

Feel Well

Health checks & screening for men

Stigmas still exist surrounding men's health matters – it's a 'man thing"! Generally, men don't openly discuss their health and how they are feeling. Furthermore, evidence suggests many men aren't taking full advantage of all the health checks and screening available which can help the early detection and treatment of conditions that would significantly improve overall health and longevity.



Early detection is key to successful treatment

The early detection of certain health issues can significantly help improve recovery rates and overall wellbeing.

Traditionally men tend to 'sweep things under the carpet', and so miss opportunities to act on some early signs & symptoms, particularly for some cancers and heart disease. Many conditions can be prevented or successfully treated by early diagnosis through some simple and widely available screening procedures. Furthermore, by raising awareness of possible issues as early as possible, positive and preventative lifestyle changes can be adopted to further reduce potential risks to health.

Heart disease risk

There are a number of things that increase the potential for heart disease. High blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, a sedentary lifestyle, and being overweight are all modifiable risks.

Simple health checks in all these areas will have a significant and positive impact on reducing risk.

Blood pressure and blood cholesterol checks are easy to do, but many men don't know their levels in this respect.

High readings are usually asymptomatic, which means unless we get them checked, we will probably be unaware we may even be at risk.

For more information go to www.bhf.org (British Heart Foundation) and check out all the information preventing heart disease, risk factors and living with heart disease.

Diabetes

Simple screening services are also available for diabetes to regularly measure and monitor our blood sugar levels. Diabetes is more prevalent in the male population.

By knowing our blood sugar levels, assessment of pre-diabetes can prompt lifestyle changes before being diagnosed with Type 2 adult-onset diabetes.

Cancer

We already know that certain types of cancer are more prevalent in, or only affect men.

Testicular cancer is one of those things that we are able to check ourselves, by becoming familiar with what is normal for us and if we do a little research online and use reputable sources such as the NHS, we can learn how we can check ourselves.

We can also be vigilant when looking for signs of skin cancer. By getting to know ourselves better we can be pro-active in checking ourselves and be on the lookout for any difference in the condition and appearance of our skin and moles.

We can also be checked for things like bowel cancer through the NHS bowel screening programme which is freely offered from around the age of 50 in most regions across the UK.

As a general rule, the earlier an issue can be detected, the better in terms of the success levels of that treatment. It starts by increasing awareness of what and how to check.

By simply increasing the general awareness of men's health issues as a proactive step and in the early detection of certain health issues, prevention, early diagnosis and effective treatment will significantly help improve recovery rates.

Develop an improved self-knowledge

"Above all – know thyself" Socrates suggested. By focussing on developing an improved awareness and knowledge of their own body and health status, men can access screening and treat conditions which can make a significant difference to their overall health and longevity.

Medicine and science advance daily and it's essential to stay ahead of the game! This knowledge will help towards encouraging men to start to develop new healthy habits and perhaps more importantly, drop the unhealthy ones!