

Live Well, Stay Well



Your guide to getting the most out of life

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Without realising it, many of us are dramatically increasing our chances of becoming ill in later life. Whether we are eating the wrong things, having a few too many drinks, smoking or just not being active enough, all of these small things add up.

The good news is that by making small changes we can have a huge influence on our health, and could reduce our chances of getting diseases such as cancer, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and dementia.

It's not always easy knowing where to begin. We're busier and surrounded by more temptation than ever before. This guide will help you get started, supporting you to make simple changes towards a longer and happier life.





Eat well





Eating well can help you feel your best, and is important for your health and your waistline.

If you eat too many foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar, and you're not as active as you could be, you're more likely to put on weight. Becoming overweight or obese increases your risk of getting cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Becoming underweight can also affect your health.

Eating well is important for the whole family. It helps your kids get what they need to grow and be healthy, and helps teach them to make healthy food choices when they grow up. This makes them less like to be overweight as adults.

Tips for eating well

Choosing healthier foods doesn't have to be difficult, there are lots of small changes and healthy swaps that you can make whilst still enjoying the food that you love.

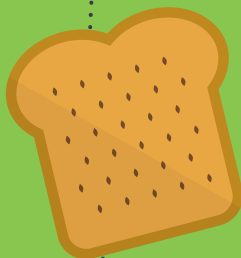
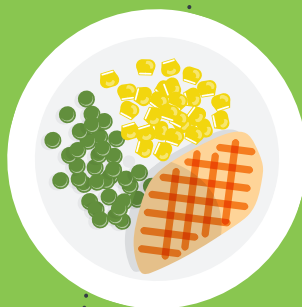
-  Eat as much fruit and vegetables as you can, aiming for at least five portions of fresh, frozen, dried or canned varieties a day. An easy way to do this is to fill half of your plate with salad, fruit or vegetables at each meal.
-  There are lots of easy ways to cut back on unhealthy fat. Try skimmed or semi-skimmed milk instead of full-fat, and low-fat cheese. Reduce the amount of oil you use when cooking and avoid high fat dressings like mayonnaise. Choose olive or sunflower spread instead of butter. Trim visible fat from meat, and opt for fish or skinless chicken which contain less fat.
-  Be wary of the amount of sugar in breakfast cereals and cereal bars as well as foods advertised as being 'low fat' – look instead for foods with 'no added sugar.'
-  Eating too much salt puts you at increased risk of heart disease and stroke. Most of the salt we're eating is in food we buy. Watch out for: sausages, bacon, ham, pastries, pizza, cheese, crisps, gravy and sauces like ketchup.

5 Swap white rice, pasta and bread for wholegrain varieties, which keep you fuller for longer and contain fibre which helps keep you well.

6 Some drinks are high in sugar and calories. Limit juice, fizzy pop and alcohol. Drink unflavoured water instead.

7 Try using a smaller plate to reduce your portion sizes, it really does work!

8 Losing just 5% of your body weight can have enormous health benefits. This isn't as much as you might think. If you are 14st 5 (92kg) you would need to lose 10lb (4.6kg). If you are 20st 6 (130kg) the amount to lose is 14lb (6.5kg).





Being active

Many of us aren't too keen on the idea of exercise. It might be that we're too busy or we simply can't face the thought of it. But most people are not getting the amount of activity they need to stay healthy. And sitting down for hours – maybe at work, watching TV or playing computer games – can also increase our risk of poor health.

You might be surprised at just how much being active can improve your everyday life. Even small changes can give you more energy, and boost your confidence. Physical activity can lift your mood, reduce stress and help you sleep better which is great for your mental health. Living an active lifestyle can also reduce your risk of cancer, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, Alzheimer's and other serious illnesses.

Tips for being more active

1 When we hear about being active it's all too easy to start thinking about 'going to the gym', 'running marathons' and all that sort of stuff. But the truth is being active can be whatever you want it to be. As long as it gets your heart beating a bit faster and makes you breathe a bit harder, it counts. Walking, swimming, cycling, gardening and housework – they all count!

