



Looking After Your Health and Wellbeing

Information for Patients





Looking After Your Health and Wellbeing

There are lots of things you can do to improve your health and wellbeing. Small changes can reduce your risk of preventable illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, type-2 diabetes and lung disease.

If you have any questions speak to your healthcare team, or GP practice, for advice about your own health and wellbeing needs and to find out about local support services.

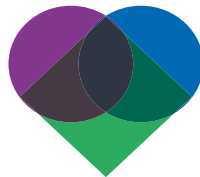


Emotional Wellbeing

A photograph of two women hiking on a hillside. The woman on the left is older, with short white hair and glasses, wearing a bright green jacket over a yellow top and a patterned scarf. She is laughing joyfully. The woman on the right is younger, wearing a grey cap, a purple t-shirt, a blue scarf, and a red and grey hiking backpack. She has her arm around the older woman's shoulder. The background is a vast, hilly landscape with low-lying vegetation under a cloudy sky.

For more information visit
[www.nhs.uk/mental-health/
self-help/guides-tools-and-
activities/five-steps-to-
mental-wellbeing/](http://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/)

There are **five steps** you can take to improve your emotional wellbeing. They could help you feel more positive and get the most out of life.



- 1. Connecting with people can:**
 - Help you build a sense of belonging
 - Give you an opportunity to share positive experiences

- 2. Being physically active can:**
 - Help you to set and achieve goals
 - Positively change your mood

- 3. Learning new skills can:**
 - Boost self-confidence
 - Help you build a sense of purpose

- 4. Acts of kindness and giving to others can:**
 - Create positive feelings and give you a sense of reward
 - Improve your self-worth

- 5. Paying attention to the present moment (mindfulness) can:**
 - Help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better
 - Positively change the way you feel about life



Stopping Smoking

It's never too late to stop smoking. Quitting will improve your health whatever your age and no matter how long you have smoked.



Benefits of Stopping Smoking

Better Physical Health:

- Your taste and smell will improve
- You start to breathe more easily
- You have more energy
- You have better blood circulation to your heart and muscles
- As a result your overall lung health will improve

Better Mental Health:

- You may experience reduced anxiety, depression and stress, as well as improved mood

Ways to Stop Smoking:

- Using vapes can help you quit smoking. They are much less harmful than cigarettes
- Stop smoking aids help you to manage cravings and withdrawal symptoms
- Expert help can boost your chances of quitting by 3 times

To find your local Stop Smoking Service visit:
[www.nhs.uk/
better-health/
quit-smoking/
find-your-local-
stop-smoking-
service/](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/find-your-local-stop-smoking-service/)

Download the free NHS Quit Smoking app by visiting:
[www.nhs.uk/
better-health/
quit-smoking/](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/)

Get a free Personal Quit Plan by visiting:
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plan/](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/personal-quit-plan/)

Eating a Balanced Diet



Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health, and can help you feel your best.

This means eating a wide variety and the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.

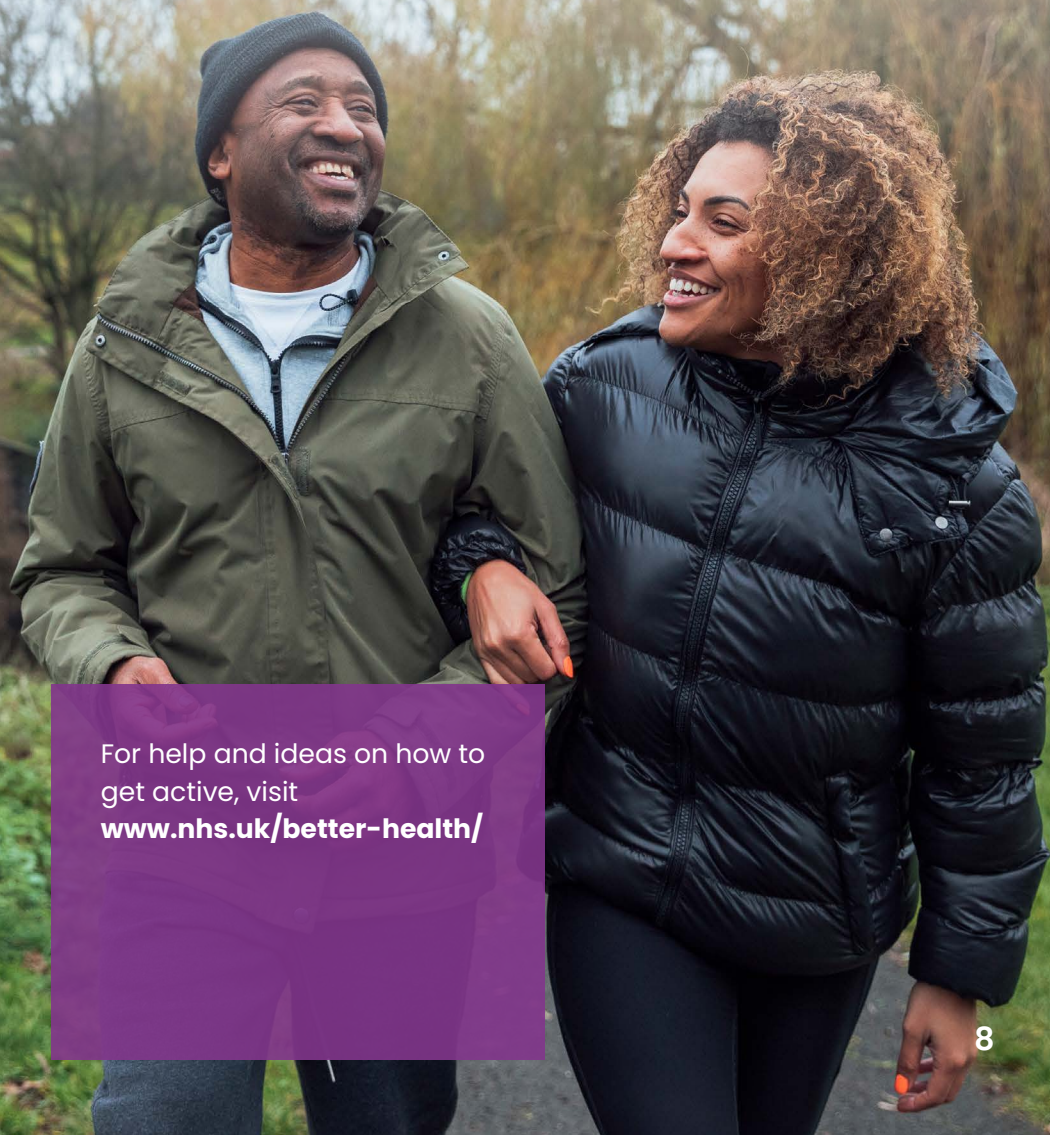
This advice covers healthy eating for the general population. Anyone with special dietary needs should speak to a member of their healthcare team.

