

Practical advice on  
**How to Feel Your Best  
as You Get Older**



All the information in this brochure can be found online at:  
[www.barnsley.gov.uk/AgeFriendlySupport](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/AgeFriendlySupport)

# Introduction

This booklet has been created to help provide some information about simple steps you can take to continue to live a healthy and independent life as your body ages.

## Contents:

- Staying active
- Eating well and staying hydrated
- Continuing to connect with others
- Preparing for the future

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## General health advice

We understand you or your family might have questions so where possible we have signposted what support is available to you in Barnsley.

**Remember to always ask for help when you need it.**

It is also important to keep up with your general health by:

- Getting your ears and eyes tested. Eye tests are free to the over 60s and in many cases you can have the tests done in your own home
- Getting your vaccinations including your COVID boosters and winter flu jabs, these can be booked through your GP
- Staying warm during winter. Try to keep your home between 18 and 21 degrees Celsius



If you would like some practical advice on making your home warmer and cheaper to run please visit:  
[www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/housing/energy-at-home](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/housing/energy-at-home) or scan this QR code with a camera on a smart phone or tablet



# Staying active

It is important to be active and keep moving to stay as fit as you can. Staying active can mean different things to different people depending on your age or physical condition.

As well as exercise classes; household chores, shopping and gardening are all great ways to be active.

## Simple steps

- **Walking** – can be a great way to keep active and healthy. We understand that you might not be able to walk long distances so make sure you take plenty of rest breaks.
- **Sitting** – If possible, try avoid sitting for long periods of time. Avoid crossing your legs too much and move your arms and legs when you can to keep muscles working.
- **Standing** – where ever possible avoid standing for long periods of time. If you feel tired sit down.

## Improving circulation in your legs

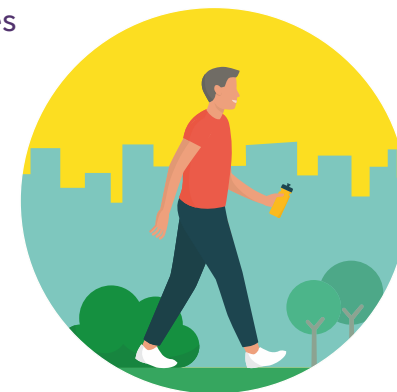
There are two simple ways you can help improve the circulation in your legs when sitting or lying down:

- Wiggling your toes
- Bending and straightening your ankles and slowly rotating them

## Relieving tension in your legs

It is important to elevate your feet when resting. This could be done by using a footrest or stool.

This will help relieve tension, stiffness or pain in your feet and legs.



## Feeling light-headed when standing up

If you feel dizzy or light-headed when you stand up or get out of bed, you may be suffering from a common condition called postural hypotension. This causes a person's blood pressure to drop when they move position. For example, if they move from being sat to stood up. This is more common in older people.

If you are experiencing this, visit your GP practice to have your blood pressure checked – both while sitting and standing. Your doctor may need to review your medication. Please do not stop taking medication without checking with your GP.

## Living independently

As you grow older you may need some extra help and support which will put your mind at ease and make you feel safe. Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council have a range of services to support you from assisted living technology (telecare) to equipment, aids and adaptations. For more info go to: [www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/adult-social-care/getting-help-early](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/adult-social-care/getting-help-early)

If you are worried about falling scan the QR code for some further advice or visit: [www.csp.org.uk/publications/get-go-guide-staying-steady-english-version](http://www.csp.org.uk/publications/get-go-guide-staying-steady-english-version)



## Exercising

You may feel able enough to do more regular exercise. If this is the case you could consider joining a local group or club as most exercise classes can be adapted to suit your needs.

## The Barnsley Older People Physical Activity Alliance (BOPPAA)

is an organisation that offers **physical activity for over 50's** in Barnsley.

Find out more by visiting: [boppaa.ageukbarnsley.org.uk](http://boppaa.ageukbarnsley.org.uk) or contact **Age UK Barnsley on 01226 776820** or scan the QR code to be taken to their website:



**BOPPAA**

Barnsley Older People  
Physical Activity Alliance

# Eating well & staying hydrated

Eating well and staying hydrated can help us keep healthy and at lower risk of long-term health conditions. This means we should try eating a wide variety of foods to have a balanced diet.

