

You and Your General Health

Factsheet

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Don't neglect caring for your teeth

Brushing and flossing your teeth correctly can help prevent gum disease and tooth loss. Gum disease is caused by bacteria found in plaque and tartar. Plaque is a sticky film that forms on the teeth, mostly made up of bacteria, mucus, food, and other particles. When plaque isn't removed, it hardens into tartar which gives a home to bacteria.

You're more at risk of developing gum disease if:

- You smoke using chewing tobacco
- You're experiencing hormonal changes (girls and women)
- You're diabetic
- You take certain medication
- It's inherited

Prevention

Good oral hygiene such as brushing and flossing at least twice every day can help prevent gum infections, cavities, and tooth loss. Having your teeth cleaned and checked by a dentist or dental hygienist at least once a year is also important. Even if you brush well, tartar and plaque can still build up and cause gum problems.

Brush correctly

- Brush in the morning and before going to sleep.
- Use a soft-bristled brush and toothpaste that contains fluoride. Use an electric toothbrush if possible.
- Place your toothbrush at a 45° angle against your gums and brush each tooth 15 to 20 times.
- Move the brush gently, using short strokes. Don't scrub.
- Brush the outer tooth surfaces using short, back-and-forth strokes.
- Brush the inner upper-front teeth by brushing vertically against them using short, downward strokes. Use short, upward strokes for lower inside teeth.
- Brush the chewing surfaces of the teeth with short, back-and-forth strokes.
- Replace your toothbrush when it's worn or frayed about every three or four months.
- Don't cover your toothbrush or store it in a closed container. This can encourage growth of microorganisms.



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Caring for your hearing

Hearing loss can't always be prevented, sometimes it's just part of getting older. But hearing loss due to exposure to loud noises is completely avoidable.

Avoid loud noises

A noise is probably loud enough to damage your hearing if:

- You have to raise your voice to talk to other people
- You can't hear what people nearby are saying
- It hurts your ears
- You have ringing in your ears or muffled hearing afterwards

Take care when listening to music

Listening to loud music through earphones and headphones is one of the biggest dangers to your hearing.

Protect your hearing at work

Wear earplugs in the workplace and clean regularly and change daily.

Get your hearing tested

If exposed to high levels of noise, make sure you attend your medical when instructed so that Greencore can continue to monitor your health. The earlier hearing loss is picked up, the earlier something can be done about it.



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Caring for your vision

It's easy to neglect your eyes because quite often they don't hurt when there's a problem. Having an eye test will not just tell you if you need new glasses or a change of prescription, it's also an important eye health check.

If at work you use a computer or tablet for spells of one hour or more at a time, you can obtain an eyecare voucher from your local HR department.

It's recommended to get an eye test every two years, but visit an optician or doctor if you're concerned about your vision at any time.

Tips to look after your eyes



If you smoke, try to give up



Protect your eyes from the sun



Stay hydrated



Take regular breaks from your screen



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Body mass

Your body mass is impacted to some degree by genetics, but it's heavily influenced by what you eat and how you exercise.

Being overweight or obese can lead to many serious health conditions and can increase your risk of heart and circulatory diseases such as heart attack, stroke and vascular dementia. Everyone needs some body fat to stay healthy. But too much, particularly around the waist, puts your health at risk.

Many people tend to worry about the fat they can feel, the one that sits directly under their skin. This is called subcutaneous fat. But it's visceral fat, the fat that surrounds our internal organs such as our heart and liver, that is the bigger health risk.

Ways to manage or lose weight

Start making small changes to your daily routine to enjoy big results.



Eat the right
portion sizes



Eat a fresh,
healthy diet



Read food labels
and avoid labels in
red



Be more active



You and Your General Health

Stop or cut down if you smoke

Smoking is one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK. Every year around 78,000 people in the UK die from smoking, with many more living with debilitating smoking-related illnesses.

Smoking can affect your body in many ways:

- Mood stimulation
- Anxiety and irritability
- Smelly hair and clothes
- Unhealthy teeth
- Bronchitis
- Persistent coughing
- Heart disease
- High cholesterol
- Immune system
- Infertility
- Erectile dysfunction
- Diabetes complications
- Blood clotting
- Early menopause
- Poor vision
- Dull sense of smell and taste
- Lung cancer
- Constricted blood vessels
- Loss of appetite
- Yellow fingers
- Cervical cancer
- Wrinkly skin
- Pregnancy problems
- Cancer connection

How your health can improve when you stop smoking:

- You'll breathe more easily
- You'll have more energy
- You'll feel less stressed
- Your sex life can improve due to better sensitivity
- Improved fertility
- Improved smell and taste
- You'll have younger looking skin
- Whiter teeth and sweeter breath
- A smoke-free home will protect loved ones
- Your chance of serious illness is reduced and you're more likely to live longer



Giving up or cutting down

Speak to your doctor about quitting, or call the NHS Smokefree helpline on 0300 123 1044.

