

**'Therapists aren't superhuman. They're paid to listen. If your wife refuses to let you go to a session with her, she could be using them as a cover-up for something — probably involving the gardener'**

## Ask Dr Ozzy

**+ Dear Dr Ozzy My wife insists on going to therapy every week, but as the family breadwinner I get lumped with the bills. Now the therapist is telling my wife she needs an expensive holiday and that she should stand up to me more on 'financial issues'! So I'm paying someone to make me poorer and ruin my marriage.**

**Steven, Norwich**

I've been in a similar situation and there's an easy solution: suggest that you go to one of her sessions so you can say to the therapist:

"I resent the fact I'm forking out good cash to help my wife and all you're doing is poisoning her against me." Or you could chin the guy and go: "Analyse that." Seriously, though: you've gotta tell them your side of the story. Therapists aren't superhuman, they're paid to listen (and make suggestions, in some cases). If your wife refuses, it may be time to get suspicious. She could be using her sessions as a cover-up for something — probably involving the gardener.

**+ I'm renovating my family's Georgian townhouse and have just found a government leaflet about lead paint. I'm now terrified that everything I do will create poisonous dust that will brain-damage my toddler.**

**Ryan, Edinburgh**

A lot of people might not take this kind of thing seriously, but I had a cousin who was an industrial painter and he got asbestosis. So if I were you, I'd be wearing a rubber suit and a gas mask in the house. Yeah, people my age grew up eating more lead-paint chips than they did hot school dinners, but that doesn't make it any less dangerous. Kids also used to ride in cars without seatbelts while their parents smoked with the windows closed. It doesn't mean we should do it



now we know better. Call your local council, ask them what the right procedure is, and follow it. And if you've already started sanding the woodwork, send your family to the in-laws until the job's done and an inspector's given you the all-clear.

**+ My 92-year-old mother is becoming unbearable. She's in good enough shape to live by herself, but relies on me for almost 24/7 support, making it impossible for me to enjoy my retirement with my husband while we're in good health. Even if we're away for a weekend, she calls day and night, laying on the emotional blackmail.**

**Anne, Cumbria**

I'd tell you to talk to your poor old mum, but at 92 she probably ain't gonna listen to much reason.

That's the problem with hanging on to your marbles for so long: you end up becoming aware of how difficult your life is getting. I've never had to deal with that kind of situation 'cos both my parents died quite young, and my father-in-law had Alzheimer's, which meant he didn't have a clue what time of day it was. But there's no getting away from the fact that modern medicine has created a whole new set of problems when it comes to people living to these crazy ages. My advice would be to contact an old people's organisation, tell them this situation is gonna drive you to the loony bin, and find out what extra help might be available. Even if you have to pay for a private nurse out of your own pocket, it may be worth it, because, as you say, you ain't gonna live for ever either.

**+ What's the best way to treat a burnt mouth? I love food, so there's nothing worse than getting over-enthusiastic about a piping-hot meal, only to destroy my taste buds for a week.**

**Sam, Warwick**

I've done that with a hot chip and it's horrible. It's even worse when you get it stuck halfway down your neck pipe, then everything you eat for the next month tastes like sulphuric acid. You gotta slow down. In Britain, we eat food like it could jump from the plate and run away at any second. You could try eating your meals at a really bad cafe, so they're always served lukewarm.

**+ Is it true that 'onion syrup' (onions cooked with brown sugar or honey) can cure a cough and cold?**

**Jamie, Madrid**

All these old wives' tales come from somewhere, so why not give it a go? Mind you, if you eat enough onions, it'll also cure people from ever wanting to speak to you again.

**+ I'm near the age when I need my first prostate check-up. Do you recommend the 'digital rectal exam' or can I get away with the less-intrusive urine screening test?**

**Christian, Stoke Newington**

I don't care if it's a blood test, a urine test, or if they have to stick a bicycle frame up there — get it done. I've lost too many friends to prostate cancer to worry about any temporary discomfort ■  
*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**