



CHAPS

THE MEN'S HEALTH CHARITY

Key issues & how to get advice



Men's Health

The Trouble With Men

UK men die prematurely at one and a half times the rate of women from a range of problems, many of which are clearly linked to social deprivation. The case for better provision of resources devoted to improving the health and well-being of men therefore seems indisputable.

The causes of premature male mortality are well documented but not properly appreciated, especially in socially deprived areas. The main causes are depression and suicide, risk taking behaviour linked to alcohol, cardiovascular disease linked to obesity and diabetes, and delayed diagnosis of cancers, which men are more likely to get and more likely to die from than women.

The reasons can briefly be summarised as male culture and attitude, lack of awareness of medical problems, late presentation and a health service orientated more towards female issues of

health and child rearing. Consequently, men have few contacts with health services, particularly during their working lives when serious problems that account for premature death may be developing.

Key issues and how to get advice

This simple booklet aims to raise awareness and in alphabetical order give a simple description of the main problems that afflict men leading to illness and premature death. Finally, it gives contact details for local and national organisations providing care and advice.

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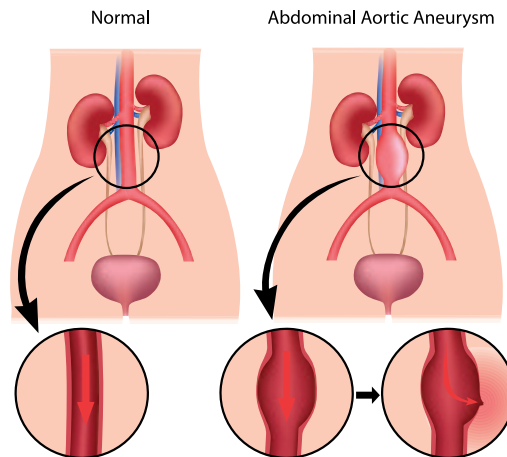
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)

The aorta is the largest artery in the body arising directly from the heart and delivers blood to every part as it courses through the chest and abdomen before dividing to deliver blood to the legs.

After age 60 the wall of the abdominal aorta may weaken and bulge out as an “aneurysm” and eventually burst, suddenly killing about 6,000 men each year in England and Wales. It is much commoner in men, especially smokers, men with high blood pressure and high cholesterol and those with a family history of AAA.

The enlargement process is silent but easily detectable by a simple, cheap ultrasound scan. Dangerous aneurysms can be repaired successfully with far less risk before they burst.

It is estimated that about 80,000 men in England have an aneurysm and the NHS AAA Screening Programme, operated by Public Health England, invites all men as they



turn 65 to have a scan; men over 65 not previously scanned may self refer by contacting their local screening centre.

For more information or to find your local AAA screening service please visit: aaa.screening.nhs.uk.



Cancer

Cancers are caused by uncontrolled growth of cells, usually forming solid lumps and then potentially spreading by direct invasion of adjacent organs or to distant sites in the body via the blood or lymphatic circulation. Once such spread has occurred, a cure is often impossible.

Cells become cancerous when their controlling genes in the cell nucleus change (mutate) by chance, because of an inherited genetic mutation as may occur in prostate cancer, or due to exposure to cancer causing agents (carcinogens) such as smoking, asbestos or radiation.

Men are 14% more likely to get cancer than women and 37% more likely to die from it. This is probably due to a higher risk of exposure to carcinogens, lack of awareness of risks and late presentation when symptoms or signs develop.

It is beyond the capacity of this booklet to deal with all except the commonest male cancers but men should be aware of the presentation of most cancers.

Symptoms and signs that always need checking:

- Any new skin lump or mole, especially if pigmented or changing colour **(skin)**
- Any persistent lip, tongue or mouth ulcer, especially if bleeding **(mouth)**
- Hoarseness, difficulty swallowing, a lump in the neck **(oesophagus - “gullet”)**
- Persistent cough, especially if coughing up blood **(throat, lung)**
- Unexplained weight loss and indigestion **(stomach, pancreas)**
- Vomiting or passing blood in the motions **(stomach, bowel)**
- Any abdominal lumps **(liver, pancreas, bowel)**
- Lumps in the armpits or groin **(any advanced cancer)**



- A poor urinary flow or increased urination
(prostate, bladder)
- Passing blood in the urine or in the semen
(kidney, bladder, prostate)
- Any lump or sore on the penis that doesn't heal within a few weeks or blood coming from under the foreskin
(penis)
- Any new testicular lump, change in size of a testis or persistent pain or aching in a testis **(testis)**

There is now a national screening programme for bowel cancer using faecal occult blood testing to detect microscopic traces of blood in the stools using a kit sent by post automatically commencing every 2 years from age 60-74 in England. The risk of dying from bowel cancer is reduced by a quarter in screened men.

