

'Yeah, it's a pain going through security, but I don't see the problem with those airline pat-downs. I got one the other day — it was the first time anyone had touched that part of my body in years'

Ask Dr Ozzy

+ Dear Dr Ozzy Thanks to airport scanners, cosmic radiation from long-haul flights and the 3-D imaging equipment at the dentist's, I'm worried I'm turning into a one-man Chernobyl. Should I try to cut down on all this radiation exposure?

Brad, Somerset

You're talking to someone who's been flying on a weekly basis for 42 years. I probably give off more cosmic radiation than Halley's comet, and that's before adding the airport scans I've had or the thousands of visits to my dentist. The longest exposure I've had to an x-ray was for the cover of one of my albums, *Down to Earth*. The bloke in charge of the art work had to shout directions through a 4ft brick wall 'cos he was so scared of getting cancer. To be honest, getting zapped with death rays was probably the safest thing I did in my career. And radiation is a fact of life now, so there's no point worrying. Yeah, it's a pain going through security, but your chances of getting sick from it must be close to zero. What's the alternative? Getting blasted out of the sky at 37,000ft? I'll take the x-ray. I don't see what the problem is with those pat-downs either. I got one the other day; it was the first time anyone had touched that part of my body in years.

+ I've read that ageing is now considered by some medical researchers to be a disease that might one day be cured. If you could live for ever, though, would you even want to?

Dawn, Berwick

Ask me that question when I've got seconds to live, and I may give you a different answer. Right now, I'd say no — it ain't healthy, wanting to live for ever. Human beings are too clever for their own good, I think, when we try to do stuff that messes h God. Having said that, if I could



go back to my mid-forties, before things went wrong with my brain — like losing my short-term memory — I might be tempted, as long as I could be healthy and not spend most of my time down the pub, like I did then. Then again, we're living in an overloaded world and it's only gonna get worse. Who wants eternal life only to see all that happening? We're better off letting the grandkids handle it.

+ My 46-year-old son inherited an addictive personality from his father (who was a big drinker) and has ended up with a crack habit. Worse: when I went on holiday recently, he burgled my house for drug money. I feel terrible. Why do you think he's doing this? Is it a cry for help?

Jeanette, Coventry

You answered your own question at the beginning. It's not a cry for help, your son is an addict. He just wants his drug. A lot of people might find it hard to believe, but addiction is an illness, similar to having any other kind of mental disorder, and nobody can help you until you decide yourself that it's time to stop. That ain't much comfort when the person who used to be your little angel starts smoking crack, though. The first thing I'd do is tell him you know what the deal is. Then give him one last chance and say: "I can help you get over this, or I can let the police handle it and you can go to prison." If he wants your support, find a helpline or a drugs-counselling service and take it from there. If he wants to be a crackhead, there ain't much you can do. At this point, tough love is the only option.

+ A doctor in Italy says he can cure patients of cancer by giving them baking soda. Could that be true?

Chris (no address given)

A friend of my brother's had cancer and didn't want to go through conventional treatments, so he spent months doing all this dead-cat voodoo stuff — and now he's dead. I ain't gonna criticise anyone in that position, 'cos if you've been told you've only got a few weeks to live, you're gonna do what you're gonna do. But baking powder? You're trying to fix a tumour, not a muffin. Also, if it really worked, wouldn't baking powder be in short supply by now? My own rule of thumb is, if some whacky new treatment sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

+ My wife has signed up our son for football practice, piano lessons and yoga classes. He's only two. Is this too much?

Alex, Oxford

It sounds like he's ready to become prime minister. I mean, how old is David Cameron — 4½? Seriously, though, my advice would be to leave the kid alone. Buy him a cowboy outfit. Get him some Lego. It's your missus who should sign up for something — like therapy. A lot of parents these days just seem to be passing all their insecurities on to their kids. Piano lessons at two? Give me a break, man. What's next? Pilot training and deep-sea-diving classes? We pile all this pressure on to these little people then wonder why they're burnt out at nine ■
Ozzy was talking to Chris Ayres

Do you have a question for Dr Ozzy? Email him at askdrozzy@sunday-times.co.uk

Warning: Ozzy Osbourne is not a qualified medical professional. Caution is advised