




# FEELING GOOD

 **Super confident** - Sport and generally being more active really can boost confidence. It will get you feeling good, looking good & being 'super-confident' about your body. Some of this 'feeling good' comes from your body releasing endorphins when you exercise. They work to reduce pain and it only takes about ten minutes of moderate exercise for you to start enjoying their effect.

 **Exercise increases blood circulation** - getting your heart pumping to improve blood flow to all your organs. Particularly carrying blood to your brain and nutrients to your muscles.

But there's more to feeling good than just exercise. A whole series of 'issues' can challenge how you look, feel & generally perform. Combined, or on their own, these 'issues' can result in a general energy deficit and hence how you feel about yourself.

 **Body image** - sometimes the way you think other people are judging your appearance can affect the way you feel about yourself. Finding your MoJo can make a huge difference about how you feel about yourself.



**Anxiety** - all athletes get anxious before a race or match and some anxiety can be a positive trigger to performance. Increased anxiousness can impact teenagers in life generally. Finding your inner MoJo can help balance sport and life.



**Periods** - it's important to learn the effects of your period on your body and how you can work your training around your (menstrual) cycle. Find out more about how your period affects you and what you can do to manage it.

**Breast health** - developing breasts is a healthy sign that you're growing up. But it can be a confusing time. Staying active can really help you get through it.

**Your bones** - important as you grow up to set your bones up for a strong body later in life. Osteoporosis - or 'porous bones' shouldn't be a problem for you if you follow a healthy diet and don't overtrain.

## FEELING GOOD

### TOP TIPS

Teenage girls who under-eat and over-train are at risk of developing the Female Athlete Triad Syndrome


Make sure you know the warning signs and treatment to keep girls training safely

## FEELING GOOD

- BODY IMAGE
- ANXIETY
- PERIODS
- BREAST HEALTH
- SPORTS BRAS
- BONES
- PERIOD TRACKING

# BODY IMAGE

FEELING GOOD

 **Body image** - is about how YOU feel about YOUR body and yet much of self-worth is based on the perceptions of others. Having negative thoughts about your body is not uncommon in teenagers - hey, your bodies are changing fast! So even small changes in approach can improve the way you feel about your body. So how do you foster a positive body image (and tackle negative thoughts)?


**Appreciate your body** – it is a miracle! Make a list of 10 things you like about you and some great things your body can do: laugh, jump, run, dance.


**Negative thoughts** – become aware of how these affect you and might hold you back. Now remind yourself that negative thoughts are just thoughts, and may not be realistic. Write down some alternative, positive, affirmations like:


- What I can do is more important than what I look like
- I am strong and I can do anything
- I do not have to look 'perfect' to be fit and healthy

**Your crew matters** – encourage your crew mates and friends to be positive and enthusiastic with each other.

**Be aware of media tricks** – remember that makeup, airbrushing and digital editing are used to create unrealistic images of women's bodies.

 **Social Media** - Take control of it. Post about things you have done /places you visit and don't be concerned that everyone appears to be having more fun than you – they probably aren't but they only post the good things they do. Use it to find and follow inspirational people (such sports women) and don't be bullied on body image issues – stand up to it! You don't need to go through it alone, talk to others and reach out to your doctor if it begins to affect your well-being.

 **Parents** – think about checking with your daughter BEFORE you post pix of her on social media. Remember, your daughter's success is hers first.

 Don't deal with online (or real-time) body image issues on your own. Talk to friends, take it to your parents or your coach/school counsellor and get advice.

## TOP TIPS



Build your self esteem by:

Going for a walk or run

Listen to music

Try a favourite activity with somebody you like being with

Thinking about good things you've achieved or places you like being

Watch some women's sport on TV

Talking to somebody you trust can also help – and if you get concerned your doctor or school counsellor can help

## BEST TIP




**Dance** – on your own, at the gym, in your bedroom – and don't forget dance is a great way to develop your core & associated muscles.




# MANAGING ANXIETY

FEELING GOOD

 **We all get anxious** – before a big test at school or when meeting new people. Much of the time this is quite normal. It's good to have 'nerves' as it helps you prepare for a challenge, but if you become too nervous, it can become overwhelming. Sport can help take your mind off things that make you anxious and being active enables you to focus on something else to plan for and be successful in. As you progress in your sport you might start to get anxious about a big race or match. Again that's quite normal and shows a healthy approach to competition.

Mixing with other teenagers (who are likely just as anxious as you are) and sharing sport can help you learn from and trust each other. You'll also feel more comfortable making mistakes without feeling judged. We often expect to be perfect and yet those who never make mistakes, never reach their full potential. So use sport to build confidence and help you take that strength into your everyday life.