There are no other national cancer screening programmes for men but many specialists believe that there should be

screening available and advocated for men at risk for lung cancer (p7) and for prostate cancer (p21) as the advantages of screening now appear to outweigh the disadvantages.

Many of the perceived disadvantages of screening have now been overcome but this is not fully reflected in much of the current information or professional advice, especially at primary care level. For up to date specialist advice on lung and prostate cancer screening we recommend consulting the following websites:

All cancers:

www.cancerresearchuk.org

Lung:

www.ukls.org

Prostate:

www.tackleprostate.org



Depression and Stress

We all get depressed sometimes, but when it seems never-ending and is impacting on your ability to carry on your everyday life, it is time to seek help.

Depression affecting men is usually of two types. A reaction to external events, such as bereavement, is “reactive” or “exogenous” depression. But if the depression comes from within for no apparent reason and seems out of all proportion to everyday events, it is termed clinical depression and can be life-threatening.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is common and related to short daylight hours in the winter. It usually gets better as summer approaches but if severe, seek medical help. Bipolar Disorder (Manic Depression) causes major mood swings between severe depression and periods of manic, excited overactivity. Professional help is urgently required for both of these states.

Depression is treatable, so get help - don't suffer in silence.

Stress at Work (see p39)

In 2015/16 there were 488,000 cases of work related stress, depression or anxiety causing 11.7 million lost working days averaging 24 days off work per case. Mental health problems at work cost the economy nearly £7 billion each year.

Early self recognition and recognition of stress in colleagues is vital in preventing major disruption in both the workplace and at home as well as the prevention of serious illness and suicide.

www.hse.gov.uk/stress



Diabetes

Diabetes is caused by insufficiency of the hormone insulin to keep the blood sugar level (BSL) normal. A raised BSL causes progressive damage to key organs and sometimes severe medical emergencies, including death.

Type I diabetes is uncommon, cannot be avoided and tends to affect the young. Treatment is with insulin injections.

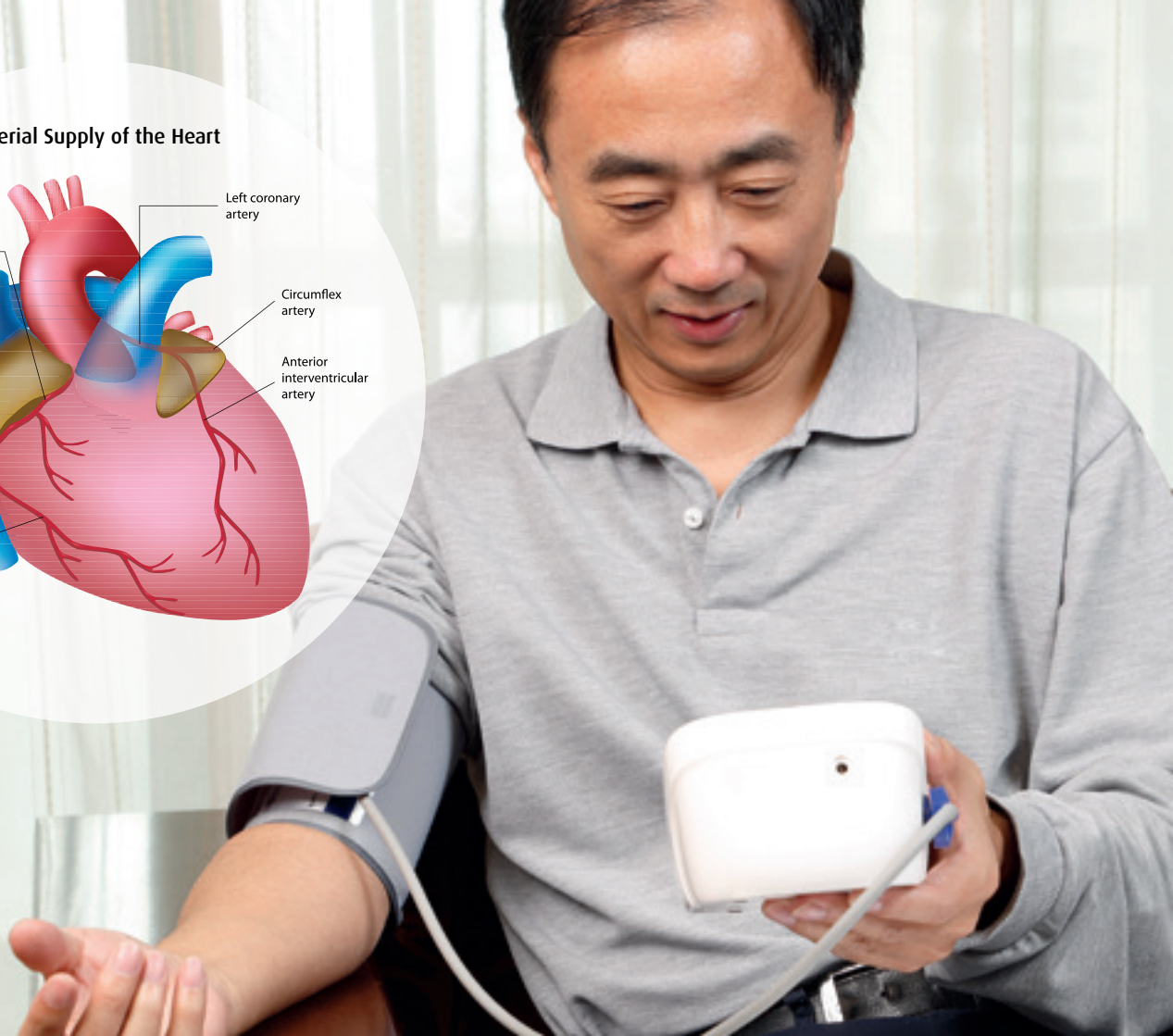
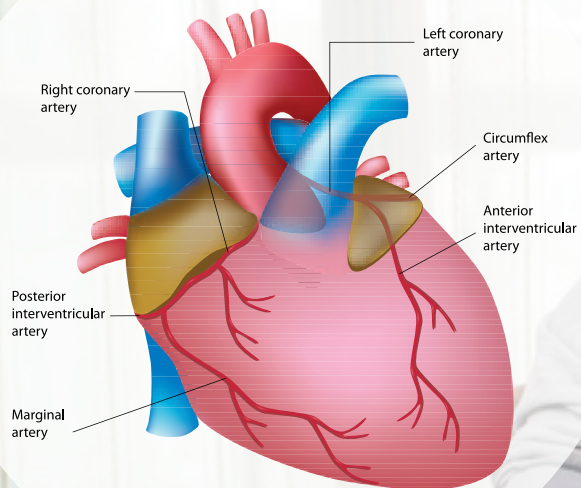
Type II diabetes is very common, comes on with age and is often associated with being overweight. It is treated by exercise, diet, weight control and, if necessary, drugs. It is best avoided by a healthy lifestyle.

