NOBODY PUTS BABY IN THE CORNER
SOPHIE GUIDOLIN CHALLENGES ONE OF SOCIETY’S GREATEST FITNESS MYTHS

2016 FITNESS TRENDS HERE TO STAY  ●  UNEXPECTED FACES OF FITSPO
FITNESS TIPS FOR PREGNANCY  ●  WHY A SIX PACK ISN’T THE PINNACLE OF FITNESS

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Editor’s Note

When thinking about the next health topic to delve into this issue, I landed on the need to inspire our readers to become the fittest versions of themselves. When I considered the link between poor fitness levels and ill health and mortality, dedicating this issue to ‘fitspo’ was an easy decision.

The sad fact is people who don’t engage in sufficient physical activity have a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, colon and breast cancers, Type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis. If that isn’t enough motivation to get the blood pumping, being physically active improves mental and musculoskeletal health and will help reduce risk factors of weight problems, high blood pressure and cholesterol.

So, how much exercise is enough? Experts around the world agree the magic number we need to beat is 30. That is, we should aim to get more than half an hour of moderate intensity physical activity under our belt on most days of the week. That 60 per cent of Australian adults are not meeting this recommendation should be at concern to us all. We need to be setting a better example for our children, who research shows are spending longer indulging in screen-based activities than being physically active.

Now onto the positives… there are inspiring tales all around us of people who have literally turned their lives around after becoming physically fit. It was a pleasure to photograph and interview personal trainer and nutritionist Sophie Guidolin, who shared her response to her prenatal fitness regime making global headlines overnight because of ‘that photo’. We hope you enjoy Sophie’s very personal story and her insightful fitness tips for pregnant women who choose to keep up their fitness regimes.

We also searched the world for the unexpected faces of ‘fitspo’ – people with unique stories that prove fitness looks different for everyone and is so much deeper than aesthetics alone.

It is my hope this issue gives you a fresh perspective on the importance of fitness, and that you are moved to make carving out time daily to work up a sweat a priority.

Melanie Coppola
Acting Editor

@twitter.com/meljcoppola
Type 2 diabetes is expected to become the leading cause of disease burden for males and second cause for females by 2023, mainly due to the expected growth in the prevalence of obesity in Australia.

Source: Fitness Industry Workforce Report published by Fitness Australia in April 2012.

Only one third of children, and one in ten young people, undertook the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day.

Source: The Australian Health Survey 2011–12

One in five Australian adults exercise at very low levels, or not at all.


The average Australian spends close to $1,000 a year on gym memberships, sports equipment and the latest fitness trends.

Source: Suncorp Bank Cost of Being Fit Survey, January 2015.

Only 34 per cent of adult Australians meet the national activity guidelines which recommend adults undertake at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week over five or more separate sessions.


The annual financial cost of obesity was estimated at $8.3 billion in 2008 with an additional $49.9 billion in the form of lost wellbeing, bringing the combined cost to $58.2 billion.

Source: Obesity: A National Epidemic and its Impact on Australia by Obesity Australia.

The average Australian spends close to $1,000 a year on gym memberships, sports equipment and the latest fitness trends.

Source: Suncorp Bank Cost of Being Fit Survey, January 2015.

Jewellery meets fitness tracker

The Misfit Shine Activity and Sleep Tracker never requires charging, is waterproof and can be worn on the wrist, shoe, belt or around the neck. It comes with an app and together they track steps, calories burned, time spent in light and deep sleep and distance travelled. Designed like a piece of jewellery, it features lights which switch on in relation to your activity level.

pica.com.au/misfit

The Netflix for gyms and fitness clubs

Monthly fitness subscription service KFit gives its members access to fitness studios, classes and gyms in their city. Aimed at people who don’t yet have a gym membership, there are already 1,000 fitness studios, gyms and facilities to choose from in Australia and New Zealand. Options range from the more traditional – yoga, Pilates, boxing and Zumba – to rock climbing and rap jumping.

