

# Know your Numbers

Factsheet



# Know your Numbers

## Introduction

Knowing your health numbers helps you to detect health risks and problems before they become serious.

By getting regular check-ups and screenings, you can maintain and improve your overall health, and dramatically lower your risk of heart attack, stroke and some types of cancer.



# Know your Numbers

## What numbers should I check?

### Blood pressure

One in three adults have high blood pressure in the UK, but many don't realise it because it doesn't have any symptoms. If left untreated, it increases your risk of serious problems such as heart attacks and strokes.

High blood pressure can happen at any age, and most people don't feel any different. The only way to know if your blood pressure is healthy is to have a check, and to keep having them regularly. Visit your doctor to find out more.

You can have your blood pressure checked at a Pharmacy, or you can buy your own Blood Pressure monitor at a reasonable price.

### Cholesterol

We need cholesterol in our blood to stay healthy, it's when it gets too high that it's a problem. High cholesterol can lead to health problems in the future, and the only way to know you have it is to get it checked with a blood test.

Too much cholesterol in the blood can lead to diseases of the heart and blood vessels. High cholesterol can be caused by lifestyle but can also be inherited, and most people don't know they have it.

You can have this checked as part of an MOT offered for over 40 year olds at your Doctors (once visits are permitted).



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## What numbers should I check?

### Blood sugar

The hormone insulin lets sugar in your bloodstream enter your cells, where it can be used for energy. If you don't have enough insulin, sugar stays in the bloodstream and can damage the blood vessels and cause heart disease, kidney disease and diabetic eye disease.

A high blood sugar level would mean you have diabetes (type 1 or type 2) or have a high risk of developing type 2. Although diabetes can have symptoms, such as thirst, urinating a lot, blurred vision, weight loss, infections and tiredness, they may only be mild or none at all.

You can have this checked as part of an MOT offered for over 40 year olds at your Doctors (once visits are permitted).

## Give your body a health MOT

Both the NHS and partner pharmacies offer a full health check. The NHS provides this for over 40s that are eligible, and pharmacies provide it for all adults over 18 (a nominal fee is charged for this service).

Take control of your health, book your health check and get top tips from a professional health advisor to improve your wellbeing.

### The tests include:

- Blood pressure check
- Cholesterol test
- Type 2 diabetes screening
- Family history
- BMI
- Lifestyle questionnaire

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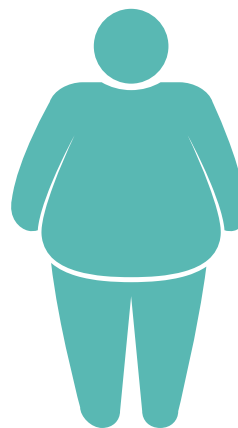
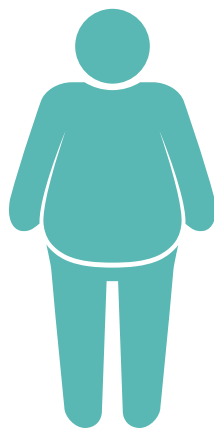
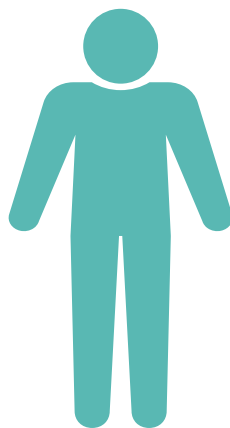
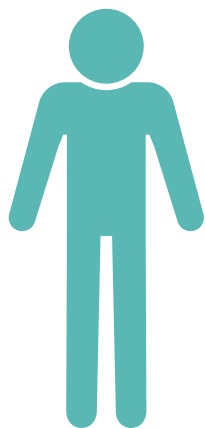
## What numbers should I check?

### Body mass index

The body mass index (BMI) uses your height and weight to work out if your weight is healthy. A BMI above the healthy weight range can increase your risk of serious health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke and some types of cancer.

The BMI calculation divides an adult's weight in kilograms by their height in metres squared. For example, a BMI of 25 means 25kg/m<sup>2</sup>. For most adults, an ideal BMI is in the 18.5 to 24.9 range. For children and young people aged 2 to 18, the BMI calculation takes into account age and gender as well as height and weight.

