

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



HELP ON:

- NUTRITION
- EXERCISE
- MENTAL HEALTH



HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Good health is about the mind as well as the body - feeling physically fit, and feeling good about ourselves, means that we can go and achieve more of the things we want to do in life.

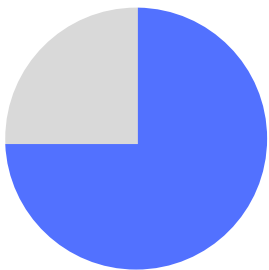
Staying in good health is important to all of us, and can become particularly important in later years.

The best way to stay healthy - physically and mentally - is by learning how to take care of yourself, and about the support you can get to help with any health problem you might already have.

Below are some Top Tips to help you to improve their health and well-being.

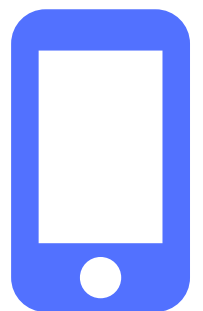
Making small changes one step at a time can great improve your thought process and ensure you do not become overwhelmed at the prospect of major changes.

Quick Facts



1 in 4 people in the UK will experience mental health issues at some point in their life

There's over 100,000 health and well-being apps available on all smartphones and tablets

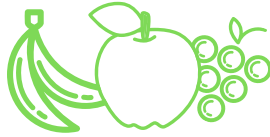


Drinking Coffee can reduce the risk of Depression

The average moderately active person walks approximately 7,500 steps a day



Nutrition



A healthy, balanced diet combined with plenty of fluids and an active lifestyle can dramatically improve health and well-being. A healthy, balanced diet is an important step towards good health. It reduces the risk of getting a large number of diseases.

Below are 10 easy steps you can take to improve and maintain a balanced diet:

(1) Plan in Advance

As with most things, the key to a successful diet is, in large part, planning. Plan your meals ahead of time and make sure you have all your ingredients on hand and your kitchen ready to go. If you don't feel like you have time to cook, you may also consider making your food for the week all at one time and freezing or refrigerating suitable portion sizes separately.

(2) Recreate Favourites at Home

Try Googling your favourite recipes and see if you can make it, don't be afraid to make healthy substitutions when necessary.

(3) Skip the Salt

Unfortunately too much salt can have negative health consequences and lead to uncomfortable bloating. Instead, commit to trying at least a few bites of your food before you add that salt. If you do find that your meal is lacking something, consider other flavourful additions like herbs and spices.

(4) Add Vegetables as Your Side

Simply substitute a vegetable dish in place of the chips or pasta.

(5) Have Dessert but Make It Fruit

Next time instead of reaching for the ice cream or cake, consider having a bowl of fresh fruit. Want a quick, convenient snack on the go that satisfies your craving for sweets? Grab an apple or a banana.

(6) Drink more water

Your body needs water or other fluids to work properly and to avoid dehydration. That's why it's important to drink enough fluids. Sports drinks should be used only when you're exercising intensely for more than an hour. These drinks help replace electrolytes lost through perspiration and sugar needed for energy during longer bouts of exercise.

(7) Slow Down While Eating

Research shows that it takes about twenty minutes from the time food is first eaten until the brain registers a satisfied, full feeling.

(8) Limit Portions Not Foods

Focus more on limiting portions sizes than eliminating particular foods from your diet altogether. Let yourself have occasional treats but limit portion sizes and don't over indulge.

(9) Add Smart Snacks

Going too long without a meal and getting too hungry can also derail your efforts to eat right by making you overcompensate for your hunger with bad choices or excessive portion sizes. Instead, add some smart snacks into the rotation between meals and try to shrink your portions to compensate.

(10) Get Enough Rest

Studies show that when people are sleep deprived they often overeat and make worse nutritional choices as a means of getting that quick sugar rush or making themselves feel better. Don't fall into this trap. Instead aim to get at least 7-9 hours of sleep every night.

Exercise

People who exercise regularly have a lower risk of developing many long-term conditions, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and some cancers. Research shows that physical activity can also boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy, as well as reducing your risk of stress, depression, dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Here are some tips to help you introduce and maintain your exercise levels:

(1) Set Realistic Goals

It may take some time to get the results you want. It's vital to break your ultimate goal down into stages and set lots of smaller goals to keep you motivated along the way.