Testing for diabetes is done most easily by measuring the BSL in a fasting finger prick sample of blood in your local surgery but many pharmacies also offer the test.

If you develop undue thirst, very frequent urination, unexplained increased appetite, weight loss, weakness, impotence, blurred vision or other unexplained symptoms, check for diabetes.

www.diabetes.org.uk

Arterial Supply of the Heart



Heart Problems

Angina, Heart Attack and Heart Failure - The heart is basically a specialised muscle that contracts (“systole”) and relaxes (“diastole”) automatically and regularly at a basic rate known as the “resting pulse rate”.

It receives blood from the veins of the body and pumps oxygenated blood from the lungs through arteries to every organ in the body. The basic heart rate (“pulse”) will increase automatically in response to increased demand such as exercise.

The heart’s own blood supply is through two main coronary arteries, 3-4 mm in diameter. If disease - “arteriosclerosis” - narrows these arteries, starving the heart of oxygen, a “vice-like” chest pain called “angina” occurs, especially when the heart has to work harder during exercise or stress.

Angina disappears with rest but if the pain is sudden, severe, does not go and is accompanied by breathlessness, dizziness, nausea and a clammy, pale skin, a heart attack (“myocardial infarction” - MI) due to blockage of an artery may have occurred. Heart attack is the biggest single killer of men and if suspected, emergency treatment (999) is required. If survived, the heart may be permanently damaged and unable to cope

with everyday tasks - “heart failure”.

The best way to avoid problems that lead to blockage of the coronary arteries is to lead a healthy lifestyle, take the NHS health check available from your GP’s surgery for men aged 40-74 and **cut out the risk factors by:**

- Stopping smoking
- Reducing weight or preventing weight gain by dieting and eating a low cholesterol diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Exercising
- Avoiding Type II diabetes through the above measures, or treating it if it already exists
- Keeping a normal blood pressure
- If you have a family history of premature heart disease, high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure or diabetes, get regular check-ups to ensure problems are not already developing

Remember, a healthy lifestyle should start during childhood so make sure your children lead one!



Impotence

Impotence or “erectile dysfunction” (ED) as it is now often termed, means failure to gain or maintain an erection for satisfactory intercourse. It is extremely common and affects most men at some stage of their lives but its incidence increases with age.

Most cases result from any one of the following problems occurring either singly or in any combination: psychological or damage to the arteries or nerves supplying the penis.

The arteries to the penis are only 1-2mm in diameter and may be the first to be affected by arteriosclerosis. Indeed 20% of impotent men who have had no heart problems actually have underlying coronary artery disease.

