



PACKET IN . . . drive begins

STUB OUT SMOKING WITH OUR TOP TIPS

By CHRISTINA EARLE

TODAY marks the start of Stoptober – the Department of Health’s campaign encouraging smokers to quit.

Last year, 160,000 Brits managed to go smoke-free for October, benefiting their health – and saving themselves hundreds of pounds, too.

To help get you started, *ME* spoke to hypnotherapist Tina Taylor, from justbewell.com. She says:

“Hypnosis is proven to be an effective way to help people stop habitual behaviours and is effective in working with tobacco addictions, removing cravings and giving them a healthy habit-free life, as well as saving them money.”

“Most of my clients beat their addiction with one session.”

“Within trance the smoker begins to realise just how they are gambling with their health and well-being.”

“The hypnosis session helps them to focus on how they want to be once they are a non-smoker, making the desire more achievable for them.”

Here, Tina shares her six top tips to help you kick the habit.

MAKE A PLAN TO QUIT SMOKING:

Do not be put off by being in situations when you would normally smoke, such as at a wedding or on a Friday night.

CHANGE YOUR ROUTINE: Smoking is a habit, so a change of routine should distract you from it.

CHANGE YOUR DRINK: Always want a cigarette with a glass of wine? Try swapping your wine for beer, that could help.

EXERCISE: This can help you quit cigarettes because it can help you produce anti-craving chemicals.

KEEP YOUR HANDS BUSY: Consider taking up a new hobby, or have a plan in place to keep your hands busy when you have a craving.

REMINDE YOURSELF OF WHY YOU ARE QUITTING: Whether it is for health reasons, vanity or financial worries, remind yourself of your motivations when your cravings peak.

● You can sign up to take part in Stoptober at stoptober.smokefree.nhs.uk.

GO FIGURE

Here’s how much you can save (at current prices) by kicking a 20-a-day habit:

- A week£49
- A month£212
- A year£2,555
- 5 years£12,775
- 10 years£25,550



Doctors made my girl more gorgeous when they put her skull back together like a jigsaw puzzle

MUM HAS ‘CLOVER-LEAF’ CONDITION TOO

EXCLUSIVE by LUCY LAING

THIS toddler has made a remarkable recovery after surgeons cut away pieces of her skull.

Lydia Marshall was born with a condition called craniosynostosis, which means her head was severely misshapen.

But doctors removed parts of her skull and put it back together in a more normal shape, so Lydia is able to lead a normal life.

Mum Laura said: “To me, Lydia has always been beautiful, but doctors have done a wonderful job with her.”

“They have completely re-shaped her head and we are hoping that now she won’t need any more surgery.”

Laura, 33, a dressmaker from Doncaster, was born with the same condition, although it wasn’t as severe as Lydia’s.

She had to have three operations before she was six months old – but never imagined she would pass the condition on to her daughter.

This is especially so because she and husband Gavin, 34, a baker, already had one son Rhys, four, who was born healthy. But when Laura was 23 weeks pregnant she was told her unborn baby had the same condition she did.

When Lydia was born in April 2012 at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, Laura saw her daughter’s deformed skull.

Laura said: “When I was being told at just 23 weeks pregnant that my baby was going to look like me, it was such a shock.”

“I already given birth to our son Rhys, and there hadn’t been anything wrong with him, so when I fell pregnant again, I never gave it another thought. All my life, I’d tried to tell myself I was normal. I wasn’t different from anyone else and I’d believed that all the way through. It helped me laugh off comments and the stares when I was growing up. But when the doctor told me my unborn baby had a skull like mine, I was devastated.”

“It made me think that all those years when I’d been telling myself there was nothing wrong with me, that actually there was.”

“And I’d passed it to my unborn baby. I felt an overwhelming guilt.”



EARLY YEARS . . . Laura as a baby, age seven and as a toddler. Far right: with family now

because it was really flat, to give it some shape. Was this all in store for my daughter too? It was such a shock when Lydia was born and I could see how misshapen her head was.