### If your BMI is:



**Underweight**  
BMI <18.5

**Healthy Weight**  
BMI 18.5 - 24.9

**Overweight**  
BMI 25 - 29.9

**Obese**  
BMI 30 - 39.9



If you want to calculate your BMI, you can use the

**[NHS healthy weight calculator](#)**

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## What numbers should I check?

### Waist circumference

This is a good measure of fat around your middle. This type of fat builds up around your organs, and is linked to high blood fat levels, high blood pressure and diabetes.

A larger waist usually also means there is excess fat inside your organs. When this happens in your liver, it pumps out too much fat and sugar into the blood, increasing your risk of heart disease and diabetes.

You can have a healthy BMI and still have excess tummy fat, meaning you're still at risk of developing these conditions.

### To measure your waist:

- Find the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hips
- Wrap a tape measure around your waist midway between these points
- Breathe out naturally before taking the measurement

Regardless of your height or BMI, you should try to lose weight if your waist is:	You're at very high risk and should contact your doctor if your waist is:
94cm (37ins) or more for men	102cm (40ins) or more for men
80cm (31.5ins) or more for women	88cm (34ins) or more for women



# Know your Numbers

## Are you getting enough physical activity?

Currently in the UK a large percentage of the population are not meeting the government guidelines for physical activity to keep healthy. **Physical activity recommendations:**



### 2-4 years

at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day



### 5-10 years

at least 60 minutes and up to several hours every day



### 11-15 years

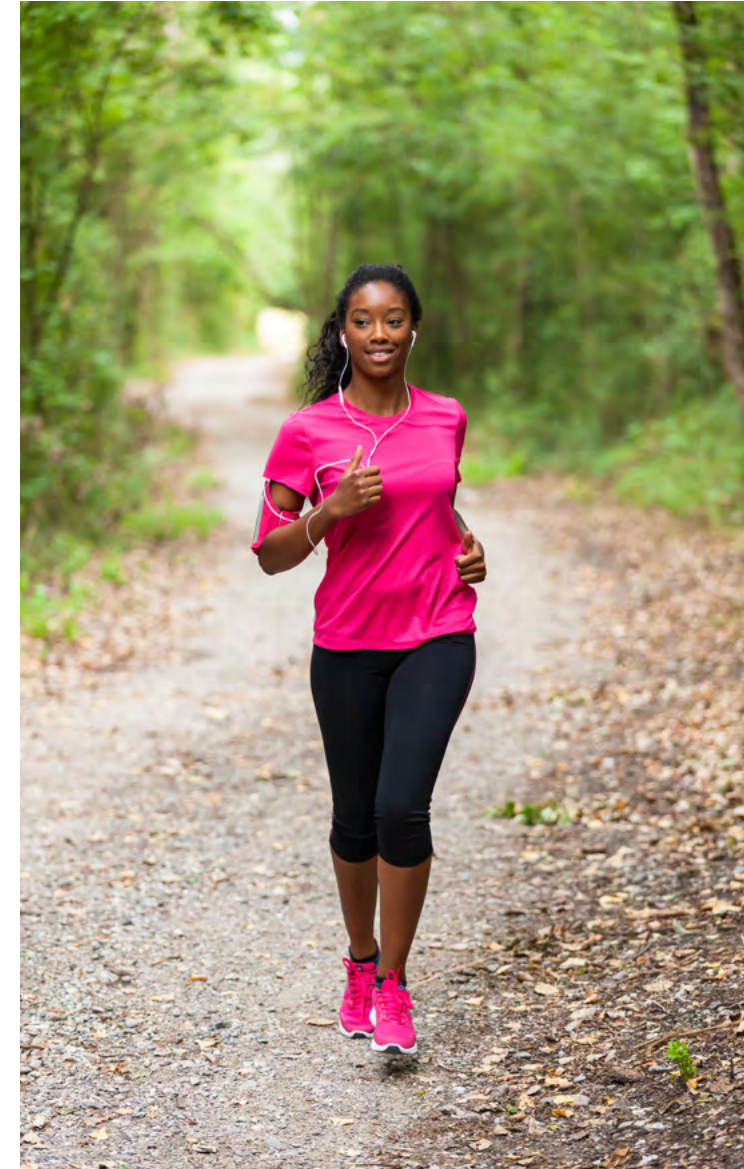
at least 60 minutes and up to several hours every day



### 19-65+ years

Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate intensity activity

Whatever your age, there's strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and happier life. People who exercise regularly have a lower risk of developing many long-term (chronic) conditions, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and some cancers.







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