

# Take care of your wellbeing



## Keep physically active

Doing regular exercise can be very effective in lifting your mood and increasing your energy levels. It doesn't have to be very strenuous or sporty to be effective – the important thing is to pick something you enjoy doing, so you're more likely to stick with it.

## Identify mood triggers

Keeping track of your moods in a mood diary can help you work out what affects your mental wellbeing. It can help you to recognise changes in your mood that would be difficult to spot otherwise. Knowing what affects your moods can help you to take steps to prepare for the impact a situation may have on you.



## Sleep

There is a close relationship between sleep and mental health. If you're finding it difficult to sleep – don't try to force sleep. Get up, go to another room and try to relax there. Do something soothing, such as listening to music, until you're tired enough to go back to bed.

## Relax

It's important to make time for yourself and relax. In order to look after others, you need to first care for yourself. Self-care is not self-indulgent – it's essential. Learning a relaxation technique, such as yoga, meditation or mindfulness can also help you relax and reduce stress levels.

## Diet

Improving your diet can help give you more energy and calmer moods. Think about how regularly you eat. If your blood sugar drops you might feel tired, irritable and experience low mood. You need to eat regularly to keep your sugar level steady, and choose foods that release energy slowly like protein, nuts, seeds, oats and wholegrains.

### Are you having too much caffeine?

Caffeine is a stimulant. Having too much can make you feel anxious, disturb your sleep, or give you withdrawal symptoms if you stop suddenly. Caffeine is in tea, coffee, chocolate, cola and manufactured energy drinks.

**Mental wellbeing is just as important as physical wellbeing, and maintaining both is an important part of staying fit and healthy.**



## Talk about the way you feel

If you're going through a difficult time, talking about the way you feel with someone you know and trust can often help. At first this may be hard – your immediate response might be to keep your feelings to yourself rather than share them. However, your colleagues, friends or family may be able to offer you practical help or advice and give you another perspective on what's causing your problems. Often, just feeling that someone is there to listen and understand you can make you feel much better.

## Do something you enjoy

Doing something you enjoy can improve your confidence and help you stay well. Make time to do things you like, whether it's cooking, seeing your friends or doing DIY. Some people find that doing something creative, such as drama, drawing or sewing, helps them to express themselves positively and deal with difficult emotions in a positive way.

Learning something new, or taking up a new hobby, can also boost your confidence and occupy your mind in a positive and active way. If you want to try a new hobby, think about what you are good at, or things that you have always wanted to try.

## Set yourself a challenge

Set yourself a challenge that you can realistically achieve. It doesn't have to be huge, but you could find something which has meaning for you. For example, you might decide to start going to a regular exercise class. You'll feel satisfied when you achieve your goal, and feel more positive about yourself as a result.

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