

Men's Health

Factsheet



Men's Health

Four common health problems in men

Heart disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of male deaths in the UK, with 119,000 men having a heart attack each year, compared to 69,000 women.

Heart disease can affect men and women differently. For example, men are much more likely to have a sudden cardiac problem, such as a heart attack. Risk factors for heart disease include smoking, being overweight, high cholesterol or blood pressure and having diabetes.

Symptoms can be:

- Chest pain
- Feeling sick
- Arm, jaw or back pain
- Feeling sweaty
- Extreme tiredness

It's important to visit your doctor regularly and get screened for heart disease risk factors.

Prostate cancer

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. The prostate is a small gland in the pelvis, found only in men. About the size of a satsuma, it's located between the penis and the bladder, and surrounds the urethra. Prostate cancer usually develops slowly, so there may be no signs for many years.

Symptoms can be:

- An increased need to pee
- Straining while you pee
- A feeling that your bladder hasn't fully emptied

Symptoms shouldn't be ignored, but they don't necessarily mean you have prostate cancer. If you show any of the above symptoms, consult your doctor



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Lung Cancer

Men are more likely to be diagnosed with lung cancer than women. And smoking is the most common cause.

Lung cancer doesn't often cause any symptoms until it's already advanced. Many people with the condition eventually develop symptoms including:

- A persistent cough
- Coughing up blood
- Persistent breathlessness
- Unexplained tiredness and weight loss
- An ache or pain when breathing or coughing

See a doctor if you have these symptoms. A screening test may detect it in its early stages, when it's most treatable.

Kidney Stones

Men are about twice as likely as women to have kidney stones. Kidney stones develop when chemicals in the urine form a hard, solid mass.

You may be at risk for kidney stones if you:

- Don't drink enough water
- Exercise too much or too little
- Are overweight
- Eat too much salt or sugar

Symptoms include:

- Pain in the side of your tummy, groin or testicles
- A high temperature
- Feeling sweaty
- Severe pain that comes and goes
- Feeling sick or vomiting
- Blood in your urine
- Urine infection

If you think you may have a kidney stone, contact your doctor. Many kidney stones pass on their own, but some need treatments to break them up or procedures to remove them.



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Male fertility tips

Did you know that infertility issues affect men and women equally? Society tends to place the onus of fertility on the female, when women only share half the responsibility. There are plenty of things that men can do to increase their own chances of fertility.

Do	Don't
<p>Eat antioxidant foods Such as leafy green veg, beans, peas, beef liver, tomatoes, apricots, Brazil nuts, cod, chicken, red peppers, kiwi, grapefruit, nuts, seeds, oysters and crab.</p>	<p>Smoke or use tobacco Smoking affects many aspects of sperm health, including decreased sperm counts, decreased sperm motility (the swimming ability of the sperm), and sperm shape.</p>
<p>Have frequent sex To have a baby, you need to have sex around the time of ovulation, but having frequent sex throughout the month can boost your fertility. Try to aim for at least twice a week.</p>	<p>Drink excessive alcohol Too much alcohol can decrease your fertility. It can cause lower sperm counts, fewer normally shaped sperm, and worse sperm motility.</p>
<p>Limit soy intake Found mainly in tofu, but also in health drinks, meat alternatives, and protein bars. The phytoestrogens in soy could have detrimental effects on reproduction, although research in humans is limited and needs further research. You may choose to limit soy if you're at all concerned.</p>	<p>Take long, hot baths or use a hot tub Your testicles need to be kept cooler than the rest of you, as high temperatures can damage sperm. Try to wear loose-fitting underwear and avoid sitting for long periods.</p>
<p>Maintain a healthy weight Being over, or underweight can upset the body's balance of hormones, which can lead to lower sperm counts.</p>	<p>Take drugs Some recreational drugs, such as cannabis, cocaine and anabolic steroids can damage sperm quality and reduce male fertility.</p>
<p>Treat underlying medical conditions Infections and medical problems can affect fertility. Some conditions may have no symptoms other than infertility which is why it's important to be tested regularly.</p>	<p>Skip dentist visits Gum disease and tooth decay have been linked to poor semen and sperm health.</p>
<p>Manage stress Stress can affect your relationship. It can also lower your sex drive which may reduce how often you have sex. Severe stress may also limit sperm production. Try to relax and take steps to lower the amount of stress in your life.</p>	



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Stress and depression in men

On average, 13 men each day in the UK lose their life through suicide.

If you're feeling extreme sadness consistently, have no or little interest in the things you usually enjoy, or are having thoughts of hurting yourself, contact your GP as soon as possible. They'll be able to offer help and advice.

While depression might be more common in women, statistically men are far more likely to commit suicide as they find it difficult to seek help.

Stress has become a major modern-day factor affecting men's health.

The tension and emotional strain of day-to-day living has been linked to heart disease, high blood pressure, migraine headaches, back pain, diabetes, cancer, and a weakened immune response to disease.

Help combat stress



Exercise regularly

Adding physical exercise into your lifestyle can be very effective in relieving stress. Even just going out for some fresh air and doing some light activity like going for a walk to the shops can really help.



Eat and sleep well

There's growing evidence that shows how food affects our mood and how eating healthily can improve this. And following a regular sleep routine can calm and restore the body and mind.



Meditate

Mindfulness is paying attention to our thoughts and feelings in a way that increases our ability to manage difficult situations and make wise choices. Mindfulness meditation can be practiced anywhere at any time.



Don't be too hard on yourself

Try to keep things in perspective. Act as if you were your own best friend. Be kind and supportive. Take a few minutes each day to appreciate yourself.



Say no

A common cause of stress is having too much to do and too little time to do it. Yet many people will still agree to take on additional responsibility. Try to say no more often to additional or unimportant requests.

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