

One careful owner with full service history

The most important thing in life is our health, and as a new mum I have really started to take mine seriously as I long to play with Finn's children. They say that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, so I decided to have a full-blown look at how this 34-year-old body is doing. Step forward Preventicum, based at London's Centre of Preventative Medicine. Girls, this place really is the last word in medical technology. It is the stuff of hypochondriacs' dreams, offering a six-star service while providing the most in-depth, full-body examinations available.

The package includes a physical examination, blood and urine tests, an exercise ECG stress test, ultrasound sessions and, the pièce de résistance, a MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan, during which every inch of your insides are pictured and analysed.

On entering this immaculate facility I felt excitement tinged with apprehension. The fear was soon soothed due to the Ritz-Carlton-type service – well, I did say it was six-star. The tests take five hours, so I was given a luxurious room for the day complete with Sky TV, internet access and comfy chairs in which to settle between examinations. First up, a nurse drew blood and took a urine sample and whisked them off for analysis. Then medical director Gary Slavin came to make a full lifestyle investigation and perform physical examinations, including a breast check and cervical smear. He was happy with my recovery from the caesarean, which was reassuring, and he gave helpful suggestions for coping with postnatal hormonal swings. After an ECG stress test to assess my cardiac and circulatory system, it was on to the biggie...the MRI.

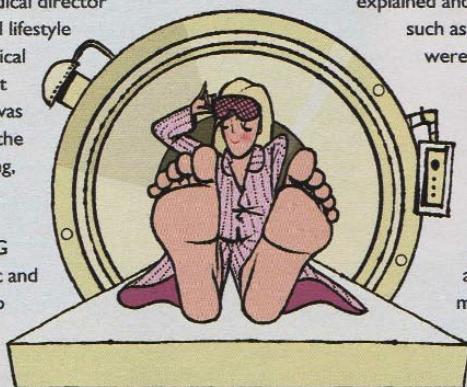
This is a huge tube-like machine that takes the most

detailed images of your organs without any harmful side effects. It works with magnets, rather than the radiation used in x-rays, and can scan in far greater detail. Some people worry that they will feel claustrophobic while enclosed in the cylinder, which is understandable, but Preventicum takes every precaution to make this test as stress-free as possible. You are given glasses with an angled mirror on them so that you can see out of the tube, and there's a choice of relaxing CDs, too. I was so happy to lie down, swaddled in a fluffy blanket, that I fell asleep during the hour-long process, while my brain, heart, arteries and bowel – the areas with the highest risk of disease – were analysed. When I woke up it was results time. Relaxation was immediately replaced with anxiety, but the great thing about Preventicum is that you get your results on the same day, so no sleepless nights.

Thankfully, my doctor did not leave me in suspense and told me that everything looked good, so I could sit back and enjoy the tour of my body. It was amazing to see my heart pumping and my system working in synchronicity. This in-depth insight blew me away. I wish for everyone to see their inner wonder because in doing so you cannot help but want to safeguard your health. My blood tests were explained and my risk factors for serious illness,

such as heart disease and certain cancers, were assessed. Thankfully, I was sent away with a clean bill of health, but with a renewed sense of the preciousness of the human body. In about a fifth of Preventicum's cases, the client is referred to their GP for conditions such as raised cholesterol or polyps in the bowel, which can be an early sign of bowel cancer. So to all my wonderful readers, guard your health and may you live long and happy lives.

www.normandie.uk.com



Contacts

■ Ultimate Check, £2,750. Preventicum, London Centre of Preventive Medicine, tel: 020 7605 6900, www.preventicum.co.uk

Products and tips

■ Abahna's Frankincense and Sweet Orange candle is wonderfully relaxing, £22, tel: 020 8675 5073.

■ Breathe Your Way to Calmness DVD, £12.74, www.amazon.co.uk

■ Take 30 minutes of exercise a day.

■ Drink eight glasses of water every day

Illustration
BILL BROWN

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TAKE



GOLD STAR

Chanel Irréelle Soleil, £22.50

RESULT 8.72/10

Light-reflecting pigments and vitamin E soften lines. Comes in four shades and with its own brush.

COMMENTS ■ 'Looked good over foundation and bare skin'; ■ 'Lasted for hours'; ■ 'Gave a soft veil of colour'. Available nationwide.



BRONZING BEAUTY

Ultra Glow Complexsun UV Demi Matte Bronzing Powder, £12.50

RESULT 8.6/10

A golden powder with a hint of sun protection.

COMMENTS

■ 'Worked well instead of blusher'; ■ 'Colour was superb'; ■ 'Gave a sun-kissed glow'. Available from Boots.



NATURAL WONDER

Dr Hauschka Bronzing Powder, £20

RESULT 8/10

Includes witch hazel and sage to combat skin impurities, plus a touch of silk for softness.

COMMENTS

■ 'A lovely, luminescent glow'; ■ 'Looked great with just mascara and lipgloss'; ■ 'Did not rub off on clothes'. Tel: 01386 792642.



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