The onset of impotence may therefore foretell serious heart problems just around the corner and many men having a first heart attack admit to impotence for the preceding 2-3 years. Consequently any man developing ED should ask for a heart check.

Other problems frequently causing or worsening ED are diabetes (nerve damage), smoking (arterial constriction), multiple sclerosis (nerve damage), prescription drugs, depression, stress and excess alcohol.

Once again, avoidance of obesity, diabetes, stress, excess alcohol and smoking are lifestyle changes most likely to enhance sexual performance, so all the usual advice on diet, exercise etc applies.

Fortunately ED is usually treated successfully. Don't be embarrassed and don't waste time and money on quack remedies or buying drugs off the internet - a high proportion are contaminated or fake.

Get checked out and pick from a menu of treatment options the one that most suits you and your partner's lifestyle.

Sympathetic, confidential expert medical advice is easily available, so don't delay - see your GP for a full check-up!



The Prostate - Benign Disease (BPH, BPE, BOO)

Prostate problems arise in two main forms: benign enlargement which affects 50% of men over 65 and Cancer which is now the commonest male cancer in the UK killing over 11,000 men each year.

The prostate gland lies immediately below the bladder encircling the tube (urethra) that carries urine into the penis. It produces fluid (semen) that helps sperm swim and fertilize a female egg. A Digital Rectal Examination (DRE) helps detect problems.

Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)

Normally the size of a walnut, BPH is the process by which prostate cells multiply in middle age, for poorly understood reasons. This may lead to benign prostatic enlargement (BPE) which in turn may block the urethra causing bladder outflow obstruction (BOO). These abbreviations are all commonly used.

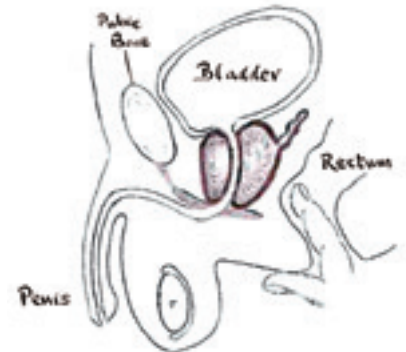
BOO causes delay, a poor or interrupted stream and dribbling afterwards. It also upsets bladder control leading to increased frequency of voiding by day or at night

(“nocturia”), an urgent desire to void or even wetting on the way to the loo (“urge incontinence”). Bed wetting in middle or old age is a serious symptom that demands an urgent medical consultation.

In many men BOO progresses and can cause serious complications such as complete inability to pass urine necessitating emergency treatment and surgery. As we don’t know what causes BPH, we can’t easily prevent it, but there is evidence to show that a diet and lifestyle that are good for the heart are good for the prostate too.

Nowadays a range of drugs can effectively relieve most men’s symptoms, may prevent BPH progression and has greatly reduced the need for surgery.

All good reasons for an early check-up.



Digital rectal examination of the prostate (DRE)



The Prostate - Cancer (PCa)

This is now the commonest male cancer causing 47,000 new cases and over 11,000 deaths each year in the UK – about one death every hour.

Early cancer confined within the prostate (“localised PCa”) is usually curable but once it has spread outside the prostate (“advanced PCa”) it is often fatal, though it may be possible to suppress it for some years.

We don’t know what causes PCa and it may be getting commoner. It is prevalent in North America and Europe, commoner in blacks than whites and rarer in oriental races. About 10% of cases have a genetic family link. We believe smoking, a western diet, alcohol and obesity predispose to PCa so a heart healthy lifestyle and diet may afford some protection.

PCa may cause the same symptoms as BPH/BOO, blood in the urine or blood in the semen, but early, curable PCa is usually silent and can only be detected by screening.

Screening is performed by conducting a Digital Rectal Examination (DRE) of the prostate and a blood test for Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA). PSA testing does have drawbacks, often being raised when no cancer exists (though usually indicating other problems such as BPH/BOO)

and occasionally being normal when significant cancers already exist. Overall its is about 80% accurate and the latest research suggests that performing it once in a man’s 40s, 50s and 60s could cut the risk of death by up to a half.

Following a suspicion of PCa after PSA testing, further more sophisticated markers may be used to assess risk but non-invasive MRI imaging should be used to locate a possible cancer before invasive tissue sampling - “biopsy” - is undertaken.

Recent large population studies in Europe have shown up to a 50% benefit in saving lives in favour of screening. Many men first develop PCa in their 50s and 60s and these are the men most at risk of premature death. If you are considering screening, we recommend you seek expert advice from a urologist or a dedicated specialist prostate clinic or screening clinic, especially if you have a family history of PCa or are of black African or African Caribbean descent where the lifetime risk of PCa is 1 in 4.

Screening could save your life.

www.tackleprostate.org



Stroke

A “stroke” (Cerebro-Vascular Accident – CVA) is caused by an interruption of the blood supply to part of the brain.