2 If you're not very active at the moment, it's a good idea to start by aiming to do at least 10 minutes of activity where you can. Once you've got started, you should try working towards doing 10 minutes or more on 3 or 4 days a week. Then,

when you feel comfortable, work your way up to doing half an hour or more on 5 days each week (or 2 and half hours across a week if you prefer). Children need to be more active – under 5s should be active for at least 3 hours every day and 5 to 18 year olds need at least one hour every day.

3 A good way to see if you're being active enough is to try and sing a song whilst you're doing an activity - if you can talk but find it difficult to sing then you're being active.

4 If you're looking for a free, easy way to begin being more active, walking more is a great place to start. Walking

lets you enjoy all the benefits of healthy aerobic exercise, without putting pressure on your joints or pushing yourself too hard. There's also the added bonus that you can get a friend to come with you for a chat or have a little me time away from all stresses of modern life, and maybe take in some nice scenery too. This will help you to feel good!

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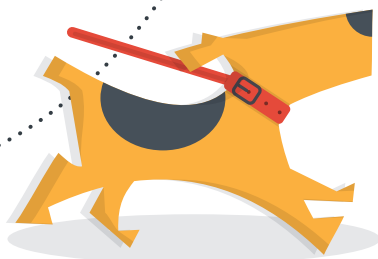
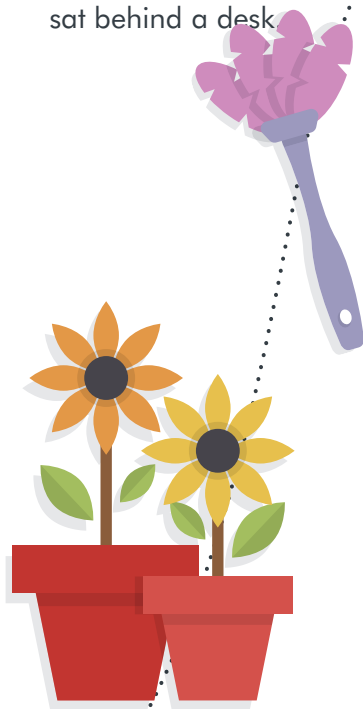
Waiting for the bus? If it's not too far, why not walk to the next stop instead of standing still? Or you could get off a stop earlier instead.

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Taking the stairs, at your own pace, is a great way to fit being active into your daily routine. It's not a big change but it can really help you have a

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more active life. Try taking a 10-minute walk after your lunch. This is a good way to break up your day if you spend all day at home or sat behind a desk.





Drink less alcohol

You might not realise it, but having a few less drinks throughout the week can really put a spring in your step. Sometimes alcohol can make us feel sluggish and make it harder to sleep, but cutting down even a little bit can boost your energy levels, lift your mood and help you to feel good.

It's surprising how many empty calories are in alcoholic drinks. If you're not careful, all these calories can add up quickly, so it's a good idea to keep an eye on how much you're drinking. Drinking a little less can have a hugely positive impact on how you feel, your family life, your career, your health and more. The less you drink, the lower your risk of cancer, liver disease, heart disease and stroke.

Tips for drinking less

1 If you drink regularly try not to drink for a couple of days each week to give your body a break.

2 Each time you have a drink, ask yourself "Can I have one less?" Continuing to gradually reduce the amount you drink on each occasion will help you cut back the amount you drink each week.

3 A popular way to drink less is to have a wine spritzer with soda water or to have a pint with a low-sugar lemonade top (shandy). This not only cuts how much you are

drinking, but your calories too.

4 A simple way to reduce the amount of alcohol and calories you're drinking is to swap strong beers or wines for ones with a lower strength percentage. This can be seen on the side of cans / bottles.

5 A really easy trick to drink a little less without feeling like you are missing out is to go for smaller sizes. Try bottled beer instead of pints, or a small glass of wine instead of a large one.



