



WELLBEING GUIDE

# MEN'S HEALTH WEEK

10-16 June 2024

Wellbeing and health are topics that are often over-looked by men. Men's Health Week is a great time to think about your overall wellbeing. This year the theme is Let's talk prostates (and everything else men's health!) For more information click [here](#).



## Did you know:

- 1 man in 5 dies before age 65.
- 75% of premature deaths from heart disease are male.
- You can have a NHS health check from age 40.
- Women live longer than men.
- 4 out of 5 suicides are male.
- Suicide is the biggest killer of men under 49.
- Men between the ages of 18 and 44 are less likely to go see a doctor than women.
- 67% of men are overweight or obese.
- Middle-aged men are twice as likely to have diabetes as women.
- Men are more likely to drink alcohol to dangerous levels.
- Men are twice as likely to have liver disease.
- When men do use therapy, it is at the point of crisis.
- Men are more likely to smoke.

**It is vital that men start to feel more comfortable talking about their health and wellbeing.**

# Physical Health

## The main physical health issues that men face are:

According to the UK Government website 1 in 10 men aged 50 have a heart age 10 years older than they are. Cardiovascular disease (CVD), with stroke and heart attack being the most common examples, is the leading cause of death for men and the second leading cause of death for women. A quarter of CVD deaths are in people under the age of 75, with 80% of these preventable if lifestyle and behavioural changes were made to improve their heart health.



According to Cancer Research UK men are more likely to get cancer than women, and also more likely to die from the disease.

**Testicular cancer** is the most common cancer of 25 to 45-year-old men (but it happens to younger and older men too). Typical symptoms are a painless swelling or lump in one of the testicles, or any change in shape or texture of the testicles. It's important to be aware of what feels normal for you. Get to know your body and see a GP if you notice any changes.

**Prostate cancer** is the most common cancer in men in the UK. It usually develops slowly, so there may be no signs for many years. Symptoms of prostate cancer do not usually appear until the prostate is large enough to affect the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the penis (urethra). When this happens, you may notice things like:

- an increased need to urinate
- straining while you urinate
- a feeling that your bladder has not fully emptied

These symptoms should not be ignored, but they do not mean you have prostate cancer. It's more likely they're caused by something else, such as prostate enlargement. See a GP if you experience these symptoms.

**Diabetes** is a lifelong condition that causes a person's blood sugar level to become too high. There are 2 main types of diabetes:

**Type 1 diabetes** – where the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells that produce insulin.

**Type 2 diabetes** – where the body does not produce enough insulin, or the body's cells do not react to insulin.

Type 2 diabetes is far more common than type 1. In the UK, around 90% of all adults with diabetes have type 2. Men are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than women.

## Tips for staying healthy:

- Drink less than 14 units of alcohol a week (equivalent of 6 pints of average strength beer).
- If you smoke, STOP! On average a cigarette smoker will die 10 years younger than a non-smoker. For help stopping smoking click [here](#).
- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and veg a day.
- Walk 10,000 steps a day.
- If it comes in brown choose this over white (rice, pasta, bread).
- Drink at least 2 litres of water a day.
- Aim to do at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week.
- Regularly have your cholesterol and blood pressure checked.
- Aim to get 7-9 hours of sleep each night (or day if you are working nights).

## Mental Health

One in four people will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year.

For many of us talking about mental health is difficult and often men find this even more difficult. It's hard to put how you're feeling into words. Remember you can be strong without being silent.

As a police officer your role is to serve and protect, this means that you are less likely to ask for help, as you may think it's seen as a sign of weakness. We all need to stop thinking that talking about emotional or mental health is a sign of weakness. Police officers are dying because they aren't asking for or getting help.

Research has shown that emergency services workers are twice as likely as the public to identify problems at work as the main cause of their mental health problems, but they are also significantly less likely to seek help.

If you're struggling with your mental health, help is available:

[Samaritans](#)

[Mind](#)

[Shout](#)



## Stress and anxiety are normal. It's what we do about it that matters. There are various steps you can take to cope with being under pressure, remember, different things work for different people.