(2) Be Consistent

Results come through regular and consistent activity. Stick to your programme and avoid frequent stops and starts.

(3) Too Much Too Soon

Do not increase the amount of exercise you do too soon. Increase what you're doing by no more than 10% per week.

(4) Accept Feelings of Discomfort

When you first start exercising you'll experience feelings of discomfort such as shortness of breath, sweating and aching muscles after exercising. Don't worry, this is completely normal and everyone feels like this when they're first starting out.

(5) Train With a Friend

Training with a friend not only keeps you motivated during the sessions themselves but will also make you less likely to miss a planned session as you're unlikely to want to let down your friend.

(6) Warm-up

Before any session ensure that you warm up thoroughly and mobilise the areas that you will be using during the workout. Furthermore, failure to warm up properly may increase the risk of injury.

(7) Time of Day

We are all different. Some of us rise early and some of us go to bed late. Exercise at the time when you feel that you have most energy.

(8) Will Power

Don't give up. There will be set backs on the way to achieving your goal. Accept them and use them to re-motivate yourself.

(9) Water

Ensure you drink plenty of water, before, during and after exercise, particularly if you are exercising in warm conditions or for long periods. Dehydration will result in a drop in performance and severe dehydration can be dangerous too.

(10) Try Something New

Keep things interesting by trying new exercises, workouts and activities to keep your programme fresh, keep challenging your body and preventing boredom.

Mental Health

Seeking help is often the first step towards getting and staying well. It's common to feel unsure, and to wonder whether you should try to handle things on your own. But it's always ok to ask for help – even if you're not sure you are experiencing a specific mental health problem.

Here are some good starting points to improve your mental health:

(1) Eat a balanced diet

A growing body of research shows direct links between what we eat and how we feel. Mind, the mental health charity, has produced a useful guide to mood and food. (See the link to Mind is the 'Useful Links' page)

(2) Drink Sensibly

Even though it might make us feel good in the short term, alcohol is a depressant drug. Avoiding too much alcohol is crucial for both our mental and physical well-being but particularly when we are feeling low or anxious.

(3) Keep in touch with friend and loved ones / Talk about your feelings

Friends form the foundation of our ability to cope with the problems that life throws at us. Expressing yourself to friends and family members can make a huge difference and provide an important source of support.

(4) Take exercise

The effects of exercise on mood are immediate. Whether it is a workout in the gym or simple walk or bike ride, it can be uplifting. Exercise can also be great fun and sociable

(5) Get enough sleep

Physically it is the time when the body can renew its energy store but sleep also helps us to rebuild our mental energy.

(6) Three good things

Keep some paper and a pen by your bedside and every night for a week write down 3 good things that happened to you that day. By the end of the week you may be surprised at how much more positive you feel. Some psychologists say that it's human nature to focus on the negative aspects of our lives.

(7) Ask for help

Anyone can feel low or get depressed if you need help, don't be afraid to ask. Seeking help early is the best course of action to help prevent a problem getting worse. Asking for help is a sign of strength and responsibility, not weakness.

(8) Set yourself realistic goals

Even the most ambitious and complex tasks can be broken down into smaller, more manageable chunks. Setting realistic, achievable goals is a good way of keeping spirits up and keeping moving forward.

(9) Get involved

Find a way to get involved and make a contribution, however little, at home, at work or in the community. People are often happiest when helping others.

(10) Keep an eye on personal stress

Some pressure is unavoidable – and some can be motivating – but stress is harmful to both mental and physical well-being. See what you can do to remove/reduce sources of pressure in your life. Meanwhile, deal with the effects of stress by relaxing more and using other positive coping methods.

Useful Links

Mind -

Provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

People First -

Supporting independent living for those living in Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster

<https://www.peoplefirstinfo.org.uk>

Mental Health Foundation -

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

National Health Service -

<https://www.nhs.uk>

Think Action -

Help you learn the skills to nurture your own well-being and build positive relationships with the people around you

<https://www.thinkaction.org.uk/>

Healthline -

<https://www.healthline.com>

Everyone Active -

<https://www.everyoneactive.com>

Healthy Performance -

<https://www.healthyperformance.co.uk>