kfit.com

Pathology and hormone testing for athletes

Planet Naturopath is a unique Australian service created by naturopath Michael Smith. The company works with athletes and fitness lovers to help them get more out of their performance through specialised testing which help clients better understand their health and optimise their performance, endurance, muscle gain and recovery times based on detailed lab results.

planetnaturopath.com
Sophie Guidolin learnt the downside of living your life in the public eye when a photograph documenting her prenatal fitness regime made global headlines overnight. But the outrage and vicious attacks simply fuelled on this 26 year old health and wellness expert to speak out about what she believes is one of society’s most outdated stereotypes about pregnancy.

by Nina Tovey
Yet nothing could have prepared Sophie for what was coming when she posted a photograph online of herself lifting a 30 kilogram weight, under the supervision of her husband and trainer Nathan Wallace, while six months pregnant with twins.

A barrage of criticism and hysteria followed, with Sophie trolled relentlessly by strangers concerned for the safety of her unborn twin girls. The media was quick to pick up the photographs, which were published by hundreds of news outlets and blogs across the world.

The media storm could only go so far, given there was not one medical expert who would publicly express concern about the safety of Sophie’s babies as a result of her choice to continue lifting weights. Support also flowed in from unexpected places, with Olympian gold medalist Libby Trickett and media commentator Amanda Blair passionately defending Sophie publicly.

“A bigger concern, and I think where we need to direct our online vitriol, is towards those women who gain 30 – 40 kilos during a pregnancy and then say it’s because they’re ‘eating for two’. That is a much bigger health concern than someone who’s lifting weights,” said Amanda.

Amanda also made the point that when pregnant with her fourth child she had to lift her other three children constantly.

“I was also lifting weights, but not in a conventional sense,” she said.

When reflecting on the backlash, Sophie said she understood people weren’t used to seeing images like the one she published.

“‘I can see why people responded strongly, but if that’s what it took to start a conversation about this issue than I welcome it. There are so many myths when it comes to exercising during pregnancy, and it drives me mad,” Sophie said.

Sophie said it was important for women to know that although some modifications may be necessary, with your doctor’s approval there was no reason not to continue exercising throughout their pregnancy.

“Many people don’t realise I was only lifting half the amount of weight in that particular photo than I did previously. It was the right amount of weight for me at that particular point in my pregnancy based on my fitness levels prior to falling pregnant.”

Gold Coast nutritionist, personal trainer and author Sophie Guidolin has learnt a thing or two about controversy over the course of her career. Whether it was shocking the bodybuilding industry after dominating a series of high profile fitness modelling competitions as a relative unknown or calling out the calorie obsession and unsafe training methods she saw permeating the competition world – Sophie is no stranger to ruffling feathers.
I want to encourage mothers to realise the body is an amazing thing.

Sophie can pinpoint her love of weight training back to a phase of her life after the birth of her second son when she started going to the gym and discovered a rush she’d never experienced before.

After overhauling her diet and entering the world of fitness modelling, Sophie decided she wanted to help other people change their lives through fitness, and she became a qualified personal trainer with FIAFitnation and eventually opened her own strength and conditioning gym called Hold Your Own on the Gold Coast.

Public interest in Sophie quickly soared, and she went on to build a community so large and loyal it surpassed the reach of some of Australia’s highest circulation magazines. Sophie became known for her holistic approach to health and wellness in an industry often associated with quick fixes and calorie obsession. Her online Eat Clean, Live Lean: Total Body Transformation Nutrition Program has helped tens of thousands of people around the world reclaim their health and fitness.

Taking a strong stance against restrictive and ‘fad’ diets, she released her first book Eat Clean, Live Lean in 2013 which sold more than 15,000 copies and followed this up with the release of her second book My Kids Eat, a collection of her favourite family recipes based on clean eating principles.

Sophie, who recently gave birth to healthy twin girls Aria and Evie, said she was in no great rush to return to her previous body shape.