 **Fear of Failure** - we all like to get things right – but worrying about failure can increase anxiety. This MoJo Manual can help you to be more

confident, to try new things and not worry so much about making mistakes.

**Taking Control** – focus on things you can control rather than things you can't.

**Breathing** – deep breathing exercises can really help you relax and focus on positive things. Make sure you breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth.

**Music** - can be used to reduce or raise your arousal levels. Choose fast rhythmic tracks if you are training, slower if you are relaxing'. Try a bit of dance for stress busting (it's great for strengthening your core as well).

 **Routines** - are good for sport and for everyday life. That way you focus and put your energy into positive triggers and push the things that make you anxious out of your head.



## TOP TIPS



Admit that some situations make you anxious

Focus on 'controllables'

Set goals and tick them off as you go

Focus on success you have had or things you like doing

Walk or go dancing

No Failure – only Feedback

If in doubt chat to an adult

## SIGNS OF EXCESS ANXIETY

Worrying about things you can't control



Constant checking you did it right

Withdrawal from normal things


Decline in appetite or sleep patterns


Low energy or feeling sad

Poor concentration

# MENSTRUATION AND SPORT


FEELING GOOD

 **Periods and Sport** - periods are a normal, natural process which start as your body changes from being a child into an adult woman. Puberty happens to all girls, usually between 8 and 13 so your timing may be different to your friend's. As part of your menstrual cycle your period typically starts on average every 28 days (often ranging from every 21-35 days) and lasts for 3-5 days. You're likely to experience bleeding and perhaps cramps or pain and blood colour may vary during the cycle. This again is normal so try not to let it interfere with your sport. It is a good idea to track your cycle just to ensure you are prepared for your period. Tracking will help you to eat and train 'smart'.

 **Nutrition & Hydration** - at certain points in your cycle your body changes the types of food it predominantly uses to provide energy. Iron intake (combined with Vit. C to help absorption) is also important during your period as is replacing fluids lost through blood loss and other changes.

 **Training** - throughout your menstrual cycle

evidence suggests that the benefit you get from different training types may vary. For example resistance and HIIT are thought best during the first half of your cycle. Being active may also help - even though you may not feel like exercising on the days leading up to/during your period.

 **Pain** - cramps can often be alleviated with warm baths and over-the-counter medicines appropriate for your age. Exercise generally helps by releasing endorphins (hormones that make you feel happier). If the pain continues get a parent to help just in case you need to see your doctor.

**Sleep** - slight increases in temperature in the second half of your cycle may make sleep difficult. Make sure you have good 'sleep hygiene' (i.e. not using phones an hour before bed).

**Train & Eat smart** - too much exercise, psychological stress and a poor diet are primary risk factors which can affect your menstrual cycle.

IF:



Your period lasts longer than a week...

You have to change your pad very often (soaking more than one pad every 1-2 hours)...

You go longer than 3 months between periods...

You have bleeding in between periods...


You have an unusual amount of pain before or during your period...


Your periods were regular but became irregular...


**...check with your mum or other female friend, and see your doctor.**



# TRACKING YOUR PERIOD

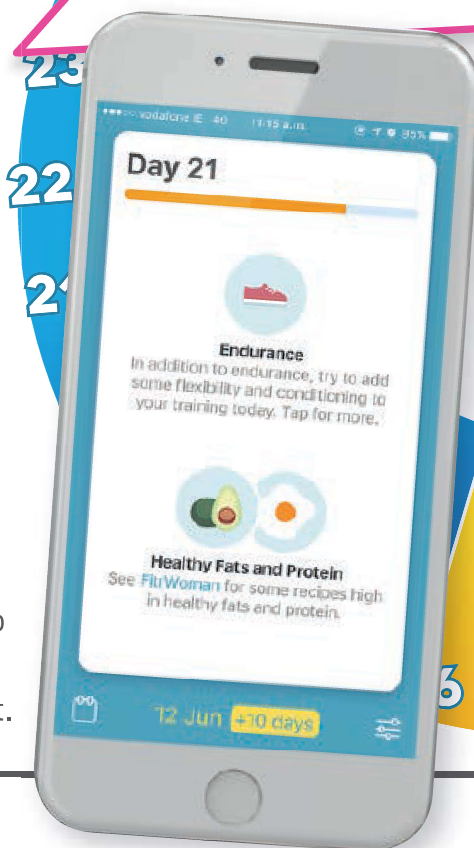
 **Work around your period** - when you're training regularly – be aware that exercise is good but the type and timing are important. You might want to track your cycle on a smart phone 'APP'. This can help you plan training/diet and have a better understanding of what's happening.