There are 2 main types:

“Ischaemic”: the commonest type, due to an artery blocking up.

“Haemorrhagic”: due to an artery leaking.

Both types deprive an area of brain of blood causing death of brain tissue. Emergency treatment is therefore vital so, if suspected, call 999 and request an ambulance.

A third type of problem is called a Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) or “mini-stroke”, caused by a temporary blockage, often causing a brief loss of consciousness or disorientation before spontaneously correcting itself. Nevertheless its causes require full investigation.

Strokes occur in about 150,000 people in the UK each year and overall are commoner in men, especially Afro-Caribbean and Asian men. It is the third commonest cause of death.

Strokes usually occur suddenly, causing numbness and weakness in one side of the body, facial drooping, sight and speech disturbances. Headache and loss of consciousness are common. The long term effects of a stroke depend on the area of brain damaged and, as dead brain tissue cannot regenerate, the effects may be permanent. Weakness, numbness, facial drooping, speech and vision loss and co-ordination of limbs may not recover. Memory may be impaired and tiredness is common.

If a stroke is suspected, it is vital to act **FAST** as urgent treatment within the first hour or two may halt or reverse brain damage and limit its harmful consequences.

Remember the symptoms:

Facial drooping, lopsidedness or weakness

Arm or limb numbness or weakness

Speech slurring and sight disturbance

Telephone 999



Ischaemic strokes are caused by arteries blocking due to arterio-sclerosis – “hardening of the arteries” – which can occur in any part of the body and is typically associated with smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, obesity and diabetes. Another common sudden cause is for a blood clot, usually coming from the heart, to impact and block a smaller calibre brain artery. An irregular heartbeat (atrial fibrillation) is the usual cause and requires treatment.

Haemorrhagic strokes occur typically in older men with high blood pressure or less commonly in younger men due to the bursting of a “berry aneurysm”, a congenital weakness of the artery, and sometimes fatal.

Because recovery from stroke is so often only poor or partial, prevention is vital. Control of blood pressure is key as well as control of cholesterol and glucose levels and exclusion of heart and carotid artery disease. A healthy lifestyle with no smoking, limited alcohol intake, plenty of fruit and veg and regular exercise are similarly essential.

For further information, contact the Stroke Association (www.stroke.org.uk) or NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk/conditions/Stroke/Pages/Introduction.aspx).

When stroke strikes, act F.A.S.T.

Face

Has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?

Arms

Can they raise both arms and keep them there?

Speech

Is their speech slurred?

Time

Time to call 999 if you see any single one of these signs

Learn how to spot the signs

Watch the F.A.S.T. campaign video:

www.nhs.uk/actfast/Pages/stroke.aspx



Testicular Cancer

Testicular cancer is uncommon but it affects young men, roughly from 15 to 50. Fortunately its treatment represents one of the great cancer success stories of the last 25 years and only about 1% of sufferers now die. Nevertheless early detection simplifies treatment.

It may be getting commoner for reasons unclear, but it is definitely related to late or failed descent of the testis from the abdominal cavity, where the risk is high. The risk can be reduced by operating early on children with undescended testes to place the testes in the scrotum before the age of 4.

The key to diagnosis and cure is regular self examination. Most cancers develop as a painless lump, so any lump should be checked out.

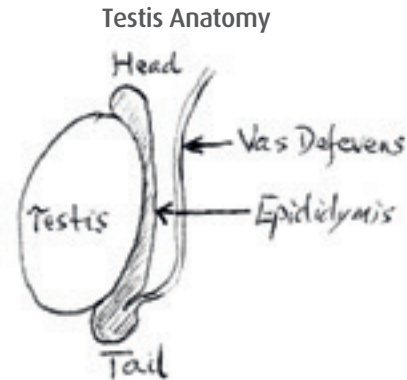
www.orchid-cancer.org.uk

Other features to get advice on are:

- Pain, tenderness, heaviness or a dragging sensation in the scrotum or groin
- A painless swelling of the scrotum
- One testis becoming larger than the other

Although the vast majority of scrotal and testicular problems are not due to cancer, the message is...

If in doubt, check it out!





Weight & Obesity

Being overweight or obese has now reached epidemic proportions in young and old alike. The more overweight a man, the greater the health risk. If nothing is done, obesity and its complications alone could bankrupt the NHS!

There are three easy ways to assess your weight:

Body Mass Index (BMI): derived from the formula of dividing your weight by the square of your height:

Imperial: $\text{wt (lbs)} \div \text{height in (inches)}^2 \times 700$

Metric: $\text{wt (kg)} \div \text{height in (metres)}^2$

Simple calculators are available on the internet under BMI. BMI's below 18.5 are underweight, 18.5 to 25 is normal, 25 to 30 is overweight and over 30 is obese.

