

VOICE OF THE

# DAILY Mirror

## Toughen knife laws

**HUNDREDS of people are being stabbed to death and we cannot stand idly by.**

Our tight gun controls mean Britain is spared America's firearms curse. Now we need to strengthen the laws on blades.

The number of fatal stabbings has rocketed to a shocking level.

Campaigners say there were 304 knife deaths across the UK last year. This is a heartbreaking problem that must not be ignored.

As a deterrent, heavier penalties for carrying blades may be part of the answer.

The risk of a long spell behind bars is surely likely to make some people think twice.

Parents whose children have been killed want the punishment for carrying a knife toughened up – from a maximum of four years to a minimum of four years.

If politicians have any better ideas, let's hear them. But we won't sit back and just let this senseless bloodshed continue on our streets.

## Syria solution

**BORIS Johnson has threatened British military action against Syria before and was forced to back down, humiliated by the lack of international support.**

Tory ministers alternatively demanding the head of Bashar al-Assad, then agreeing that the Damascus dictator needed to be part of any peace deal, raised doubts about our Government's willingness to risk British lives.

The use by Assad's regime of chemical weapons breaches international law and is abhorrent. So too is dropping barrel bombs to incinerate civilians.

Targeting the Islamic State jihadists was relatively simple when they had no missiles to shoot down aircraft. But Syria's tyrant, backed by Russia, possesses the ability to fire back.

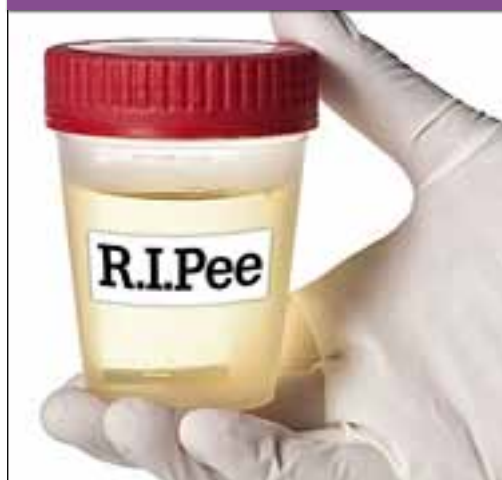
We need a negotiated solution to this terrible conflict, not more fighting.

## Utterly sick

**BRIBING GPs not to look after patients must be the worst health cut so far.**

What next: bonuses for losing – rather than saving – lives to free up hospital beds?

SCIENTISTS USE URINE TEST TO PREDICT WHEN YOU'LL DIE



# As deafness is identified as an early warning of dementia...

BY KAREN EVENNETT and WARREN MANGER

**D**eafness could be one of the early warning signs of dementia, a study has found.

When it comes to our health, we know many of the big things to keep a watchful eye on.

But here are some of the early warning signs that you would probably never think of...

### You can't smell pizza

If you can't detect the distinctive aroma of basil, cheese and tomato, you should tell your doctor.

Prof David Dexter, deputy director of research at Parkinson's UK, said: "Pizza is one of about 28 distinctive smells that seem to elude people in the early stages of neurological disorders like Parkinson's, often years before classic symptoms like shaking set in."

"Parkinson's is caused by the gradual death of brain cells that make the neurotransmitter dopamine. At the same time, cells that detect smell in your nose also die."

### Your handwriting is shrinking

If you look back at old letters and your handwriting has got smaller over time, this could potentially be another sign of Parkinson's.

Prof Dexter said: "It's due to a lack of dopamine causing a gradually diminishing range of movement in your limbs."

### You take afternoon naps

People who nap for more than an hour during the day are 45% more likely to have Type 2 diabetes than those who don't, according to a study. Feeling lazy and lethargic



despite getting plenty of sleep could also be a sign of diabetes.

Prof Naveed Sattar, professor of metabolic medicine at the University of Glasgow, said: "It's likely that risk factors which lead to diabetes also cause napping. This could include slightly high sugar levels, meaning napping may be an early warning sign of diabetes."

with your doctor. They could be the first sign of lung cancer, though you would normally have noticed other symptoms such as a persistent cough, breathlessness, or coughing up blood."

### Your fingers/toes look like drumsticks

Drumstick fingers, or clubbed nails, can be a sign of lung or heart disease. Three in 10 people with non-small-cell lung cancer (affecting 80-85% of lung cancer patients) may get finger clubbing.

Prof Sir Malcolm Green, founder of the British Lung Foundation, said: "The most likely cause is a lack of oxygen in the body."

"It's sensible to discuss any changes in the shape of your nails



# Signs that your body is trying to tell you something

arrange for you to have an X-ray to investigate the underlying cause."

**Your tongue looks like a map**  
A patchy geographic tongue could be due to smoking or a vitamin or iron deficiency, but it could also be the result of gastric tract damage due to coeliac disease, for example. "One in 100 of us have this autoimmune condition causing an intolerance to gluten, but three in four remain undiagnosed," says Prof David Sanders, professor of gastroenterology and a consultant gastroenterologist at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital and the University of Sheffield.

**You can't stop hiccupping**  
Uncontrollable hiccups lasting hours or days are very rare, and are usually caused by irritation of the phrenic nerves that move your diaphragm up and down as you breathe.

"In a very small number of cases, this irritation may be due to a tumour, though other triggers include infection or medicines you're taking," says Prof Green. "For hiccups that have lasted 12 hours or more, your doctor would normally

**Your eyebrows are balding**  
Both an underactive and overactive thyroid



can cause hair loss, and not just on the eyebrows, explains Dr Aled Roberts, a consultant endocrinologist at Spire Cardiff Hospital.

"You'd normally also notice that hair has thinned on your head, underarms and pubis – but it

should grow back with treatment for your thyroid problem, if that's what's causing the loss."

### Your brain is foggy

Brain fogs – when you struggle to think clearly, forget the words for everyday objects or the names of people you know – can be a feature of pernicious anaemia.

"It's caused by a lack of vitamin B12, which you need in order to produce healthy red blood cells for oxygen supply around your body and brain," explains Martyn Hooper MBE, chair of the Pernicious Anaemia Society.

### You've an urge to shoplift

Out-of-character behaviour can be a sign of dementia, warns Dr Mohammad Dashti, a consultant neurologist at Spire Parkway Hospital, Solihull. "Dementia is a neurodegenerative disorder, meaning that cells in the brain are dying off. Even without any

obvious signs of memory loss, losing cells in the frontal cortex can lead to disinhibition and unusual and anti-social behaviour."

### You have dry eyes

Dry or red eyes and blurred vision can be an early sign of rheumatoid arthritis, often caused by the same inflammation that occurs in the joints when the immune system attacks itself.

This malfunction also uses up platelets – blood cells responsible for clotting. Rochelle Rosian, a rheumatologist at London's Cleveland Clinic, said: "Your doctor can conduct a physical examination and do a complete blood count to determine whether you have low platelet levels due to the disease."

### You feel bloated

If you notice an unpleasant, rock-hard sensation in your stomach or start to feel full faster than normal, you could be suffering from a lung disease known as COPD.

The lungs may have become hyperinflated, taking up more room in the body and leaving less space for the stomach.

And a lack of oxygen caused by breathing problems may make it more difficult for the body to digest food. Plus, those struggling to breathe because of COPD may do less exercise, which can leave them feeling more bloated.

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