

What happens when...

...I go to a festival?

They're one of life's great headliners – but, as we enter a summer of live music, blow-up mattresses and feel-good memories, what can you do to ensure your health remains on the line-up?

01

Sound advice

It's not all music to your ears. 'When the noise is loud, sound waves enter your outer ear and travel through the canal – via the eardrum and tiny bones vibrating – and into your inner ear,' says Paul Harrison, audiologist and founder of Hearing Aid UK. 'Hair cells detect these vibrations, which then signal to your brain,' he adds – urging caution. Even short exposure to high decibels can cause damage. Take earplugs or breaks between sets.

02

Feeling wiped

Camping isn't exactly conducive to a 10-step skincare routine. 'But the temptation to leave make-up on can trap dirt, oil and pollutants against the skin, which can clog pores and lead to acne breakouts,' says Anjali Mahto, consultant dermatologist at Self

London. 'It's essential to cleanse skin thoroughly to remove impurities.' So, face wipes? Anita Sturnham, founder of skincare range Decree, suggests steering clear. 'They often contain drying ingredients that can irritate and disrupt the skin barrier.' Pack micellar water and cotton pads instead.

Is your festival fix a ticket to a happier, healthier you?

04

Crowd-pleaser

Spending time with your loved ones – or meeting new people – serves serious psychological benefits. 'The intense bonding experienced within a tight-knit community fosters a sense of belonging and camaraderie, elevating mood and reducing feelings of loneliness,' explains Elle Mace, positive psychology and relationships coach. 'Additionally, social interaction and connection can boost self-esteem and overall mental wellbeing, contributing to fulfilment and happiness.' Sharing experiences and creating memories are important for enhancing emotional resilience and bolstering a support network for the future.

03

Dancing queen

When you're throwing shapes, there's a whole spectrum of changes happening inside of you. 'The endogenous opioid system – a network that triggers rushes of feel-good chemicals – is at the root of sensations of elation,' explains Peter Lovatt, a psychologist, former professional dancer and author of *The Dance Cure*. 'Research has found that when we move in synchrony with other people, this system is activated.' Oxytocin, connected to feelings of empathy and safety, is also triggered – boosting a sense of connection and bonding.

05

Pitching in

Ah, tent life. 'As well as noise, light can disrupt production of the sleep hormone melatonin,' notes Lindsay Browning, an insomnia expert and author of *Navigating Sleeplessness*. Irregular sleep times (that you, sunrise?), snoozing inches from the ground and enough canned rosé to fuel a stadium of Swifties also risk sabotaging shut-eye. Taking earplugs and good bedding can help you stay in sync with your circadian rhythm as much as possible. Above all, know this: good health is about the habits you perform all year, not just during weekends in July – and fezzzy szn comes but once a year. So don't forget to have fun, yeah?