

Ageing well

Top tips to help you age well and live a healthy lifestyle



Ageing well means living a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle as you get older. This is important for everyone including those living with dementia and those caring for them.

Although there is no way to prevent dementia, ageing well can help to lower your risk of developing the condition.

Here are some top tips to help you age well and live a healthy lifestyle:



Keep physically active

Regular physical activity can boost your mood and help you stay healthy.

- Staying active keeps you strong, mobile, and independent. Exercises that work your legs and balance can help to prevent falls.
- Join a local gym, attend yoga or stretch classes, or enjoy exercise and movement at home — for example through YouTube videos or doing gentle stretches or chair exercises.



Eat and drink well

Good food and drinking enough water are important for staying healthy and feeling your best.

- Eat a balanced diet made up of lots of nutrients — including a mix of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and fish. Try to limit sugary drinks and alcohol.
- Plan your meals, read food labels, cook at home, and eat with others — it's a fun way to stay social and boost your appetite.
- If you are struggling to lose or gain weight, you can chat to your GP who can help you with personalised advice and check there are no underlying issues.



Sleep

Good sleep is essential for your health and mood. Sleeping well helps you to stay focused, feel better, and improves long-term health.

- Create a calming bedtime routine — try reading or gentle stretching to help you wind down. Keep your bedroom cool, dark and quiet.
- Avoid screens an hour before bed.
- Don't have caffeine or heavy meals just before going to bed.



Maintain good emotional wellbeing

As we age, life changes. Sometimes we lose people, independence, or routines. It can be difficult to cope with these changes, but try to focus on the things you can control and the things that you can feel grateful for.

- Try to understand your thoughts and feelings, and how they affect your actions. If you try to ignore difficult feelings, bottle things up or blame others, you can feel worse.
- Try using a thought tracker to reflect on how you are feeling, and check out the Action for Happiness website for free tips and wellbeing calendars: [actionforhappiness.org](https://www.actionforhappiness.org)



Get annual health checks

Getting regularly checked means that you can make lifestyle or medical changes to avoid serious complications and stay healthy.

- Getting your hearing and eyesight checked can help spot gradual hearing or vision loss, which can affect communication and quality of life. You can get help through NHS 111, your GP, or local hearing clinics.
- Regular checks with a dentist are important whether you have teeth or not! They can pick up problems in your mouth early and healthy teeth make it easier to eat well with less risk of choking.
- Take up opportunities for regular health checks including cholesterol and blood pressure checks, blood sugar, kidney, eye and foot checks and memory and understanding checks.



Stay connected

Staying socially active can lead to a longer, healthier and happier life.

- Spending time with family, friends, or community groups gives emotional support, builds confidence, and supports resilience.
- Try to stay connected to people whether for in-person socialising, or over the phone or online. Consider joining groups for people who share an interest with you, or who are in your local community.



Find meaning and joy

Think about the things that make you smile, or feel happy and calm. It might be a hobby, listening to music or singing, spending time with loved ones, joining a group, or helping others.

- Feeling connected to people boosts your wellbeing and reduces loneliness.
- Try learning something new, volunteering, travelling, or enjoying time in nature.



Be present in the moment

Focusing on the 'here and now' can help improve your mental wellbeing. This means noticing your thoughts, feelings, body, and surroundings — also known as mindfulness.

- Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better.
- A simple way to start is by noticing your breathing and take the time to slow down.



Visit [skillsforcare.org.uk/dementia](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dementia) to download more dementia resources and find support on dementia