“My priorities are bonding with my beautiful little girls, and the rest will follow. I’ve learned to realise although we may have an ‘ideal body image’, this needs to change in order for us to continue a healthy relationship with ourselves. I accept where I am and the stage my body is in,” said Sophie.

“I want to encourage mothers to realise the body is an amazing thing – to trust the changes it goes through and allow themselves not only to accept but to love their new body.”

Sophie said she wanted women to realise the huge favour they would do for themselves and their babies by staying active during their pregnancy.

“The research doesn’t lie – exercising regularly can help mothers recover more quickly, cope better with labour and experience less swelling, insomnia, anxiety and depression,” Sophie said.

Sophie also points to the vast difference between how smooth her third pregnancy was compared to carrying her two sons Ryder and Kai.

“I felt so much stronger this time around after putting on almost 30 kilograms during my first pregnancies where I was completely inactive and ate chocolate for breakfast, custard for lunch and two minute noodles for dinner. I honestly believe my diet and fitness regime helped me avoid the complications and gestational diabetes I experienced when I was pregnant with my sons,” said Sophie.

Sophie said she also regularly reminded her community she was purely documenting her own experience and journey, as she had done for many years prior to falling pregnant.

“What is right for me may not be right for someone else as everyone’s circumstances and health is different,” said Sophie.

Sophie also highlighted to her community how much easier her pregnancies had been following her own fitness regime.

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The barefoot running CEO

“Exercise is a vital part of my daily routine. I will run or box for an hour every morning before work as it makes it much easier for me to concentrate throughout the day – without it I feel lethargic. My usual week consists of three runs and a few boxing classes.

The story about how I discovered barefoot running is an interesting one. I was never a big fan of running at school or university, and started running more after I got a full-time job. Initially I kicked off with smaller distances (10 kilometres seemed huge at the time) and gradually built up to a marathon distance over ten years.

My wife and I both read Born to Run by Christopher McDougall and Barefoot Step by Step by Ken Talbot. After learning more about the benefits of this style of exercise we gave it a try. I was particularly attracted to the simplicity and common sense notion of running without an artificial object on your foot, combined with the lower chance of injuries.

While barefoot runners tend to be a bit slower, they can usually run longer distances as there’s far less impact involved. And as I travel a fair bit for work I can pack less luggage which is a nice bonus. You always get a few strange looks but most people are usually really supportive. For my first ever barefoot run I actually wore socks because I was worried about stepping on something. But in time, your feet become a lot tougher.

At school and university, exercise was more about competing with others – especially in team-based sports. These days it’s about maintaining a base level of fitness and keeping energy levels up. There’s also some nice side benefits – last year as part of the Melbourne marathon I raised more than $7000 to support the Myeloma Foundation in its efforts to provide care to those living with myeloma.

As we get older, devoting the time to exercise definitely becomes more important. Responsibility shifts to the individual to ensure that keeping fit isn’t forgotten in the business of everyday life.”

Adam Schwab, 35

Adam is the Managing Director and Founder of online retail company AussieCommerce Group. He is a regular business commentator specialising in corporate governance, economics and start ups.

aussiecommerce.com.au
One fit grandma

“At the end of 2013 I hit the wall where my fitness was concerned. Over the previous three to four years I had put everyone else’s needs before my own and had gained almost 20 kilograms and felt constantly miserable, stressed and exhausted. I had played lots of sport throughout my life but reached a stage where I gave it all up and could hardly get off the couch.

I was experiencing heart problems which tests showed were due to my weight and fitness levels. There is also a long history of cancer in my family, and I had already had a benign lump removed from my breast. I felt there was no doubt my deteriorating health would continue if I didn’t start taking care of myself.

In early 2014 when I turned 52 I drew a line in the sand and started working with a personal trainer called Chris Chesher. Today I am the fittest and healthiest I’ve been in my whole life. I can now run 10 kilometres, ride my bike for up to 80 kms, am back in the pool swimming and do a couple of sessions of yoga and strength training each week. I’ve even recently mastered a headstand.