## A healthy diet often consists of the following:

- **High quality protein** such as meat, fish (especially oily fish: mackerel, sardines, salmon), chicken, tofu, eggs, beans, pulses
- **High-fibre starchy carbohydrate** such as potatoes, bread, pasta, rice and breakfast cereals (ideally whole grains)
- **Fruit and vegetables** at least 5 a portions per day
- **Good sources of calcium** such as milk, cheese and yoghurt (you should choose full fat options unless you are overweight)



## Vitamins B & D

People over the age of 65 are at risk of not getting enough Vitamin D so its recommended to take Vitamin D supplements 10 µg (400 IU) per day, if you are over the age of 65. Vitamin B is also important for our body to maintain normal functions, this can be found in green vegetables, cereals, peanuts, fish, meat and eggs.

**Staying hydrated** - Make sure you drink a minimum of six to eight glasses of fluid a day (this is at least 1.5 litres of fluid).

For further information on good nutrition and hydration in older age please scan the QR code. Or visit The Association of UK Dieticians website: [www.bda.uk.com](http://www.bda.uk.com)



If you are losing weight without trying or have a loss of appetite, scan the QR code for some tips and advice or visit: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/)

## Oral Health

Good oral health is essential when maintaining good overall health. Look after your oral health by:

- Brushing your teeth with 1350-1500ppm fluoride toothpaste
- Brush in small circular motions where your teeth meet your gums twice daily. Spit after brushing, don't rinse
- Use dental floss or interdental brushes (or both) to remove food from in-between the teeth
- Use mouthwash at a separate time to brushing
- Replace your toothbrush every 3 months or when the bristles are worn.
- Clean dentures twice daily with a toothbrush and water
- Rinse dentures after every meal
- Remove dentures overnight to allow your mouth to rest

**For more tips on mouth care visit: [www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-well-being/healthy-living/oral-health/](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-well-being/healthy-living/oral-health/)**

## Looking after your skin

As you get older your skin will change. There are some simple things you can do to look after your skin:

- Make sure you wash in warm water
- Avoid taking hot baths and using perfumed soaps
- Apply moisturiser to your skin every day
- Look after your feet and toenails – if you see a change of colour in your nail bed contact your podiatrist or pharmacist as this could be a fungal infection
- Avoid heat and cold extremes and remember not to sit too close to a fire or radiator
- If you knock your skin or notice a break in the skin, seek help quickly, particularly if you are diabetic or are taking any blood thinning medications
- If you are at risk of falls, try to wear long trousers or long socks to reduce the risk of skin breaks if you fall
- Use a good insect repellent and treat any bites promptly



# Continue to connect with others



**Try to socialise as much as you can with others. Regular chats can help with your wellbeing.**

One way to stay socially active is to continue your learning in your later years, this is proven to enhance self-esteem. Why not try learn something new today? This could be something simple like:

- Finding out something about your friends
- Signing up for a class
- Reading the news or a book
- Setting up a book club
- Visiting your local library
- Doing a crossword or Sudoku
- Researching something you've always wondered about
- Learning a new word
- Understanding how to best manage your health
- Signing up to a mobile app that can teach you about physical activity

**To find out more about what local activities you can get involved in why not visit the following:**

**What's  
Your Move  
Barnsley**



[www.barnsleywhatsyourmove.co.uk](http://www.barnsleywhatsyourmove.co.uk)

**Age Friendly  
Support  
& Events**



[www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/community-and-volunteering/age-friendly-barnsley/](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/community-and-volunteering/age-friendly-barnsley/)

# Preparing for the future

As you get older there is lots to look forward to, particularly retirement. You will have extra time to spend with your loved ones or to do what you enjoy most. Being prepared for the future will help make sure no matter what happens your wishes for later life can still be met. There are lots of things to consider from reviewing your finances, tracing old pensions, and what you might need emotionally to retire.

## Power of attorney

We understand it might be difficult to think about, but now is a good time to talk to family and friends about your future care options in case there is a time where you are not able to make decisions about your care and welfare.

You might want to consider putting a power of attorney in place. This is a legal document that allows somebody to make decisions for you, or act on your behalf only if you are no longer able to. For further information scan the QR code, or visit:

[www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/legal-issues/power-of-attorney](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/legal-issues/power-of-attorney)



For some further practical guidance from the NHS about planning for your future scan the QR code: or visiting: [www.england.nhs.uk/improvement-hub](http://www.england.nhs.uk/improvement-hub)



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## NHS111

If you need urgent medical help and it's not life threatening, please call 111. This is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobiles. Online service for NHS 111 can be accessed by visiting: [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk)