

CARER WELLBEING

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



Research shows 6 in 10 carers (60%) say their physical health has worsened as a result of caring and 25% of carers recognising they have 'bad' or 'very bad' physical health, ([Carers UK](#)).

This newsletter aims to give you some tips, tricks and signposting to organisations who can support you to care for your physical health and wellbeing, whilst caring.

A person's physical health can be impacted by many different factors.

This can include exercise, nutrition, lifestyle choices, illness or disability and more. Good physical health and wellbeing can reduce the risk of chronic illnesses such as Diabetes, Heart Disease etc. Your physical health can impact your mind as well as your body. There has been a lot of research that indicates looking after your physical health can improve your emotional and psychological wellbeing.



SANDWELL SHARED LIVES

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It is important you keep the Shared Lives team updated with any significant changes to your health and wellbeing to ensure support and risk assessments are completed to reflect the current circumstances. You can do this by speaking to the team or completing a health declaration form.



The team are always here to help - whether that be physical or emotional support or just a friendly face and an ear to lend.

The Shared Lives Team!

EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Engaging in **regular physical activity** has numerous benefits. As well as reducing the risk of heart conditions, stroke and other medical conditions, it can help with **strengthening muscles and bones**, improving your **heart health**, **boosting energy** and improving your **mood and mental wellbeing**. Physical activity will look different for everyone. The main aim is to move more than you usually would. This can be outside, in a gym environment, or at home.

[CLICK HERE FOR EXERCISE VIDEOS YOU CAN DO AT HOME](#)



[CLICK HERE FOR RAMBLERS UK - FIND YOUR LOCAL WALKING GROUP](#)



[CLICK HERE FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SOCIAL CLUBS IN SANDWELL](#)



Did you know exercise can keep your brain healthier?



Regular exercise not only benefits your body but also your brain.

Studies show that physical activity boosts molecules like GPLD1, which supports **memory**, **learning**, and **new brain cell formation**, potentially offsetting age-related cognitive decline.

DID YOU KNOW?

To stay fit and healthy, it's recommended you get at least **150 minutes** of moderate physical activity a week, or around **20-30 minutes per day** - NHS.

Make physical activity part of your daily routine to reduce the risk of physical health decline and illnesses.



Small increases in physical movement, such as **taking the stairs instead** of the lift and **walking** instead of driving short distances, greatly benefit your health. [Set yourself the challenge to move more!](#)



[CLICK HERE FOR SANDWELL LEISURE TRUST - FITNESS CLASSES AND OPPORTUNITIES TIMETABLES](#)

Active 10



Download the NHS Active 10 Walking Tracker and the NHS Couch to 5K to support you in achieving physical activity goals and building up your stamina.

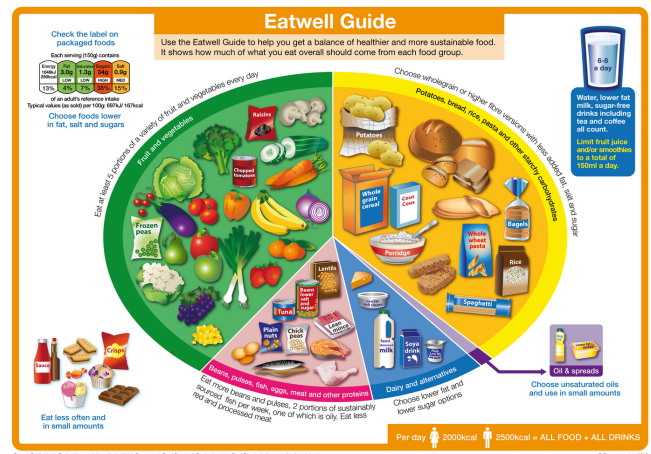
Couch to 5K



HEALTHY EATING AND NUTRITION

Eating a balanced and well-rounded diet will fuel your body with nutrients it needs to function well.

The **Eatwell Guide** shows a variety of foods should be eaten, but it is important to recognise it is all about balance. Click on the image to find out more about having a healthy balanced diet.