The best thing about my new life is that I can share my fitness journey with my children, grandchildren and wonderful friends. There is no sitting on a park bench for me now while everyone else climbs to the top of the lookout to enjoy the view!

I find my work life balance today is far easier to manage. I even scare myself some days with the amount of energy I have and find I am much more productive at work. I sleep well and having a whole closest of new clothes makes a girl feel pretty good too!

One of my biggest achievements came in 2014 when I carried my 18 kilogram grandson up Mt Coolum, a seriously steep hike. I then carried my other grandson all the way down. Earlier that year I could hardly lift them into their prams. These moments are what all the hard work is for.

Completing my first 10 kilometre run with my daughter was another huge high, and something I never thought I’d be able to do. I’ve also joined a cycling group and we completed the 50 kilometre MS Brissie to the Bay ride earlier this year as a team which was great fun. Being part of a healthy community has been a big inspiration on my journey. The social aspect is fun, rewarding and keeps me motivated.

Next up I’ll be tackling my first beginner triathlon! This will also involve training with friends from my new community. I love that we share a common goal and can support and motivate each other to tackle what we once thought was unachievable head on.”

Karen Taylor, 53
Karen lives in Brisbane, is a wife to one, mother to three wonderful daughters and Grandma to five awesome grandsons – who no longer run rings around her!

She is the Centre Coordinator at the Australian Centre for Entrepreneurship Research at Queensland University of Technology.
Bell’s Palsy sufferer leans on fitness to recover

“I was running some very stressful sponsor hospitality and activation programs for the Sydney Olympics in an event management role when I started experiencing severe headaches and a slight numbness of my tongue during a holiday. On the third day I woke up with the right side of my face paralysed, and I thought I must have had a stroke. I was quickly diagnosed with a form of facial paralysis called Bell’s Palsy, which is linked with extreme stress. At the time I couldn’t speak properly, drink a cup of tea without dribbling or close my right eye.

Following two weeks at home after lots of rest, extensive acupuncture and a course of cortisone tablets my face gradually returned to normal.

The experience was a huge wake up call for me as I had always taken my health and fitness for granted. I learnt first hand that being aware of your body, and taking note of warming signs is very important. I made fitness a regular part of my life at that point, because of the emotional and mental benefits it offered through stress relief.

Once you have Bell’s Palsy it stays in your system and becomes your body’s default response to extreme stress, so being physically fit helps me keep on top of this. I’ve had a few instances of numbness and headaches, but I amp up my fitness as a preventative and this works well for me.

In addition to my corporate job, I also teach BodyPump, CWWorks, Barre Attack and boot camps at gyms around Sydney. I try to motivate all my clients, who range from teenagers to incredible people in their 80s and 90s.

I have learnt the importance of setting fitness goals so I always feel I have something to work towards. This year I will participate in my 8th half marathon. I love spreading the message that living an active life really improves your quality of life as you get older, as mobility and strength deteriorate as you get older. This doesn’t necessarily need to be at the gym – going for long walks, running, doing body weight training at home and incorporating incidental exercise are all great options.”

Carol Molloy, 47

Carol is a group training instructor with a focus on strength, health and wellbeing across all age groups. She was previously a contestant on My Kitchen Rules.

instagram.com/carol.mkr
Overcoming fitness compulsion to find a peaceful place

“I first became aware of body image when I started modelling at 19 after being approached by a scout in a café. From that moment on, I became aware of my body – every ‘flaw’, every extra kilogram of weight had to go. I was heavily influenced by my friends – all models – and I learnt how to disguise things with fake tan and makeup.

My equation at the time was less calories and more exercise equated to a skinny body and more modelling jobs, money and happiness. I quickly learnt I was wrong.

