



# Health Information

## 5 steps to Mental Wellbeing

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Trying these things could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

### 1. Connect with other people

Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can:

- help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- give you an opportunity to share positive experiences
- provide emotional support and allow you to support others

There are lots of things you could try to help build stronger and closer relationships:

#### Do

- if possible, take time each day to be with your family, for example, try arranging a fixed time to eat dinner together
- arrange a day out with friends you have not seen for a while
- try switching off the TV to talk or play a game with your children, friends or family
- have lunch with a colleague
- visit a friend or family member who needs support or company
- volunteer at a local school, hospital or community group. Find out how to volunteer on the GOV.UK website
- make the most of technology to stay in touch with friends and family.

#### Don't

- do not rely on technology or social media alone to build relationships. It's easy to get into the habit of only ever texting, messaging or emailing people

### 2. Be physically active

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- raising your self-esteem
- helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- causing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood
- Find out more about getting active

#### Do

- find free activities to help you get fit
- if you have a disability or long-term health condition, find out about getting active with a disability
- start running with our couch to 5k podcasts
- find out how to start swimming, cycling or dancing
- find out about getting started with exercise

#### Don't

- do not feel that you have to spend hours in a gym. It's best to find activities you enjoy and make them a part of your life

### 3. Learn new skills

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:



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- boosting self-confidence and raising self-esteem
- helping you to build a sense of purpose
- helping you to connect with others

Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life.

Some of the things you could try include:

### Do

- try learning to cook something new. Find out about healthy eating and cooking tips
- try taking on a new responsibility at work, such as mentoring a junior staff member or improving your presentation skills
- work on a DIY project, such as fixing a broken bike, garden gate or something bigger. There are lots of free video tutorials online
- consider signing up for a course at a local college. You could try learning a new language or a practical skill such as plumbing
- try new hobbies that challenge you, such as writing a blog, taking up a new sport or learning to paint

### Don't

- do not feel you have to learn new qualifications or sit exams if this does not interest you. It's best to find activities you enjoy and make them a part of your life

## 4. Give to others

Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by:

- creating positive feelings and a sense of reward
- giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth
- helping you connect with other people

It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

Some examples of the things you could try include:

- saying thank you to someone for something they have done for you
- asking friends, family or colleagues how they are and really listening to their answer
- spending time with friends or relatives who need support or company
- offering to help someone you know with DIY or a work project
- volunteering in your community, such as helping at a school, hospital or care home

## 5. Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Read more about mindfulness, including steps you can take to be more mindful in your everyday life.

*The 5 ways to wellbeing were researched and developed by the New Economics Foundation.*



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### Lifestyle Modification Questionnaire

A weight loss of 5–10% of existing body weight results significant reduction in the metabolic risks among these patients and is recommended as standard treatment protocol. Studies suggest that only 15% of subjects achieve the goal of 10% body weight reduction mostly because of the lack of compliance and nonadherence to lifestyle modification advices.

**Q1 How often do you eat meals in a day (including tea, coffee, fruits, salads, snacks)?**

- A) >6 times
- B) 6 times
- C) 5 times
- D) 4 times
- E) 3 times.

**Q2 How often do you drink sweetened beverages like soft drinks, juices, etc.?**

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

**Q3 How often do you eat sweets such as Laddu, Barfi, Jalebi, Kulfi, Chocolate, Halwa, Rice pudding, etc.?**

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

**Q4 How often do you eat fried foods such as Puri, Parathas, Kachori, Tikki, Bhatore, Pakoras, Samosas etc.?**

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

**Q5 How often do you eat high salt snacks such as Namkeen, Bhujia, Pickles, Chutney, Papad etc.?**

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

**Q6 How often do you consume sugar and honey in tea, coffee, curd, lassi, etc?**

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

**Q7 How often do you eat fruit and salad?**

- A) Every time in the main diet
- B) At least once a day
- C) 3 to 4 times a week



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- D) 1 time a week
- E) Less than once a week.

Q8 How often do you eat sprouted pulses and green vegetables?

- A) Every time in the main diet
- B) At least once a day
- C) 3 to 4 times a week
- D) 1 time a week
- E) Less than once a week.

Q9 How often do you eat saturated fat like mutton fat, egg yolks, etc.?

