

Reduce your dementia risk

Looking after your health can benefit your brain too.



Research has shown that up to 40% of dementia cases are down to factors we can influence. This page gives advice and information about services which can help.

Here in Surrey, around 17,700 people are living with dementia. Numbers are projected to rise by more than a quarter, to 22,600, between 2020 and 2030.

Many dementia cases are linked to things we can't change, such as our age and genes, but evidence is becoming stronger that dementia isn't always inevitable and there are steps we can take to influence our risk of developing the condition.

If you're planning to make healthy lifestyle changes, make positive changes for your brain health too.

Looking after your health can benefit your brain

Did you know that keeping your heart healthy can reduce your risk of developing dementia? There's growing evidence that all the habits we understand to be good for the heart are also good for the brain.

Research has shown that **up to 40% of dementia cases are down to factors we can influence** but surveys also suggest that few people are aware it's possible to reduce their risk of getting the condition later in life.

In fact, just as you can improve aspects of your physical health, you can also take steps to keep your brain healthy.

Getting active, managing blood pressure, keeping a healthy weight and stopping smoking are among the habits you can build into everyday life to give yourself the best possible chance of avoiding the heartbreak of a dementia diagnosis in the future.

Brain-healthy habits

There's a wealth of tips, support and local services available to help make brain-healthy habits stick.

1. Manage your blood pressure

If you're aged 40 to 74 with no pre-existing conditions, make sure you get your free NHS health check which includes some simple tests including blood pressure. You can get them every five years. Visit the **health checks** web page to find out how. You can also get a quick and easy **blood pressure** check at a participating pharmacy to check your blood pressure and pulse rate.

2. Get active

With stunning scenery on our doorstep, Surrey offers a wealth of opportunities to be active. Head to the **Get Active** web page to find activities to suit you, even if you can only fit in 10 minutes. You can also explore ideas for connecting with nature on our **31 tips** web page.

3. Keep to a healthy weight

Visit our **adult weight management** web page to try a quick and easy quiz about your diet and lifestyle and also to find your body mass index (BMI). You'll be able to find out about the support available to help you get down to a healthy weight and stay that way for good, including the **NHS Better Health** website where you'll find free weight loss plans. Check out **Health Unlocked** to join a supportive group of people.

4. Enjoy a healthy diet

The **adult weight management** web page shows how much of what we eat overall and what should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet. Also check out the **One You Easy Meals app** for healthy recipes or visit the **NHS Better Health** website.

5. Get socially active

Find ways to get involved in your local community, or look for befriending services, through the **Connect to Support Surrey** website.

6. Keep within alcohol limits

The **DrinkCoach alcohol test** is a quick and confidential way you can see if your drinking is putting your health at risk. Depending on your result, you may be **signposted to services** which can help you change your drinking habits.

7. Quit smoking

If you're a smoker, **quitting for good** is the most important step you can take to protect the health of your heart while also giving your brain a break. The **One You Surrey stop smoking service** has all the support you need to make 2023 the year you kick the habit once and for all.

8. Keep your mind active

Keeping your brain active and challenged may help reduce your dementia risk. Ideas include reading, doing puzzles or crosswords, or learning a second language. Why not check out **Surrey Adult Learning**?

Related articles



Healthy hearts

Do you know much about cardiovascular health? It will enable you to take steps to maintain or improve your health.



Get active

Get going every day. Being active every day helps us to all to stay healthy.

Healthy Surrey

Access the local health and wellbeing services available to you as a Surrey resident, as well as self-care information that can help you lead a healthier life.



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