



# FIT MOTHER

Our health and fitness expert, Maria Lally, has the latest news and advice to help you get back in shape

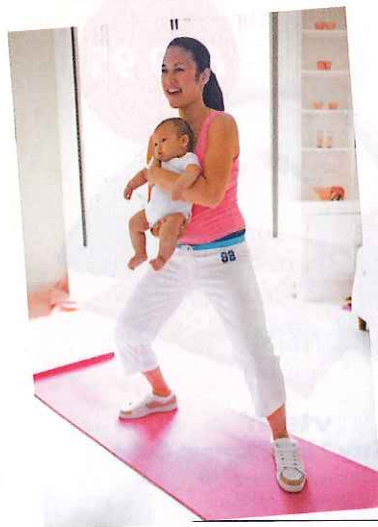
## SHOULD I TRY... BALLET?

Popular stateside, this latest dance and exercise fusion is heading to the UK. 'Classes involve traditional ballet exercises, yoga-style stretches, plus some light cardio and weights,' says trainer Jess Schuring, who runs classes at heartcore.co.uk. The workout promises to tone your stomach, arms and legs. Esporta gyms run Ballet Fusion classes\* or try a DVD like *Xtend Barre: Ballet Workout* (£8.97, amazon.co.uk).



# 90

THE NUMBER OF CALORIES YOU BURN PUSHING A PRAM FOR 30 MINUTES



## FIVE-MINUTE FIXER... SQUATS

'Squats strengthen your legs and core, as well as your body's ability to avoid injury and lower back pain,' says personal trainer Phil Curtis\*\*. Here's how to do them:

- 1 Put your shoulders back and lift your chest, then slowly begin to bend your knees, keeping your heels firmly on the ground.
- 2 As you lower, push your hips out behind you as if you're showing someone your bum. Continue down until you are in a seated position with your knees at 90 degrees. Hold this for one second.
- 3 Keeping your chest and head still lifted, push through your legs and squeeze your bum on the way up. Do three sets of 20 reps and you can even add in your pelvic floor squeezes as you stand up.

## NEW MUM? DON'T FORGET ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

According to a US study, new mums have no time to prepare healthy meals for themselves and eat fewer green veg and more saturated fat and sugary drinks than their childless counterparts. 'This is absolutely true,' says nutritionist Amanda Ursell. 'Moreover, it takes a woman two years to replenish all her pre-pregnancy vitamins and minerals.' To avoid burn out, Amanda suggests peanut butter on toast for breakfast, fruit and nuts mid-morning, pasta for lunch and whatever the kids are having for dinner. Check out her new *Baby And Toddler Food Bible* (£11.99, Hay House), which has a chapter on mums' nutrition.

**Q** 'I had a baby 10 months ago and my stomach is still flabby. Will sit-ups help?'

'No,' says trainer James Duigan, who trains mum-of-two Elle Macpherson. 'But pelvic floor exercises will.' Your pelvic floor muscles are the ones you'd use if you wanted to stop yourself from peeing mid-flow but also include your undercarriage and 'core' muscles. 'Squeeze your vagina, and pull in your belly button, clench for a few seconds, release and squeeze again,' says James. 'Aim to build up to 10-20 squeezes, five times a day.' James also advises taking fish oil supplements: 'They switch on your fat-burning hormones.' Try Vitabiotics Aquamarine Omega-3 Super Potency (£10.15 for 60 capsules, vitabiotics.com).

## STARTING POINT

### MEET ALYSON!

Every month we'll be following 32-year-old Alyson Humm, from Surrey, mum to ten-week-old Jessica, as she battles her way back into her skinny jeans...

Height: 5ft 5

Weight: 10½st

Ideal weight: 9st 4lbs



'I was really happy with my body pre-pregnancy – I was toned and had a flat stomach. I loved being pregnant and enjoyed the

changes in my body, but after I gave birth it was a different story. My stomach, legs and breasts looked flabby and saggy. Before Jessica, I ate lots of sushi, salads, fruit and vegetables, but now I'm existing on toast, sandwiches, ready meals, biscuits and coffee. To begin with I was so wrapped up in Jessica I didn't have time to think about how I looked, but now I want my old body back. Sadly, I lack the freedom, time and energy to do anything about it! I've got a pair of skinny jeans I used to wear all the time and now they won't go past my thighs. I love life as a new mum but I just want to feel like my old self again.'

### NEXT MONTH

Alyson checks out a gym