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

Q10 How often do you eat refined food items like burgers, pizza, etc.?

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

Q11 How often do you eat ghee, butter, cream, mayonnaise, etc.?

- A) At least once daily
- B) 3 to 6 times a week
- C) 1 to 2 times a week
- D) 2 to 3 times a month
- E) Once a month or less.

Q12 How often do you eat out of the house (such as wedding, party, family function etc.)?

- A) More than 3 times a week
- B) More than once a week
- C) 2 times in a month
- D) 1 time in a month
- E) Less than 1 time in a month.

Q13 How many days do you exercise in a week?

- A) Daily
- B) 5 to 6 times a week
- C) 3 to 4 times a week
- D) 1 to 2 times a week
- E) Never.

Q14 How much time do you exercise for each session?

- A) >40 minutes
- B) 30–40 minutes
- C) 20–30 minutes
- D) 20–10 minutes
- E) < 10 minutes.

Reference:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6436250>



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### Need to lose weight?

Most adults are overweight or obese. Check whether you're a healthy weight using the BMI calculator.

#### A modern problem

People are less active nowadays, partly because technology has made our lives easier. We drive cars or take public transport. Machines wash our clothes. We entertain ourselves in front of a TV or computer screen. Fewer people are doing manual work, and most of us have jobs that involve little physical effort. Work, household chores, shopping and other necessary activities are far less demanding than for previous generations.

We move around less and burn off less energy than people used to. Research suggests that many adults spend more than 7 hours a day sitting down, at work, on transport or in their leisure time. People aged over 65 spend 10 hours or more each day sitting or lying down, making them the most sedentary age group.

#### Sedentary lifestyles

Inactivity is described by the Department of Health and Social Care as a "silent killer". Evidence is emerging that sedentary behaviour, such as sitting or lying down for long periods, is bad for your health.

Not only should you try to raise your activity levels, but you should also reduce the amount of time you and your family spend sitting down.

Common examples of sedentary behaviour include watching TV, using a computer, using the car for short journeys and sitting down to read, talk or listen to music. This type of behaviour is thought to increase your risk of developing many chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes, as well as weight gain and obesity.

If you need to lose weight, you need to eat healthy and exercise to help you lose weight and develop healthier habits.

### 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 of foods in the right proportions, and consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.

This page covers healthy eating advice for the general population. People with special dietary needs or a medical condition should ask their doctor or a registered dietitian for advice.

The Eatwell Guide shows that to have a healthy, balanced diet, people should try to:

1. eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day (see 5 A Day)
2. base meals on higher fibre starchy foods like potatoes, bread, rice or pasta
3. have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks)
4. eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein
5. choose unsaturated oils and spreads, and eat them in small amounts
6. drink plenty of fluids (at least 6 to 8 glasses a day)

If you're having foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar, have these less often and in small amounts.

Try to choose a variety of different foods from the 5 main food groups to get a wide range of nutrients.

**Most people eat and drink too many calories, too much saturated fat, sugar and salt, and not enough fruit, vegetables, oily fish or fibre.**



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An adult man needs 2,700 kcal per day and the average woman needs 2,200 kcal per day.

Below are the calorific values of three main components of food:

1. 1 g of carbohydrates contains 4 kcal
2. 1 g of protein contains 4 kcal
3. 1 g of fat contains 9 kcal

As an example, here is the breakdown of how a person would get calories from one cup of large eggs Trusted Source, weighing 243 g:

**Fat:** 23.11 g

$23.11 \text{ g} \times 9 \text{ kcal} = 207.99 \text{ kcal}$

**Protein:** 30.52 g

$30.52 \times 4 \text{ kcal} = 122.08 \text{ kcal}$

**Carbohydrate:** 1.75 g

$1.75 \times 4 \text{ kcal} = 7 \text{ kcal}$

243 g of raw egg contains 347 kcal. 208 kcal comes from fat, 122 kcal is taken from protein, and carbohydrate provides 7 kcal.

The Eatwell Guide does not apply to children under the age of 2 because they have different nutritional needs.

Between the ages of 2 and 5 years, children should gradually move to eating the same foods as the rest of the family in the proportions shown in the Eatwell Guide.