You and Your General Health

Let's talk about sex

Sexual health is an important part of physical and mental health as well as your emotional and social wellbeing. It's important to take care of your sexual health and to talk about sex and relationships with your loved ones.

- Get clued up on contraception, pregnancy and STI's. Caring for your sexual health can help you stay safe and healthy while enjoying sexual pleasure and intimacy.
- Over 100,000 people live with HIV in the UK, but an estimated one in five are unaware of their infection. Taking a HIV test is the only way to find out if you have HIV.
- Need to talk to someone about a sexual health issue? Call the national sexual health helpline free on 0300 123 7123 or contact your doctor for advice.



You and Your General Health

Get the best for your brain

Brain health is directly affected by what we eat, how we respond to stress, the relationships surrounding us and other life factors. Boost your physical and mental health with these simple tips.

Prime your brain for focus

Exercise helps you combat fatigue and sharpens your attention.

Breathe

Conscious breathing can lower stress, enhance mental clarity and encourage trust.

Get better sleep

Help get high-quality sleep. Avoid big meals, alcohol and screens a few hours before bed.

Meditate

Mindfulness meditation helps increase attention control

Light it up

Regular exposure to natural light can boost serotonin and vitamin D levels to lift your mood.

Make nutrition matter

Your gut is your second brain. It's where brain chemicals, called neurotransmitters are made.

Try something new

Different surroundings and experiences wake up your awareness and stimulate your senses.



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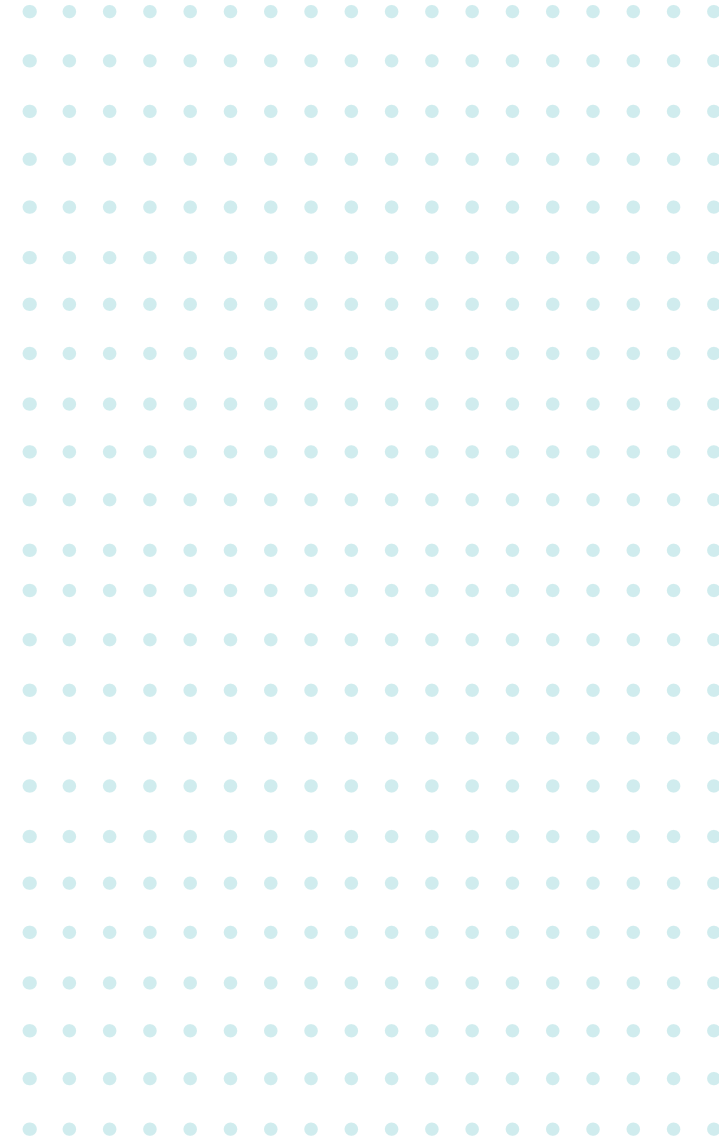
The salty secret you need to know

Around 2.5 million deaths could be prevented each year if we reduce the amount of salt we eat to less than 5g a day. Do you know how much you consume each day?

A huge 60-80% of the salt we eat is from processed, packaged food, so an easy way to lower salt intake is either checking the labels or even simpler, cooking fresh.

Using less or no salt in your cooking doesn't mean you have to compromise on flavour. You can still enjoy an array of alternative seasonings like citrus, garlic and spices.

Lower your risk of heart disease and stroke and celebrate home cooking. Get creative in the kitchen to consciously cut down on salt.



**the
Greencore[®]
way**

Making every day taste *better*