 **High oestrogen** - rising levels of the hormone oestrogen in the first half of your cycle help energise you and can help you feel ready to train hard. As oestrogen levels increase, some experts suggest that this is good time to do strength and resistance training. Eating carbohydrates and proteins are particularly important as these provide energy and help with recovery.

 **Second half of your cycle** - as the hormone progesterone kicks in, and then towards your period levels of both progesterone and oestrogen fall, you might begin to feel a little sluggish. Some experts say this is the time to focus more on endurance and reduce the intensity of your training. Your body is thought to use fats more at this time to provide energy, so try and get some good healthy fats into your diet.

## FACT

**OESTROGEN (Estrogen)** The main female sex hormone responsible for changes in your body such as starting your period & development breasts



2 3 4  
**MENSTRUATION**

10 11 12 13 14 15  
**OVULATION**

## FEELING GOOD

### TOP TIPS

Track your periods & training using a smart APP

Provides daily training suggestions tailored to your changing hormone levels

Recipes for stages of your period

Maximise training on any given day

Reduce fatigue & injury

... but learn to know your body



FitrWoman APP is free to download on most platforms.



[www.fitrwoman.com](http://www.fitrwoman.com)  
[@fitrwoman](https://www.instagram.com/fitrwoman)

# BREASTS AND BRAS

FEELING GOOD

💖 **All shapes & sizes** - but one thing that all breasts have in common is that if they are not properly supported during exercise they can move around. This movement can sometimes be embarrassing and can also be painful. But it is not all bad news. A well fitted, supportive sports bra can solve both these problems and help you exercise pain free and with confidence.

🌈 **Sports bras** - there are lots available and some may be more supportive than others. Many provide support to the breasts by pushing them against the chest; others by holding each breast in place in a separate cup, just like a regular bra. Some bras may do both of these things. However, not every bra suits every person, and wearing the wrong size, or style can reduce the level of support the bra gives you. Especially if it is the wrong size! When you are shopping for a sports bra, always try it on so that you can check the fit. You won't always be the same size in every bra and your breasts may change shape and size as you grow and develop.

Below are some tips on how to check the support of your bra and most importantly, make sure that it fits correctly.

- The underband of the bra should be level all the way around your body and be firm enough that it doesn't move when you exercise. Be careful that it is not so tight that it restricts your breathing or digs in to you!
- Your breasts should fit within the cups of the bra without your breast tissue bulging out of the top. If your breasts don't quite fill the cups then try a smaller cup size.
- Make sure the shoulder straps are tight enough that they support your breasts and don't slip off your shoulders. But be careful not to make them so tight that they dig in to your shoulders!
- Jump up and down or run on the spot in the changing room so you can check how much support the bra gives you.



Compression sports bra

## TOP TIPS




Your sports bra is as important as your trainers – replace them both at the same time




Trouble getting your sports bra & heart rate monitor configured? Try adding in a Booband



# BREAST HEALTH

 **Breasts and Sport** – We often begin to take sport seriously just as our breasts are starting to develop. So it can be a bit confusing and sometimes a bit of a challenge to deal with both at the same time. Breasts can take a little getting used to but having a better understanding of what's going on, and how to support your breasts during exercise, can make a big difference to how you feel about them.

 Your body goes through a number of the changes during puberty. Breasts start growing because of rising hormone levels (it's that oestrogen thing again!). The first change you might notice is a firm 'bump' starting to develop underneath your nipples. These are known as 'breast buds'! After this your breasts will go through growth spurts just like any other part of your body and will take around 3 to 5 years to fully develop.

**Tissue** - your breasts are made up of fatty tissues and glands (called mammary glands). The glandular tissue is where milk is produced and stored when a mother breastfeeds her baby.

**Muscle?** - There is no muscle in the breast

which is why it is really important to support the breasts during exercise and other general activity. Without support the soft tissues that provide a little support to the breasts (called Cooper's ligaments) may get stretched and damaged, especially during repetitive or high impact sports that might make your breasts bounce.

Exercising your 'pecs' is generally a good thing – but, because your breasts are tissue, there are no recommended exercises for better breast support. So a well fitted sports bra is a must. Please check the section on sports bras and really look forward to your first sports bra fitting.

## THE PILL...



...and other forms of contraception might be prescribed for teenage girls.

The 'pill' is taken orally but some other forms of personal protection may be implanted or injected. If you are 'prescribed' tell your doctor that you are sporty and make sure s/he explains how your prescription works.