### Fruit and vegetables: are you getting your 5 A Day?

Fruit and vegetables are a good source of vitamins and minerals and fibre, and should make up just over a third of the food you eat each day.

It's recommended that you eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day. They can be fresh, frozen, canned, dried or juiced.

There's evidence that people who eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day have a lower risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

Eating 5 portions is not as hard as it sounds.

A portion is:

- 80g of fresh, canned or frozen fruit and vegetables
- 30g of dried fruit – which should be kept to mealtimes
- 150ml glass of fruit juice or smoothie – but do not have more than 1 portion a day as these drinks are sugary and can damage teeth
- Just 1 apple, banana, pear or similar-sized fruit is 1 portion each.
- A slice of pineapple or melon is also 1 portion, and 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetables is another portion.
- Adding a tablespoon of dried fruit, such as raisins, to your morning cereal is an easy way to get 1 portion.

You could also swap your mid-morning biscuit for a banana, and add a side salad to your lunch.

In the evening, have a portion of vegetables with dinner and fresh fruit with plain, lower fat yoghurt for dessert to reach your 5 A Day.

### Starchy foods in your diet

Starchy foods should make up just over a third of everything you eat. This means your meals should be based on these foods.



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Choose wholegrain or wholemeal varieties of starchy foods, such as brown rice, wholewheat pasta, and brown, wholemeal or higher fibre white bread.

They contain more fibre, and usually more vitamins and minerals, than white varieties.

Potatoes with the skins on are a great source of fibre and vitamins. For example, when having boiled potatoes or a jacket potato, eat the skin too.

### Milk and dairy foods (and alternatives)

Milk and dairy foods, such as cheese and yoghurt, are good sources of protein. They also contain calcium, which helps keep your bones healthy.

Go for lower fat and lower sugar products where possible.

Choose semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed milk, as well as lower fat hard cheeses or cottage cheese, and lower fat, lower sugar yoghurt.

Dairy alternatives, such as soya drinks, are also included in this food group.

When buying alternatives, choose unsweetened, calcium-fortified versions.

### Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

These foods are all good sources of protein, which is essential for the body to grow and repair itself.

They're also good sources of a range of vitamins and minerals.

Meat is a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals, including iron, zinc and B vitamins. It's also one of the main sources of vitamin B12.

Choose lean cuts of meat and skinless poultry whenever possible to cut down on fat. Always cook meat thoroughly.

Try to eat less red and processed meat like bacon, ham and sausages.

Eggs and fish are also good sources of protein, and contain many vitamins and minerals. Oily fish is particularly rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

Aim to eat at least 2 portions of fish a week, including 1 portion of oily fish.

You can choose from fresh, frozen or canned, but remember that canned and smoked fish can often be high in salt.

Pulses, including beans, peas and lentils, are naturally very low in fat and high in fibre, protein, vitamins and minerals.

Nuts are high in fibre, and unsalted nuts make a good snack. But they do still contain high levels of fat, so eat them in moderation.

### Oils and spreads

Some fat in the diet is essential, but on average people in the UK eat too much saturated fat.

It's important to get most of your fat from unsaturated oils and spreads.

Swapping to unsaturated fats can help lower cholesterol.

Remember that all types of fat are high in energy and should be eaten in small amounts.

### Eat less saturated fat, sugar and salt

Too much saturated fat can increase the amount of cholesterol in the blood, which increases your risk of developing heart disease.



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Regularly consuming foods and drinks high in sugar increases your risk of obesity and tooth decay.

Eating too much salt can raise your blood pressure, which increases your risk of getting heart disease or having a stroke.

### Benefits of Exercise

Crucially, you can hit your weekly activity target but still be at risk of ill health if you spend the rest of the time sitting or lying down.

1. Exercise can reduce your risk of major illnesses, such as coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer and lower your risk of early death by up to 30%.
2. It's free, easy to take, has an immediate effect and you don't need a GP to get some. Its name? Exercise.
3. Exercise is the miracle cure we've always had, but for too long we've neglected to take our recommended dose. Our health is now suffering as a consequence.
4. Whatever your age, there's strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and happier life.
5. People who exercise regularly have a lower risk of developing many long-term (chronic) conditions, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and some cancers.
6. Research shows that physical activity can also boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy, as well as reducing your risk of stress, clinical depression, dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

### Health benefits

Given the overwhelming evidence, it seems obvious that we should all be physically active. It's essential if you want to live a healthy and fulfilling life into old age. It's medically proven that people who do regular physical activity have lower risk of:

1. coronary heart disease and stroke
2. type 2 diabetes
3. bowel cancer
4. breast cancer in women
5. early death
6. osteoarthritis
7. hip fracture
8. falls (among older adults)
9. depression
10. dementia

### What counts?

To stay healthy, adults should try to be active every day and aim to do at least 150 minutes of physical activity over a week, through a variety of activities.