For a health balanced diet try to:

- Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day
- Base meals on food that includes fibre/ starch such as bread, rice, pasta, or cereals, and where possible choose wholegrain options
- Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks)
- Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein
- Choose unsaturated oils and spreads, and eat them in small amounts
- Drink plenty of fluids (at least 6 to 8 glasses a day)
- Limit the amount of foods you eat that are high in fat, salt and sugar

For more information or to find out more about the Eatwell Guide visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>

Being Physically Active



For help and ideas on how to
get active, visit
www.nhs.uk/better-health/

Adults should do some type of physical activity every day.

The guidelines for adults aged 19–64 (including disabled adults, pregnant women and new mothers) are to:



- Be physically active every day. Any activity is better than none – more is better still
- Do strengthening activities (such as carrying heavy shopping bags, pilates, lifting weights) that work all the major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms) at least twice a week
- Do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity (such as brisk walking) or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity (such as running) each week, or a combination of both
- Spread exercise evenly over 4 to 5 days a week, or every day
- Reduce time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity
- Make sure that the type and intensity of your activity is right for you. Visit www.nhs.uk/live.well/exercise to find out more

In addition, Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults (65 and Over) recommend you should:

- Aim to be physically active every day, even if it's just light activity
- Do activities that improve strength, balance and flexibility at least 2 days a week



Drinking Less Alcohol



You should drink no more than 14 units of alcohol a week, spread across 3 days or more. That's around 6 medium (175ml) glasses of wine, or 6 pints of 4% beer.

There's no completely safe level of drinking, but sticking within these guidelines lowers your risk of harming your health. Setting and sticking to a few drink-free days a week, or swapping to lower-strength drinks, are great steps in the right direction.

The Benefits of Drinking Less

Short-term:

- Feeling better in the mornings
- Being less tired and more energetic
- Healthier looking skin
- Saving money

Long-term:

- Lower blood pressure
- Lower risk of stroke, cancer and liver disease
- Lower cholesterol levels
- Better mood, memory and quality of sleep
- Helps with weight management



For tips to help you cut down on alcohol visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/#tips-to-help-you-cut-down-on-alcohol

Staying Sun Safe



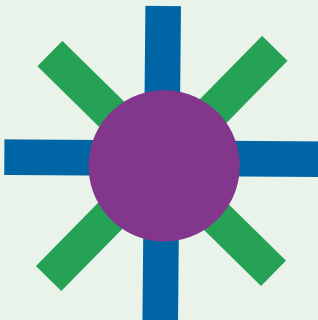
Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer. Sunburn does not just happen on holiday abroad. You can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy.

There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan. A tan does not protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects.

Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight.

Sun Safety Tips

- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm
- Never burn
- Cover up with suitable clothing and sunglasses
- Take extra care with children
- Use at least factor 30 sunscreen



For more tips to stay safe in the sun visit Sunscreen and sun safety - NHS www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/



Northern
Cancer Alliance