Waist Measurement: because men tend to put on weight by increasing fat within and around the belly, this is a useful simple measure of body fat. Simply measure your girth

halfway between the lowest rib and top of your hip bone whilst standing up and after breathing out:

37-40 inches (94-102cm) = overweight;
above 40 inches = obese.

If you look down and can't see your "willy", you are almost certainly overweight!

Waist/Hip Ratio: measure your waist as above then measure around your hips at their widest part and divide waist by hip measurements. The healthy ratio should be below 0.9.

Obesity is associated with higher risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis and many other problems leading ultimately to a shorter lifespan. After smoking, obesity is now estimated to be the commonest factor promoting the development of cancer.

Lose weight and you'll feel great!



Exercise

In addition to a healthier diet, regular physical activity is an important component of your weight loss journey. Not only will it help you burn extra calories, but it will also keep you motivated and improve your general health and well-being.

To improve health and stay healthy, men aged 19-64 need to do 2 types of physical activity each week; aerobic and muscle-strengthening:

- A minimum of 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic activity such as cycling or fast walking every week.
- Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week using all major muscle groups (legs, arms, back, abdomen and chest).

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

If you want to up the ante to vigorous-intensity, aerobic

activity, take up jogging, running, swimming fast, singles tennis, football, rugby or martial arts.

Vigorous-intensity aerobic activity means you're breathing hard and fast and your heart rate has gone up a lot. If you're working at this level, you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath.

Muscle-strengthening exercises are counted in repetitions and sets. A repetition is 1 complete movement of an activity, like lifting a weight or doing a sit-up. A set is a group of repetitions; try to do 8 to 12 repetitions in each set. There are many ways you can strengthen your muscles, whether it's at home or in the gym. Try lifting weights, doing exercises that use your body weight for resistance such as push-ups and sit-ups, yoga or heavy gardening, such as digging and shovelling.

So whether at work or at home, break up long periods of sitting with some light activity. Sedentary behaviour is now considered an independent risk factor for ill health leading to increased risk for obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular



disease, no matter how much exercise you do.

Busy lives and lack of free time can make it difficult to dedicate time for exercise. So here are our top 7 exercise tips that you can do at or on your way to work.

- Walk or bike to work. If you take the bus or tube, get off at an earlier stop and walk the rest of the way. In your building, take the stairs not the lift.
- Standing burns more calories than sitting so look for ways to get out of your chair. Stand while talking on the phone or skip the odd email and instead walk to a colleague's desk for a discussion.
- Organise a lunchtime walking group and enjoy the camaraderie. You can hold each other accountable for regular exercise and offer encouragement when the going gets tough.
- Conduct meetings "on the go". When it's practical, schedule walking meetings or walking brainstorming sessions.
- Wall sits are great for building strength and endurance. Standing with your back against the wall, bend the knees

and slide your back down the wall until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Sit and hold for 30-60 seconds.

- Try the seated leg raiser. While seated, straighten one or both legs and hold in place for five or more seconds. Then lower the leg(s) back to the ground without touching the floor. Repeat (alternating legs if raising them separately) ideally 10-15 times.
- Perfect posture is a must for long days at the desk. Practice safe desk ergonomics by adjusting the chair height to make sure the feet, hips, and arms are at 90-degree angles to the floor. Engage the core to keep the back straight throughout the day.

Men who increase their activity level over a five year period cut their chances of dying prematurely by almost half. To get you started, here are some links that you may find useful:

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/strength-and-flexibility/Pages/strength-flexibility-podcasts.aspx

www.sportengland.org

www.sustrans.org.uk



Healthy Eating

67% of UK men are overweight or obese. Only four other countries in Western Europe have a higher percentage of overweight men than the UK: Malta 74%, Iceland 74%, Greece 71% and Cyprus 68%.

Being overweight can seriously damage your health by causing diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, strokes, arthritis, some cancers and possibly even dementia. It will certainly shorten your life.

The first step in achieving a healthy weight is to eat a well-balanced diet. Not only is this essential in keeping your weight down but it also helps to lower your cholesterol level, prevent high blood pressure and makes you feel much better in all sorts of ways!

Men have different nutritional requirements from women, especially those in heavy, physical occupations where a high energy output and high calorie intake are required. However, there are still some simple rules to follow to achieve a daily well-balanced diet:

- Eat your five portions of fruit and vegetables each day

- Eat three servings of whole-grains each day (approx. 140g per serving)
- Choose more fish and poultry and less red meat
- Reduce your intake of saturated fat, sugar and salt and do not exceed the safe alcohol limit of 2 units a day.