### Identify your triggers and take control

– working out what triggers your stress can help you anticipate when you may feel stressed and what you could do about it in advance.

**Organise your time** – making some adjustments to the way you organise your time can help you feel more in control and able to handle the pressure you are feeling.

**Be active** – exercise can help clear your head and then let you deal with your problems more calmly. Go outside to exercise, as fresh air and spending time in nature can really help.



**Talk to other people** – friends, family and colleagues can help support you through the stress you are feeling, you may even have a laugh and start to relax. You may also want to consider talking to a professional counsellor.

**Do something you enjoy** – spending time doing something you enjoy will take your mind off how you are feeling. Everyone needs to take time for themselves, it can be as simple as having a bath or reading a book.

**Avoid unhealthy ways to cope** – many people use alcohol, smoking, chocolate and gambling to try and relieve the stress they are feeling, none of these things will help in the long term, use healthy coping strategies like going for a run, listening to music or walking the dog.



**Challenge yourself** – learning new skills and setting yourself new goals will help build your confidence and make you feel good about yourself.

**Help others** – people who volunteer in the community or for a worthwhile cause tend to be more resilient.

**Try to be positive** – think of all the things you are grateful for, write down or say out loud 3 things that went well each day.

**Address some of the causes** – where possible improve some of the issues that are putting pressure on you.

**Accept the things you can't change** – it's not easy, but accepting that there are some things happening to you that you can't do anything about will help you focus your time and energy elsewhere.

For more details on looking after your mental health, read our guide [here](#).  
To read our stress awareness guide click [here](#).

# Financial wellbeing

**Worrying about money can be extremely stressful and may lead to mental and physical health conditions.**

**According to the 2023 Police Federation of England and Wales Pay & Morale Survey:**

- More than half of police officers are not able to cover their monthly essentials and are worrying about money 'daily' or 'almost every day'.
- Nine in ten of respondents reported that their cost of living had increased in the last month.

Being in debt causes stress and worry which can lead to mental health problems. Research by [moneyandmentalhealth.org](http://moneyandmentalhealth.org) found that nearly half of those in England in problem debt also suffer from poor mental health.

Individuals with multiple debt problems are at a 'significantly high risk of suicide' than those with just one problem debt.





If you're struggling with debt or finding it hard to manage your finances then we're here to help.

Read our debt awareness guide [here](#).

If you are struggling with gambling, call the National **Gambling Helpline (24 hours) 0808 80 20 133** or read our guide [here](#).

Worrying about money can be extremely stressful and may lead to mental health conditions. Police Mutual are here to help. We want to break down the stigma surrounding debt and get people talking about money.

We've teamed up with **PayPlan\***, one of the UK's leading free debt advice providers, who offer free and confidential advice to anyone in serious financial difficulties.

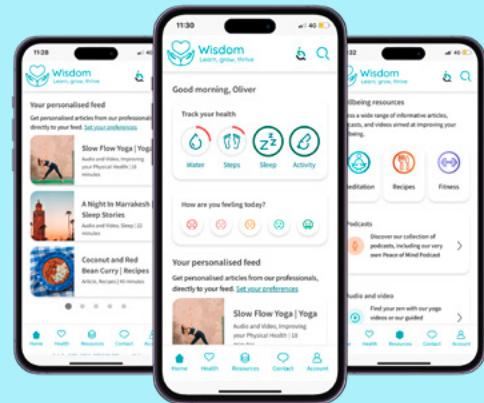
They're able to advise you on a range of debt solutions suited to your individual circumstances, helping to protect you and your family with a sustainable way to manage your debt.

Get free and confidential help to combat your debt, call **PayPlan\*** on **0800 197 8433**.

## Police Mutual Services

Our Care Line Service provided by Health Assured can offer advice and information, helping with a range of concerns including emotional support.

## Wisdom App



Download the **Wisdom App** provided by Health Assured and register today - your code is **MHA107477**



To read more of our wellbeing guides take a look at our **Wellbeing Hub** [here](#).

Call us **0151 242 7640** Visit **policemutual.co.uk**  
We're open from **9am - 5pm Mon - Fri**

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