Sometimes the 'pill' is prescribed to help moderate your periods – sometimes even for acne! So to be really sure – ask!

## FEELING GOOD



**Buying your first sports bra.**

## TOP TIPS




Posture – always try to stand up straight. Good posture is important for helping to maintain the strength of Cooper's ligaments because slouching shifts the weight of your breasts forward, putting more pressure on the ligaments

If you have concerns about the shape, colour or size of your breasts – don't worry all breasts are different, and please do talk to your parent or medical professional




# HEALTHY BONES

FEELING GOOD

 We saw how important a strong frame is in the SUPER YOU section – well, there's more to know. Sport-related injury & fractures can occur, especially when the health and strength of your bones can't keep pace with your growth spurts. These growth spurts are triggered as you start to produce oestrogen. This is the female sex hormone which drives many of the changes that occur to our bodies throughout life – but particularly in your teens.

If your diet lacks vital, bone-strengthening vitamins and minerals it will be harder to withstand the forces and impacts occurring as you get more active. Even simple fractures (greenstick, stress or even shin splints) can mean rest and reduction in exercise.

 A healthy diet, controlled training and period tracking are all essential to maintain bone health and fully protect you from bone damage. Make sure your diet contains vitamins (especially bone-essential vitamin D from egg yolk, some fish such as salmon/tuna and from just being outside in the sun). You also need minerals (such as Calcium from dairy

products, reputable nut milks and green leafy vegetables) and if you don't like these foods, try dried fruit, such as prunes, which are also really good for bone health.

Take charge of your own healthy lifestyle with the help of your family and coach! Why not post on social media about smart training for sport? Why not snapchat your own healthy menu creations and share them with teammates?



**Cycling & Swimming:** Bone loading improves bone density when training. Swimming & cycling offer limited bone-loading – so make sure your training includes plenty of impact activity like running. XTraining in all three of the above – in sensible amounts – is good! Ask your coach for advice.

## CALCIUM-RICH

30g of Cheese/cottage or Cheddar

200ml semi-skimmed/skimmed, fortified unsweetened almond/soya milk.

Yoghurt (natural is best)

Green-leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, broccoli etc.

Sardines (in olive oil)

Breakfast cereal: check your brand is fortified with calcium!




## WHAT'S REDS-S?

Or Relative Energy Deficiency Syndrome - looks at connections between fatigue, disordered eating, hormonal disruption, bone health and injury in male and female athletes. It looks also at the effect of the interplay between these on athlete performance.





# FEMALE ATHLETE TRIAD

 The advice we offer in the Feeling Good zone – bone health, healthy food, rehydration, the menstrual cycle and smart training – is there to help you train well and support you being a young woman as well as an athlete. We want to empower you so that you avoid unhealthy habits and excessive exercise which can eventually lead to lack of energy, disrupted periods, fragile bones and where your sport gets out of perspective. The interaction of disordered eating, menstrual problems and bone health in female athletes AND resultant energy deficit/lowered performance is referred to as the 'Female Athlete Triad'.

**Food and water to fuel your exercise** - Eating the right foods at the right times will keep your energy levels up. You could be left feeling overly tired from increasing training, over-exercising or decreasing the amount of food you eat. Abnormal eating habits (restricting foods, skipping meals, eating disorders) can result in low-energy levels which can disrupt periods and increase risk of injury. So, remember to eat and drink smart to train smart!

**Keep track of your menstrual cycle** - By using a period tracker app (or tracking the start and end dates of your period in a diary or calendar) you will be able to work out your menstrual pattern. Irregular or multiple missed periods can impact bone health by disrupting estrogen levels.

If you have missed periods or your periods haven't started by the time you are 15 OR if you began breast development more than three years ago and haven't started your periods, it's worth arranging a check-up just to make sure everything is OK.



**Bone growth** – your bones are growing fast in the early teens so, again a healthy diet and controlled training and period tracking are all essential to keep them strong.



## FEELING GOOD

### TOP TIPS



Beat the Female 'TRIAD' by training sensibly around your menstrual cycle, eating & hydrating well and getting enough sleep. Make a note of the warning signs and treatments – if in doubt ask your coach, parent or teacher

## WARNING SIGNS



- Chronic tiredness
- Anaemia
- Recurring infections/illnesses
- Depression
- Disordered-eating thoughts
- Poor performance
- Absent or irregular periods
- Stress fractures or repeated bone injuries
- Irritability
- Frequent injuries
- 'Tummy' upsets
- Weight loss