“I’d never imagined I would pass it on to her, especially as there had been nothing wrong with Rhys.”

Tiny Lydia had her first surgery at four weeks old, where doctors took out parts of her skull that were fused together.

‘She may need to have further surgery’

Laura said: “It was terrible to watch her go down for surgery, as she was so tiny. But we knew it was her best chance of a normal life.”

Craniosynostosis causes the clover leaf shape to develop because parts of the skull bone fuse prematurely in an infant, causing the bone to grow in a different direction. This causes an abnormal head shape.

Even after her first operation, Lydia’s head was still growing out of proportion – growing upwards rather than rounder, so her forehead was getting taller and taller. So in June 2013, Lydia, now aged one, had another major

operation to take more sections of skull out of the back of her head. Laura said: “It looked a lot better after her second bout of surgery. The surgeons are just going to see how she goes as the years go on. She may need more surgery like I did but we’ll deal with that as it happens. I still feel guilty when I look at her, that it was me who passed it on to her.”

“But I’m determined to be the best role model I can for Lydia, and to show her she can live a normal life, just like I’ve done.”

“The surgery has advanced so much since I had my operations, which is reassuring. Luckily there are people out there who can see past skin-deep problems and see the person inside.”

“I met Gavin, and I’m confident Lydia will find love too one day, just like I have done.”

Laura added: “I put a brave face on it as a teenager, and I developed a really thick skin to people’s comments. I had to, I had no choice.”

“People would jeer that I had a big head. I would retort that it was because I had bigger brains. And because I laughed it off and didn’t get upset, it stopped more comments.”

“I know I now have to teach this all to my daughter. To show her how to laugh about it, and not get upset.”

● For more information, see geneticdisordersuk.org.



‘There should be nothing to stop Lydia having a normal childhood’

CONSULTANT plastic and reconstructive surgeon, BAPRAS member Steven Wall operated on Lydia. He said: “There are more than 100 conditions that can cause craniosynostosis. We think Lydia has Pfeiffer Syndrome, where the bones of the skull don’t fuse properly, which can be passed down from a parent. “Craniosynostosis is dangerous because the skull

bones don’t grow with the brain, causing everything from headaches, in minor cases, to blindness and even death.”

“To prevent this, patients with genetic forms of it usually undergo numerous operations. “It’s impossible to predict how many more times Lydia will have to go under the knife. “But there should be nothing to stop her having a normal, happy childhood.”

THE healthometer

MANGOES: They slim your waist, say scientists at Oklahoma State University. They reckon eating the fruit can limit the body’s absorption of sugar and increase its insulin sensitivity, thus curbing your appetite.

GROUNDING: Standing barefoot on soil or grass to restore the flow of electrons between you and the earth. It might sound New Age – but studies show that grounding, also known as earthing, can cut stress and aid sleep.

PROTEIN SHAKES: Men who take whey and bovine lactoferrin – both commonly found in protein shakes – have a 57 per cent lower risk of catching ‘flu, according to research carried out at the University of Queensland.

PEANUTS: A cup of roasted peanuts contains more cancer-fighting antioxidants than a portion of carrots, Danish researchers have found.

EMAILS: Compulsively checking your inbox sends your heart into overdrive. A study by a team at Loughborough University found the constant stream raises your blood pressure and stress hormone levels.

STATINS: Some commonly prescribed statins can impair memory, say scientists at the University of Bristol. They believe Pravastatin could affect cognitive function, but not atorvastatin, which has the brand name Lipitor.

CHINESE MEDICINES: Health chiefs at the MHRA have warned that some unlicensed, traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicines contain “dangerously high” levels of lead, mercury and arsenic.

ICE PACKS: Using ice to aid recovery has actually been shown to slow muscle repair, according to a study in the *Journal Of Strength And Conditioning Research*. If muscles ache and there is no swelling, you are better letting them recover on their own.