

Improving your health might not seem easy. You can do it if you take one step at a time and remember **it is never too late!**

WEIGHT LOSS

If you are overweight, losing just a small amount of weight can improve your overall health. Studies show that a 5 to 10 percent decrease in your weight can make a significant difference.

Obesity Action Coalition

SMOKING

Stopping smoking just 1 month before surgery is beneficial as your body is free from carbon monoxide, your blood circulation and lungs improve and your breathing becomes easier.

Smokefree.nhs.uk

ALCOHOL

Studies have shown that if you stop drinking alcohol 3 to 8 weeks before surgery you will reduce the chance of serious problems after surgery such as heart and lung issues, wound healing and infection.

British Journal of Anaesthesiology (2009) 102(3):297-306

For more information about 'Herefordshire Treatment Policy' and 'Optimise your Health before surgery guidance for patients' visit the CCG website www.herefordshireccg.nhs.uk

LOCAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND INFORMATION

We recognise that you are unique. What motivates one person to make positive changes to their lifestyle may not work for you. Therefore there are lots of support services and community activities to suit your interests and help you achieve your goals.

For staying healthy information and signposting to services:


Visit the Herefordshire Council WISH website:

 www.wisherefordshire.org

NHS Choices  www.nhs.uk


Weight Management, Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:

Self-funding commercial services e.g. Slimming World or Weight Watchers



Healthy Lifestyle Trainer Service (HLTS)
call  **01432 383567**

Quitting Smoking:

 www.herefordshire.gov.uk search for Stop Smoking and find a list of community pharmacies accredited to offer help to stop smoking.

Healthy Lifestyle Trainer Service (HLTS)
call  **01432 383567**

Alcohol Consumption and Drug Addiction:

Addaction  **01432 802487** or
 www.addaction.org.uk/services/addactionherefordshire

Drinkaware  www.drinkaware.co.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
helpline  **0800 9177 650**

NHS

Herefordshire
Clinical Commissioning Group


**ARE YOU
FIT AND READY
FOR YOUR
SURGERY?**

Putting the public
and patients at the
heart of everything
we do



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Having surgery is a major life event. Most people have surgery to reduce pain and improve their quality of life. It can also be lifesaving.

All surgery has some risk. Lifestyle factors such as obesity, smoking and heavy alcohol drinking increases these risks. The good news is that you can lower the risks by improving your health before surgery. If you maintain a healthy lifestyle you can improve your long-term health.

You are not alone. Your GP and other health experts will welcome the opportunity to help and inspire you to be as fit as you can before surgery.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF RISKS RELATED TO SURGERY

1. During Surgery

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Excessive bleeding

2. After Surgery

- Wound infection
- Wound healing
- Blood clot in your leg or lung
- Chest infection
- Urine infection
- Excessive bleeding

An unhealthy lifestyle can increase your risk of complications. This could affect your recovery, the results of your operation and lengthen your stay in hospital.

IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

It is your duty to get as fit and healthy as you can before surgery. This will reduce your risk of developing problems during and after your operation. The benefits will be:

- ✓ A positive mental state helps you prepare for surgery and your recovery.
- ✓ A healthy weight improves wound and joint healing and makes your breathing easier.
- ✓ A healthy balanced diet helps your body heal.
- ✓ Regular exercise makes you feel healthier. It strengthens your bones, improves blood flow, heart and lung health.
- ✓ Not smoking improves blood flow, heart and lung health and strengthens your bones.
- ✓ Stopping drinking alcohol before surgery reduces immune system risks such as chest infections, wound infections and heavy bleeding.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE HELP IS OUT THERE

Your GP and other health experts will talk to you about how you can help yourself to lower the risks related to your surgery. Taking advice will have a positive impact on your health and improve your recovery.

See Pre-Op Optimisation Project for more information and signposting to local support services: www.preop.org.uk.

WENDY'S STORY

I had a painful six month wait for a knee replacement operation. Because I could not walk with my friends I put on weight. I found it hard to motivate myself to lose the weight. I received my date to have my operation with four weeks notice. It was a serious operation so I decided to give myself the best chance of recovery and lose the weight I had gained. On the day of my operation I had lost nine pounds by doing what exercise I could and eating healthy food. I cut out sugar in my tea and snacks between meals. Six months later I am walking with my friends and have kept my healthy eating habits. I feel so much better for it.