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It's easy to drink too much when you're at home. Keep an eye on home measures and always make sure to finish one drink before pouring another.

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Become familiar with how many units are in what you drink. It is harmful for men and women to regularly drink more than 14 units a week. You should spread your drinking over three or more days. Pregnant women or women planning to become pregnant should not drink alcohol at all.

HOW MANY UNITS ARE YOU DRINKING?...



Pint of lager /
beer / cider
5% ABV

3 UNITS



Glass wine
175ml
12% ABV

2 UNITS



Spirits single
25ml
40% ABV

1 UNIT



Small glass of
sherry
15.5% ABV

1 UNIT



Alcopop bottle
275ml
4% ABV

1 UNIT



Stop smoking

Now is the right time to quit. Every cigarette you smoke causes you real harm.

Smoking damages your body in many ways. From the day-to-day effects on your heart and your breathing, to longer-term smoking-related diseases such as cancer, heart disease and stroke. Your smoke can harm your family's health, too.

No matter how long you've smoked for, quitting can help improve your health straight away. It's never too late to quit.

Tips for giving up smoking

1 You're four times more likely to quit with support from a Stop Smoking Service than going it alone. They offer a free, proven personalised programme of motivational support and can help you deal with stress, weight gain or mood swings. If you don't pay for prescriptions you will also be able to access free medications to help with nicotine withdrawal such as patches, gum, mouth / nasal spray, inhalator and lozenges.

2 There's lots of free help on offer at **nhs.uk/smokefree** from support emails, to text messages and a smartphone app. By choosing the support that's right for you, you'll

be boosting your chances of quitting.

3 What's your reason for quitting? Your kids? Your health? You want to feel fitter and look younger? It doesn't matter whether you want to get rid of an annoying cough or help avoid a serious illness, just focus on what matters most to you. Keep that in mind to help keep you motivated.

4 Understand how nicotine is playing with your mind and body. The withdrawal symptoms start around 2 hours after your last cigarette – and often peak about 3 days later. So weirdly, the worse the cravings, the closer you are to your goal. Keep that in mind to help you stay strong.

5 On average, most people who quit save about £250 a month. That's £3,000 a year. Imagine having that money to play with instead of it going up in smoke. That will help keep you on track!

6 Every time you smoke, make a note of when and where, and who with. These are your triggers. Work out the ones you can avoid and make a point of changing your routine – for the first few weeks anyway. For triggers you can't avoid, find something to distract you.

Chew gum, sip water through a straw, or take big deep breaths. Keep your hands busy – anything but smoke.

7 When you're stressed and feeling like you need a cigarette, there's a really simple thing you can do to relax and take your mind off smoking. And that's just breathing. Breathe in deeply – let your tummy push out. Hold a second. Now breathe out and let your tummy come back in. Repeat for ten breaths in and out. It might feel funny, but it works.



Healthy blood pressure

High blood pressure is very common in the UK, but almost half of those affected don't realise because it rarely has noticeable symptoms. If left untreated for a long time, high blood pressure increases your risk of having a stroke or heart attack. It also puts you at greater risk of kidney disease, dementia and other illnesses.

Your lifestyle can affect your blood pressure, and you're more likely to have high blood pressure as you get older, if you have a family history of high blood pressure, if you are Black, or of South Asian descent.

All adults should have their blood pressure checked at least every five years. Getting this done is easy and could save your life.

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY BLOOD PRESSURE

- 1 Know your numbers! A healthy blood pressure is around 120/80mmHg or less. A blood pressure of 140/90mmHg or over is considered high. The only way to know your blood pressure is to get it checked. You can do this at your local pharmacy, GP practice or even at home. Find out more by searching for 'blood pressure' at **nhs.uk**
- 2 Improve your lifestyle as described throughout this leaflet, e.g. eat less salt, be more physically active.
- 3 Some people may need medication prescribed by their doctor to lower their blood pressure. If you are prescribed medication to lower your blood pressure, your local pharmacy can review and offer useful advice.

This information is brought to you by Public Health
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