of cardiovascular work," she said.

"I also used a trampoline and a ball for different exercises. And there were floor exercises as well.

"We would do three sessions a week and he would change the routine around each time he came to keep things varied.

"He would also leave me plans for doing other sessions on my own, along with information on warm-ups and warm-downs."

She added: "And even when I wasn't in the mood, Paul was good at coaching me and getting me into the right frame of mind."

"For Paul, speaking to clients who are wary of going to the gym is a common occurrence.

He explained: "A lot of our clients have a very self-conscious attitude when it comes to fitness and what they can and can't do.

"You find that people use personal training as almost like a last resort as they've tried going to the gym, but didn't like it.

"We also have clients who are in good shape but looking for someone

**FERTILITY AND WEIGHT**

IT'S been known for a long time that a woman's chances of conception are affected by weight.

Being underweight or overweight can make it harder to conceive and so women should aim for a healthy body mass index of between 18.5 and 25.

Studies have also shown that women who are overweight or obese have a lower likelihood of becoming pregnant. For every BMI

hour and then eat a 500-calorie chocolate muffin, which will offset it."

From a high of nearly 21st, Sharon managed to shed nearly 4st in just three months.

And despite having started the fitness programme with a view to trying IVF, Sharon fell pregnant naturally - much to her surprise.

She said: "It was a big shock but a very welcome shock.

"I had taken the pregnancy test just a short time before Paul arrived for a training session, so apart from my husband he was the first person to know."

She added: "Phil and I couldn't believe it. It was a case of asking, 'How did that happen?'"

"I would have liked to lose more weight before I became pregnant but we didn't expect it to happen as quickly as it did.

"And I was just happy that it had happened."

Alfie was born in March and Sharon is loving being a mum.

She added: "He's a good baby. Phil and I had a good relationship anyway but having Alfie enhances things."

For further details, visit [www.motiv8trainer.co.uk](http://www.motiv8trainer.co.uk)

to help them maintain what they have. In every case, we can offer motivation, direction and a bit of moral support."

Sharon was also pleased to get some help with her diet.

"The diet plan was very flexible and was based around common sense," she said.

"Breakfast could be something like cereal or egg on toast, and the plan included drinking a lot of water.

"The main meal could be chicken or salad or pasta.

"And it included carbohydrates that gave me a slow release of energy throughout the day so that I wouldn't feel tired and I wouldn't feel hungry and start snacking."

"Little treats were also included, although I couldn't have them all the time. And the plan also catered for the sort of things I liked.

"But I still had to cut out a lot of fatty foods and things like junk food and takeaways."

Paul added: "Fifty per cent of what we do is getting the fitness programme right, and reviewing it all the time and improving it so you don't fall into a comfort zone.

"The other 50 per cent of what we do is looking at diet in a big way. You don't train hard in the gym for an



▼ **FAMILY** Sharon and Phil with Alfie



▲ **CATCH IT** Before everyone else does

## DEFINITELY NOT TO BE SNEEZED AT

A WHOPPING 62 per cent of people feel their stress levels rising when faced with a serial sniffer on public transport, according to a survey of 1875 UK adults by Lloydspharmacy.

However, nearly three in 10 (28 per cent) of those surveyed also admitted that they themselves had been caught short on public transport without a tissue to blow their nose.

Asked how they would deal with the situation, more than a quarter said they'd use either an item of clothing or whatever was available - from a newspaper, to wrappers and receipts.

More than a fifth said they'd wipe their nose on their hand - a sure way to spread germs.

A shocking 33 per cent of those surveyed confessed to "disposing" of their boogies in, among other places, on the floor, under furniture, in their mouth and on other people.

Etiquette expert, Marie-Hélène Ferguson said: "Fabric hankies are a no-no in this day and age.

"Carry tissues and use them when you blow your nose and also to cover your mouth if you cough or sneeze. Also, don't be afraid to politely offer someone a tissue. You never know, it may save you from getting ill."

Nearly half (49 per cent) said they were embarrassed about the noise they make when they sniff or cough on public transport.

Surprisingly, this ranked much higher than feelings of guilt about passing on infections, which scored 39 per cent.

Nitin Makadia, flu expert at Lloydspharmacy, said: "We're all responsible for helping to protect both ourselves and those that may be more vulnerable from catching germs, whether that's by getting a flu vaccination or by helping to control germs through good hygiene.

"Prevention really is your best insurance policy against getting flu, so I'd urge people to get vaccinated sooner rather than later"

Flu vaccinations are available in around 350 pharmacies in the UK. The normal cost is £10 but it will be just £7 for a two-week period from November 7.

Vaccinations are administered by a pharmacist in a private room. Visit [www.lloydspharmacy.com/flu](http://www.lloydspharmacy.com/flu) for further information.