We all lead busy lives and trying to keep track of portion sizes and calorie counting can initially seem off putting. To make it as easy as possible, here is a handy guide to portion sizes and Guideline Daily Amounts:

Portion Sizes

No need for kitchen scales - use your hands to measure

Carbohydrates like potato/ rice/pasta/cereal	Your clenched fist : 2-3 tbsp*
Proteins like meat/ poultry/fish	Palm of your hand : 3oz
Savouries like popcorn/crisps	Two of your cupped hands : 2-4oz
Cheese	One of your thumbs : 1-2oz
Butter, Spreads & Dips	The tip of your thumb : 1tsp

*Portion sizes are approximate



Guideline Daily Amounts (GDA's)

The chart below shows the recommended GDA's for maintaining a healthy weight rather than losing it.

Nutritional needs vary depending on your sex, size, age and activity levels so use this as a general guide only.

Energy (kcal)	2500
Protein (g)	55
Carbohydrates (g)	300
Sugar (g)	120
Fat (g)	95
Saturates (g)	30
Fibre (g)	24
Salt (g)	6

Remember to check your food packaging to ensure your daily intake does not exceed the GDA's

If you need to lose weight, aim to do so at a safe rate of 1lb-2lb per week. For most men this will mean sticking to a calorie limit of 1,900kcal per day. Alternatively why not try the 5:2 diet, eating no more than 600kcal 2 days

a week and eat normally (up to 2,500kcal) the other 5 days. As well as losing weight, scientific evidence suggests that intermittent dieting is good for a range of age-related diseases. It appears to 'switch on' genes that repair cells and increases insulin sensitivity, helping to reduce your risk of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, some cancers and perhaps even dementia.

Men report health gains beyond simple weight-loss when they participate successfully in weight-loss programmes. For example a reduced need for medications. One very male-specific outcome of successful engagement with an intensive weight-loss programme is an improvement in penile erections!

When you are ready to start eating a healthier, well-balanced diet, here are some links that you may find useful:

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/weight-loss-guide/Pages/losing-weight-getting-started.aspx

www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/balanced-diet-men

www.thefastdiet.co.uk/why-fast/



Mental Health and Well-being

Each year 1 in 4 of us will experience mental ill health with poor mental well-being leading to depression, anxiety and panic attacks. Mental health problems now account for a third of GPs' time and cost the UK £77 billion a year.

The suicide death rate for men is now three and a half times that for women and is the largest cause of death in men below the age of 40 in the UK.

Men tell you what is on their minds but not what is in their heart. Many struggle with expressing empathy and compassion. Boys and men commit the vast majority of violent acts from domestic violence to murder.

Why is good mental well-being important?

If we improve mental well-being, we can help to prevent ill health, reduce inequalities and lower the impact on the health service. "Unhappy" people are 1.5 times more likely to have heart disease and fail to manage other illnesses such as diabetes.

Stress at Work

Mental health problems at work cost the economy nearly £7 billion each year. Early self recognition and recognition of stress in colleagues is vital in preventing major disruption in both the workplace and at home as well as the prevention of serious illness and suicide.

What is positive mental well-being?

Good mental well-being is feeling positive, being productive, managing health issues, realising your abilities, coping with stress and surviving daily difficult situations.

Your mental well-being is shaped by many things

- Positive influences include good physical health, a stable home life and financial stability.
- Negative influences include unemployment, illness, financial difficulties and isolation.

Improving your mental well-being

- Talk to family or friends about problems. The first step is the hardest.
- Seek professional help from your doctor or an organisation such as The Samaritans.
- Be active and socialise. You don't have to go to the gym, just take a walk, go cycling or play some sport. Find the activity you enjoy and make it a part of your life.

Make 'mindfulness' a part of your daily routine

'Mindfulness', or meditation, is being more aware of the present moment, including your feelings and thoughts, your body and the world around you. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges. That might not sound like much but study after study finds that practising mindfulness can bring a host of physical, psychological and social benefits.

Many men practice high levels of mindfulness in a variety of arenas in our society. Soldiers and policemen learn to control

their breathing and focus on a target before firing a weapon. Sportsmen and athletes are taught to clear their mind by going through a routine before competing; getting into "the zone" is active meditation in its highest form.

3 mindfulness exercises you can try today

One minute breathing

This exercise can be done anywhere at any time, standing up or sitting down. All you have to do is focus on your breathing for just one minute. Start by breathing in and out slowly, holding your breath for a count of six once you have inhaled. Then breathe out slowly, letting the breath flow effortlessly out. Your mind will wander but simply notice your thoughts, let them be and return to your breathing. If you thought you would never be able to meditate, you are half way there already!

Touch Points

This exercise is designed to make us appreciate our lives by slowing the pace down, coming into purer awareness and resting in the moment for a while.

Think of a simple daily action you take for granted like opening a door for example. As you touch the door knob, just stop and be completely mindful of where you are, how you feel and what you are doing. Similarly, the moment you open your computer, pause to appreciate the hands that let you do this and the brain that will help you use the computer. Choose a touch point that resonates with you today. Instead of going through the motions on auto-pilot, stop and stay in the moment for a while and rest in the awareness of this daily activity.