Simple Swaps:

- Use a spoonful of dried fruit on your cereal instead of sugar.
- Swap the frying pan for the grill when cooking meats.
- Switch from whole milk to skimmed or semi-skimmed milk.
- Swap your sugar for sweetener in hot drinks.
- Ditch the takeaway and make a 'fakeaway!'

Download the NHS Food Scanner app for more simple swaps.

Water is the best way to keep your body **hydrated** and well. It is recommended for you to drink around **1.6 litres** of fluid a day. This equates to between **6 - 8 cups/glasses** a day. This can be any fluids, but water is the healthiest choice. Keeping your body hydrated is an easy yet important way to boost your physical wellbeing. It supports your body with **digestion, temperature regulation** and **joint movement**.



You should try to avoid excessive consumption of sugary or caffeinated drinks as these can dehydrate you.

Good nutrition supports, not only your physical health, but also your **mental well-being**. Did you know there is a connection between **gut-health** and **mood**?

The Gut-Mood Connection



Did you know that **80% of the body's serotonin is found in the gut microbiome?**

This feel-good neurotransmitter is heavily influenced by hunger, which is why you might feel irritable when you're hungry.

DID YOU KNOW?

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

COULD YOUR DRINKING BE PUTTING YOUR HEALTH AT RISK?



ALCOHOL

Drinking too much alcohol regularly can cause significant damage to your organs. Men and women are advised to not drink more than **14 units per week**.

Here are some top tips to cut back:

- Take a break - **alcohol free days/month**.
- Switch to **lower alcohol percentage** drinks.
- Keep tabs on your **units**.
- **Dilute** your drinks - make it a spritzer or shandy.
- Set yourself a **maximum** and stick to it.

Alcohol is very addictive. If you have concerns about your drinking, you can seek support with organisations such as [Cranstoun Sandwell](#) and [Alcohol Change UK](#).

SMOKING

Smoking cigarettes and vaping increases the risk of heart attack and stroke, and is a contributing factor to at least 14 types of cancer. There are many **benefits** to quitting, which all **add years onto your life!**

Top tips to help stopping smoking/vaping:

- **Remove** all of your smoking/vaping stuff at home, work, in the car etc.
- Try to **avoid smokers** and situations you usually would smoke in.
- **Beat the nicotine craving** - replace it with **going for a walk**, **having a drink** of water, **having a snack** or **changing the scene**.
- Put the **money** you save aside and watch it grow.
- Take it **one day at a time** and celebrate your progress to a **healthier life!**



Download the free NHS Quit Smoking app today.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Carers poor physical health has been linked to carers not attending their own medical appointments due to time, caring responsibilities etc. (Carers UK).

If this is a concern you are having, please talk to the team. The new Home and Away day respite scheme aims to support carers to be able to attend medical appointments and focus on their wellbeing.

Have a chat with the Shared Lives team to find out more and to see if you would be eligible.



Get a free NHS health check!

If you are aged between 40 - 75, you can request a free health check at your GP. This check aims to spot early signs of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and dementia. Ask your GP Surgery today.



Useful Contacts:



Healthy Sandwell

Tel: 0121 569 5100

Address: Public Health, Floor 2, Sandwell Council
House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, B69 3DE

Email: LS@nhs.net

Sandwell Leisure Trust

Tel: 0300 012 0121

Address: Tipton Sports Academy, Wednesbury Oak
Road, Tipton, DY4 0BS

Email: info@slt-leisure.co.uk



Cranstoun Sandwell - Drugs and Alcohol Service.

Tel: 0121 553 1333

Address: Alberta Building, 128B Oldbury Road,
Smethwick, B66 1JE

Email: sandwell@cranstoun.org.uk

Smokefree Sandwell

Tel: 0121 740 0040

Address: YMCA Black Country Group, Office 5B,
Western Gateway, 38 Carters Green, West Bromwich,
B70 9LG

Email: abl.sandwell@nhs.net



Useful Websites:



<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>



<https://route2wellbeing.info/>