I became obsessed with staying skinny which would see me spend at least two hours a day at the gym doing cardio and weights training and talking to personal trainers about how I could work harder. I was addicted to the endorphin high that came after a long workout. Missing time with friends and family was ok by me because I HAD to train because it was my passion, healthy obsession and stress relief… or so I thought.

The turning point for me came when I tripped during a long run and split my chin deeply. I needed immediate surgery and was close to becoming paralysed. I see this as my first message to the universe that I needed to rethink my priorities. I was very thin with no energy and realised the excessive exercise I was doing was taking its toll on my body and contributing to my poor health.

I made a decision to love myself more, and my relationship with exercise became vastly different. I began practising yoga – I was amazed at how calm it made me feel. It made the exercise noise a lot quieter and it began to nurture my body from the inside out. I began gaining weight, helped by the natural foods I was beginning to cook with and enjoy. My energy began to return and I started to look and feel like myself again.

Today I walk twice a week which I see as my ‘moving meditation’ – it is a chance to breathe in fresh air, connect with nature and be with my thoughts. I occasionally spend short periods of time on an exercise bike and rowing machine, and lift weights once a week for 20 minutes. I still make time to exercise but nothing is set in concrete.

I don’t stress about not exercising anymore and I’ve learnt that for me – less is more. When I finally freed myself from the shackles of over-exercising there was a huge shift in my demeanour. It had a lot to do with getting my life back and spending time with friends I would have previously spent at the gym or running.

Yoga has taught me to help silence those nagging thoughts we experience from time to time. My productivity has increased and I have more energy to focus on things that enhance my life and happiness. Today I help others who feel stuck in a never ending rut of body, exercise and food confusion.”

Danielle Shine, 35

Danielle is a natural foods chef who lives in New York City and shares her recipes and insights on nutrition and yoga through her blog Danielle Shine.

danielleshine.com
The fitness trendmill

With the fitness industry in Australia anticipated to be worth more than $1.5 in 2016, new trends are constantly emerging as the fitness market becomes increasingly crowded. Some fade from the scene as quickly as they arrived, yet others prove to strike a chord which resonates and sticks.

**Director of Fitness and Health Expo Shaun Krenz**
*fitnessexpo.com.au* gave his insights into the latest trends to hit Australian shores:

**Submerged Spin**

Pippa Middleton put this form of exercise on the map, which combines the principles of stationary indoor cycling with the healthy and soothing experience of being submerged in water. Aquaspin uses the benefits of water buoyancy and resistance to make the exercise motions gentle yet vigorous.

**Treading on Sand**

SandTrek brings the beach to the gym by providing a natural ‘walk-on-sand’ experience to the treadmill surface. It is thought to be possible to burn up to double the calories in the same speed and training time than running on firm surfaces without facing the disadvantages of high impact running and walking.

**Get ‘Uber Fit’**

Instead of connecting you with a nearby car, PT4You is an app under development which will connect you to a local personal trainer. This handy gadget will make training easier for fitness fanatics wherever they are.

**National Training Manager FIAFitnation Ewan Birnie**
*afiafitnation.com.au* nominating the following ‘must watch’ fitness trends:

**Animal Flow**

Animal Flow (*animalflow.com.au*) is a type of bodyweight training drawing inspiration from the movement of animals to improve body awareness while developing mobility, strength and core muscle function.

Ewan said Animal Flow was known for using only bodyweight exercises and removing the need for expensive equipment or facilities.

“This provides great versatility as the movements can be included in regular workouts, or as a completely separate session anywhere, at any time,” said Ewan.

**Xtend Barre**

This exercise regime (*xtendbarre.com*) brings in elements of dance, ballet and pilates to create an adrenaline-fuelled workout that helps strengthen, lengthen and chisel the body.

“Women are flocking to Xtend Barre with dedicated studios popping up all over Australia. It appeals to women who might have enjoyed dancing classes as a girl and love the social aspect of group classes. It’s also low impact which is great for anyone with injuries,” said Ewan.