A Game of Fives

In this exercise all you have to do is notice five things in your day that usually go unnoticed. These could be things you hear, smell, feel or see such as:

Seeing the walls of your bedroom, hearing the birds in the tree, feeling your clothes on your skin as you walk to work, smelling the flowers in the park or seeing the rain on the window. Are you truly aware of these things and the connections they have with the world? Are you aware of their true benefit?

Allow yourself to fully experience the environment and explore the wonder, impact and possibilities of these unnoticed things.

Mindfulness exercises help centre the mind and restore balance to our lives and live with full attention and purpose in the moment.

Useful links

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/improve-mental-wellbeing.aspx

www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/resources/online-resources/

www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/black_dog

www.samaritans.org/

Conclusion

Men live shorter lives than women and men in socially deprived areas live shorter lives than the better off. For instance, if you travel east from Westminster to Canning Town on the Jubilee Line, male life expectancy drops by eight years - one year per station! These variations are visible in almost every area in the country, not just in the stereotypical areas of the old heavy industries in the North and Midlands.

You may not be able to help where you live, but hopefully this leaflet will help you focus on what makes men unhealthy and kills them prematurely.

If you have read the whole booklet, you will have realised there is a common theme that links so many of these key conditions together.

The conclusions are therefore simple:

- Don't smoke
- Don't drink excessively
- Maintain a normal weight
- Eat plenty of fruit, veg and wholegrains
- Reduce the proportion of red meat in your diet
- Exercise - 20 minutes vigorous exercise a day works wonders
- Check your testicles below age 50
- Check your prostate above age 40

Treat your body like a good car. Service it regularly and you are less likely to break down in the fast lane.

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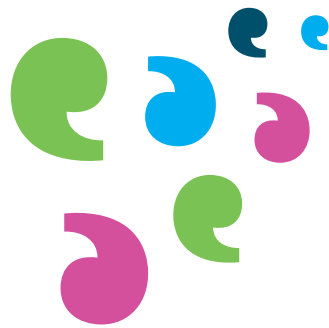
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 - Erectile Dysfunction
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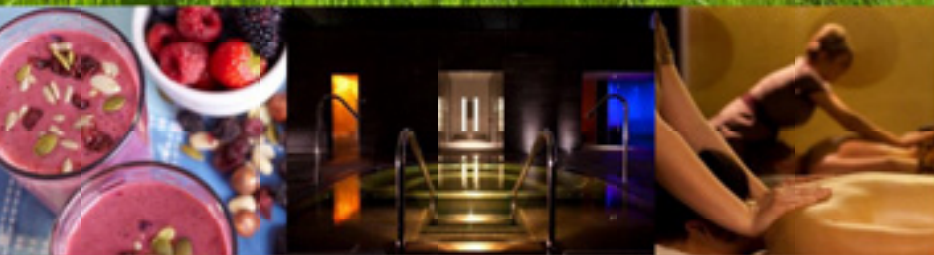
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01277 657835

info@communitydermatology.co.uk

www.communitydermatology.co.uk

One man in five dies before the age of 65. TOGETHER we can change that



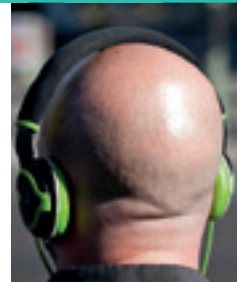
The national charity to improve men's health in England, Wales and Scotland.



All the big killers hit men harder: 40% of men die before the age of 75.



On your side. Join us in the fight against premature male death.



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INFORMATION

for men and professionals online or in booklets.



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Men's Health Week. Online Chat and Email.



MEN'S HEALTH FORUM

menshealthforum.org.uk
beatstress.uk



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For more information visit springfieldhospital.co.uk

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Men's Health Check

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- **Cardiac assessment**
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Mr Maan is a full time Consultant Urological Surgeon based in Colchester, Essex with over 15 years experience in Men's Health. He is a full member of the British Association of Urological Surgeons.

For information or bookings please contact us:

01206 862148



h.scott@ntlworld.com



www.essexurologyconsultant.co.uk



Blood Pressure Association:

www.bpassoc.org.uk

Change 4 Life:

www.nhs.uk/change4life

Drinkline:

0800 917 8282

The Men's Health Forum:

32-36 Loman Street, London, SE1 0EH
(Reg. Charity No: 1087375)
0207 922 7908

NHS Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening:

www.aaa.screening.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/conditions/Stroke/Pages/Introduction.aspx

NHS Direct:

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Prostate Cancer

www.tackleprostate.org

The Samaritans:

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www.stroke.org.uk



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