

**'My stutter has been a lot better since I sobered up. Though when I'm nervous about something my mind spins faster than my mouth can catch up, so I end up sounding like a World War II machinegun'**

## Ask Dr Ozzy

**+ Dear Dr Ozzy** When you're served bad food in a high-pressure social environment, like at a family gathering, what's the best way of emptying your plate without upsetting your stomach?

**Stephanie, Durham**

Get a dog and keep him under the table, so you can pass down handfuls of lumpy mashed potato when your mother-in-law (or whoever cooked the food) is looking in the other direction. That way, you can be a hero by filling up your plate and keep coming back for more. Just don't get a dog that's too big: having a 10-stone rottweiler slobbering under the table ain't a good idea. Another trick is to stuff the food in your pocket. One time I managed to fit all three courses of one of Sharon's dinners into my coat. The only problem was, I forgot all about it, so when she took a trip to the dry cleaners a few months later, she found my stash of rock-hard dumplings. Most of 'em ended up being thrown at my head.

**+ As a self-confessed stutterer, have you ever gone through any of the treatments shown in the film *The King's Speech*, like putting marbles in your mouth or reciting Shakespeare while wearing headphones? Do you think a stutter can be cured?**

**Kim, Santa Barbara, California**

I don't know if a stutter can be cured, but I can tell you how to get one: drink and do drugs for 40 years. Believe me, getting to the end of a single sentence is a huge achievement. To answer the first part of your question, though: no, I've never had speech lessons — although I did once get hypnotised by Paul McKenna when I was trying to change my lifestyle. The trouble was, I was blasted at the time, so it's hard to say if I was hypnotised



or if I just passed out. As for my stutter, it's been a lot better since I sobered up, and I've realised that it's usually brought on by anxiety. When I'm nervous about something, my mind spins faster than my mouth can catch up, so I end up sounding like a World War II machinegun. By taking a deep breath and slowing down a bit, I can usually keep it under control.

**+ My boyfriend goes swimming six times a week and does yoga twice a week, but he's still getting fat. Why?**

**Eve, Ireland**

There's only one explanation: he's eating sandwiches between laps. Either that, or he's lying to you about the exercise. Try hiring a private detective to follow him around for a week. Then report back.

**+ My friends have started to tell me that I'm far too paranoid — about my boss, my girlfriend, the government... you name it. Isn't a bit of paranoia good for you, though?**

**Jamie, New York**

No. Being paranoid is a terrible way to live. Every so often when I get on a plane, I convince myself that it's doomed, and that everyone's gonna die. So I spend the whole 12 hours in the air sweating and trying to stop my heart jumping out of my ribcage, which is a total waste of time, because my panic attack ain't exactly gonna stop a bomb going off or the wing catching fire. I mean, I suppose you could argue that being a worrier makes you more likely to live longer, but if you're feeling paranoid 24 hours of the day, what's the point? It ain't

comfortable for the people around you, either, especially not if you're giving your girlfriend the Gestapo treatment every time she comes home. Listen to your friends and chill out, man.

**+ According to my great-aunt, nine white raisins, soaked in one tablespoon of gin for two weeks, can be a good cure for arthritis. What's your expert medical opinion on this?**

**Phil, Luton**

I have heard of that recipe before, but my version's the other way around: one white raisin soaked in nine bottles of gin for two seconds. I guarantee you won't be able to feel your arthritis after that. You won't be able to feel anything.

**+ When driving long distances, what's the best way to stay awake at the wheel? I've tried keeping the window open, but I still find myself zoning out and having to stop.**

**Raj, Birmingham**

I knew some roadies in the 1970s who could drive from John O'Groats to the moon and back 10 times thanks to the rocket powder they were putting up their noses on a daily basis. But the truth is, driving when you're high is as stupid as driving when you're exhausted. Either way, you could end up killing yourself — or, worse, someone else. If you want to cover a lot of miles without stopping, get a co-driver. Or better yet, take the train ■

*Ozzy was talking to Chris Ayres*

**Do you have a question for Dr Ozzy? Email him at [askdrozzy@sunday-times.co.uk](mailto:askdrozzy@sunday-times.co.uk)**

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