For most people, the easiest way to get moving is to make activity part of everyday life, like walking for health or cycling instead of using the car to get around. However, the more you do, the better, and taking part in activities such as sports and exercise will make you even healthier.

For any type of activity to benefit your health, you need to be moving quick enough to raise your heart rate, breathe faster and feel warmer. This level of effort is called moderate intensity activity. If you're working at a moderate intensity you should still be able to talk but you won't be able to sing the words to a song.

An activity where you have to work even harder is called vigorous intensity activity. There is substantial evidence that vigorous activity can bring health benefits over and above that of moderate activity. You can tell when it's vigorous activity because you're breathing hard and fast, and your heart rate has



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gone up quite a bit. If you're working at this level, you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath

### Physical activity guidelines for adults aged 19 to 64

Adults should do some type of physical activity every day. Exercise just once or twice a week can reduce the risk of heart disease or stroke.

Speak to your GP first if you have not exercised for some time, or if you have medical conditions or concerns. Make sure your activity and its intensity are appropriate for your fitness.

#### Adults should aim to:

- do strengthening activities that work all the major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms) on at least 2 days a week
- do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week
- 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

*You can also achieve your weekly activity target with:*

- several short sessions of very vigorous intensity activity
- a mix of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity

These guidelines are also suitable for pregnant women and new mothers.

When you start exercising after pregnancy, make sure your physical activity choices reflect your activity levels before pregnancy. You should include strength training.

After your 6- to 8-week postnatal check, you can start to do more intense activities if you feel you're able to. Vigorous activity is not recommended if you were inactive before pregnancy.

#### What counts as moderate aerobic activity?

Moderate activity will raise your heart rate, and make you breathe faster and feel warmer. One way to tell if you're working at a moderate intensity level is if you can still talk, but not sing.

*Examples of moderate intensity activities include:*

1. brisk walking
2. water aerobics
3. riding a bike
4. dancing
5. doubles tennis
6. pushing a lawn mower
7. hiking
8. rollerblading

#### What counts as vigorous activity?

Vigorous intensity activity makes you breathe hard and fast. If you're working at this level, you will not be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath.

In general, 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week can give similar health benefits to 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity.

Most moderate activities can become vigorous if you increase your effort.

*Examples of vigorous activities include:*



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1. running
2. swimming
3. riding a bike fast or on hills
4. walking up the stairs
5. sports, like football, rugby, netball and hockey
6. skipping
7. aerobics
8. gymnastics
9. martial arts

For a moderate to vigorous workout, get running with Couch to 5K, a 9-week running plan for beginners.

### What counts as very vigorous activity?

Very vigorous activities are exercises performed in short bursts of maximum effort broken up with rest.

This type of exercise is also known as High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT).

*Examples of very vigorous activities include:*

1. lifting heavy weights
2. circuit training
3. sprinting up hills
4. interval running
5. running up stairs
6. spinning classes

### What activities strengthen muscles?

To get health benefits from strength exercises, you should do them to the point where you need a short rest before repeating the activity.

There are many ways you can strengthen your muscles, whether you're at home or in a gym.

*Examples of muscle-strengthening activities include:*

1. carrying heavy shopping bags
2. yoga
3. pilates
4. tai chi
5. lifting weights
6. working with resistance bands
7. doing exercises that use your own body weight, such as push-ups and sit-ups
8. heavy gardening, such as digging and shovelling
9. wheeling a wheelchair
10. lifting and carrying children

You can do activities that strengthen your muscles on the same or different days as your aerobic activity – whatever's best for you.

Muscle-strengthening exercises are not always an aerobic activity, so you'll need to do them as well as your 150 minutes of aerobic activity.