**Wellspring loves:**

**Curvy Yoga**

With a focus on body acceptance, Brisbane-based yoga chain Stretch Yoga runs a six week course for voluptuous yoginis and yogis featuring props and adjusted sequences. The idea is to show that yoga is for everybody and in the creator PJ Well’s words – ‘working with what yo’ mama gave you’.


**Balance Breaks**

This interesting twist on a retreat combines invigorating exercise with activities which help participants find greater balance in their lives. Created by Sydney-based health and fitness duo Casey and Jenna, the trips are hosted on the NSW and WA coasts and internationally in Sri Lanka. Guests can expect to indulge in yoga, surfing, a fusion of boxing and pilates, barre while also enjoying self-reflection exercises, cooking classes and life coaching. Sounds like our type of holiday.

[papertigerwellness.com](http://papertigerwellness.com)
Debunking fitness myths

By Sophie Kay

Let’s take a little poll – how many of you have a certain image of a personal trainer or someone who is ‘fit’ in your minds? Yep, thought so, quite a few of you.

Well, as a personal trainer and fitness blogger I see a lot of pressure in the industry to look and act a certain way that can be stressful and damaging. When I started on my fitness journey I turned to Instagram for inspiration, like a lot of other young women. I followed a host of young women who had those enviably flat stomachs, long tanned legs and sweat-free faces and aspired to be exactly like them.

Two years later I’ve come to the slow realisation that fitness isn’t necessarily connected with a certain aesthetic or figure. Plus, some of what is posted online as ‘fitspo’ can be incredibly misleading.

Take selfies for example – the ubiquitous currency of young men and women today. If those ‘before and after’ shots show what seems like an impossible improvement that’s because it is not a fair comparison. I have seen before and after shots feature two different people, heavy photoshop and other clever tricks.

My own now infamous ‘before and after’ photo shows how easy it is to fake an improvement without any tech wizardry whatsoever. All I did in the three minutes between the two photos being taken was to turn off the overhead light, put on some more flattering underwear, twist my body slightly to the side to show off my best angle, flex and, of course, add a filter.

That said, there are plenty of real progress shots out there and some amazing transformations. However those women and men will be the first to tell you it took time, hard work and commitment. There are no quick fixes when it comes to fitness.

There’s also no reason why fit and healthy people need to look a certain way. I’ve been sizes lighter than I am now and unable to do half of the things I can do today – like squat more than 100 per cent of my body weight and complete a 40 mile cycle race.

And no, I don’t have a six-pack. Having a six-pack just means your body fat percentage is low enough to be able to see your abdominal muscles. Also, the shape of your abs is totally dependent on your genetics. Some people can get a six-pack, some can’t. For the majority of people the lifestyle they would have to live to achieve and maintain this type of definition isn’t achievable.

Also, ladies, having such a low body fat percentage might stop your periods. Surely that can’t be good for you...

The last myth I want to dispel is that exercise is easy, full of sunshine and smiles and leaves you with a flawless face. Exercise is not easy. And if it is easy then you’re not pushing yourself. And if you’re not pushing yourself then you won’t make any progress. Even if your goal is just to clear your head you need to put in a bit of effort to achieve that.

The real side of fitness is early mornings, freezing hands and ears in winter, ridiculous sports bra tans in summer, stinging sweat in your eyes, not bothering to wash your hair because you’re only going to get sweaty again tomorrow, permanent hand callouses, blistered feet and stiff muscles. But all of this adds up to feeling alive, proud and on top of the world.

About Sophie

Sophie Kay is a personal trainer and fitness blogger based in London, England. After being a sporty and active teenager, five years in an office job led to her piling on the pounds and growing increasingly unhappy. Sophie got fit again and fell in love with the power of transformation and body confidence that she became a personal trainer to help other people to fall in love with their bodies.

thefitologyway.com
twitter.com/fitology_uk
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