



Live a long and strong life

Take the lead in your own health care



You have the
Power!



This booklet is about living a healthy life and getting your health checks.

Looking after your health helps you feel happy and strong and means you are less likely to get ill.



You have the power to live a long and strong life!



Sometimes people with a learning disability and autistic people don't get the same good health care as everyone else.



There are lots of things you can do to take the lead in your own health care.

You don't have to do this on your own. If you have someone who supports you, they can get involved too.



You might have heard the words
Reasonable Adjustments.

These are things that help you get what you need. You can ask for these things whenever you go to the doctors or a hospital.



We all have different things that help us feel comfortable. Here are some examples of reasonable adjustments:



You might want people to telephone you instead of sending letters.



You might want someone to go to an appointment with you.



You might like having your appointments at the end of the day when the waiting room is less noisy.



Think about what helps **you** feel comfortable. Make a list or ask someone to help you make a list. There is a page at the end of this booklet to help you.

Then tell your doctor what you need – they will be able to support you.



Annual Health Checks

Anyone who is aged 14 and older and has a learning disability should get an annual health check. This is free.



This is a bit like taking a car for its MOT once a year – a doctor or nurse will do some quick checks for your body and your health.



You go for this even if you feel well. They will check things like your weight and blood pressure.



They might talk to you about a **Health Action Plan**. A Health Action Plan is just for you, and you can help decide what to put in it. It could be things like getting more exercise.



Get to know your own body

We are all different shapes and sizes, with different bits and bobs.



We can get to know our own bodies. Then if something changes or feels wrong, we can tell a doctor.



If something changes in our body, or we don't feel well, it is good to speak to a doctor straight away.



Sometimes we worry and keep things to ourselves, but this can make us feel worse. Talk to someone.



Healthy Habits

There are lots of things that affect our health. We might not be able to control all of them, but we can all take small steps to be healthier.



We all know that sugar, alcohol and smoking or vaping are bad for us. It's ok to have treats, like a bar of chocolate, so long as it's not often.

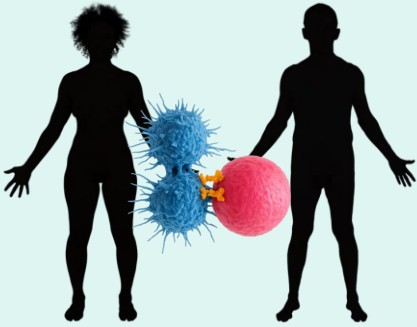


We all have the power to be healthier! Drinking water and eating healthy food is good for our bodies and minds.



Exercise also helps our bodies stay strong and makes us feel good.

There are lots of different ways to exercise – you can find the ones that are fun for you.

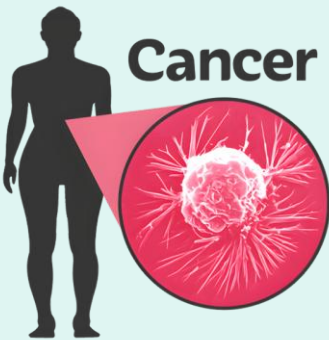


We can be cancer aware

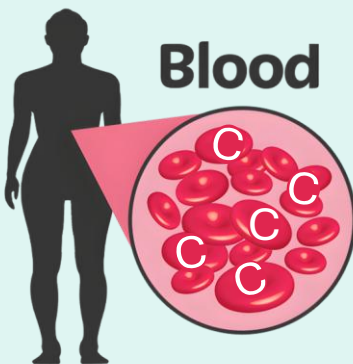
We all have lots of tiny parts inside our bodies called cells. Sometimes cells go wrong and can turn into a lump called a tumour.



Some tumours are called benign. This means they are not cancer. These don't usually harm us.



Some tumours are called malignant. They get bigger and can spread to different parts of the body. This is cancer.



We have cells in our blood that can turn into cancer, too.



Check your body and your skin. Do this every month if you can.

If you notice a new lump, bump or change in your skin, tell someone right away and go to see a doctor.



Sadly, lots of people get cancer. If we go to the Doctor right away we have a better chance of getting well again.



And if we keep our bodies healthy we have a lower chance of getting cancer.

Cancer checks



At certain times in our life we will be asked to go for an injection or a cancer check. Checks for cancer are sometimes called a screening.



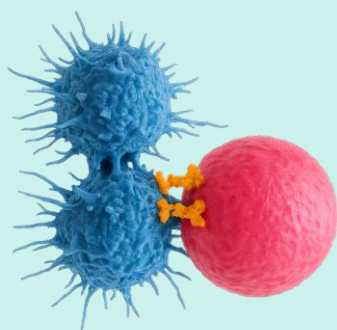
There are checks that people are asked to go for at certain ages. You go for these even if you feel well.



The **HPV Vaccine** is an injection children are given around the ages of 12 to 14.



It is usually done at school, but sometimes people go to the doctor or nurse for this.



HPV stands for human papillomavirus. There are lots of types of HPV.

Some types of HPV do not cause any problems, but there are some that can cause different cancers.



NHS: Book your vaccine online, on the app or call us

If you are asked to get the HPV vaccination make sure you get this. It will protect your health.

25



There is a check some people can have that starts when they are aged 25. This is called a **cervical screening**, or smear test.

This is for women and people who have a cervix. The cervix is inside the vagina.

Once you start having smear tests you should have these every five years.

50



At age 50 women and other people with breasts are asked to go for a **breast screening**. This is called a **mammogram**.



Remember – we should check our breasts and chest ourselves, too. Then if we notice something is different, like a lump, we can talk to a doctor as soon as possible.

50



Once we are over 50 we should all get a poo test called a **Fit Test**.

This is usually sent to us in the post, with a letter that shows how to do it.

This checks our poo for signs of a cancer that can happen inside our bowel.



And when men turn 50 their doctor will speak to them about checks on their **prostate**.

This is also for trans women and some non-binary and intersex people.

The prostate is a gland inside the body. It's about the size of a walnut.



There are other booklets that explain more about some of these checks.



Things to Remember

We can all live a healthy lifestyle by:



Eating healthy food and drinking water



Not having too much alcohol



Trying not to smoke or vape



Getting plenty of exercise



Protecting our skin with sunscreen



Checking our own bodies



Going for health checks



Having fun and doing hobbies that make us happy



You have the power to live a long and strong life!



Other information

If you want more information about things we have talked about in this booklet, here are some links to click.



Video: [Annual Health Checks](#)
made by NHS Derby and Derbyshire

Video: [Reasonable Adjustments](#)
by Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust

Video: [How I keep healthy](#)
by West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership



Easy Read guide: [Information about HPV](#) –
made by Mencap

Yorkshire Smokefree [Easy Read booklets](#)



West Yorkshire
Health and Care Partnership



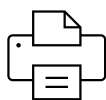
This booklet was made by a group of autistic people and people with learning disabilities in West Yorkshire in 2025.

We did this with **Inclusion North** and people who work in health care.

It was supported by **West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership**.

We have made other booklets and videos that help us take the power and look after our health. Go to this website link:

www.inclusionnorth.org



What helps you?

Print this page to make a list of your **reasonable adjustments**. These are things that help you feel comfortable.

Use this when you have appointments such as doctors, hospitals and dentists.

I need...

☐

To bring someone with me

☐

Easy words

☐

Don't rush me

☐

A quiet waiting room

☐

A longer appointment

☐

A morning appointment

☐

An afternoon appointment

Write your own list here
