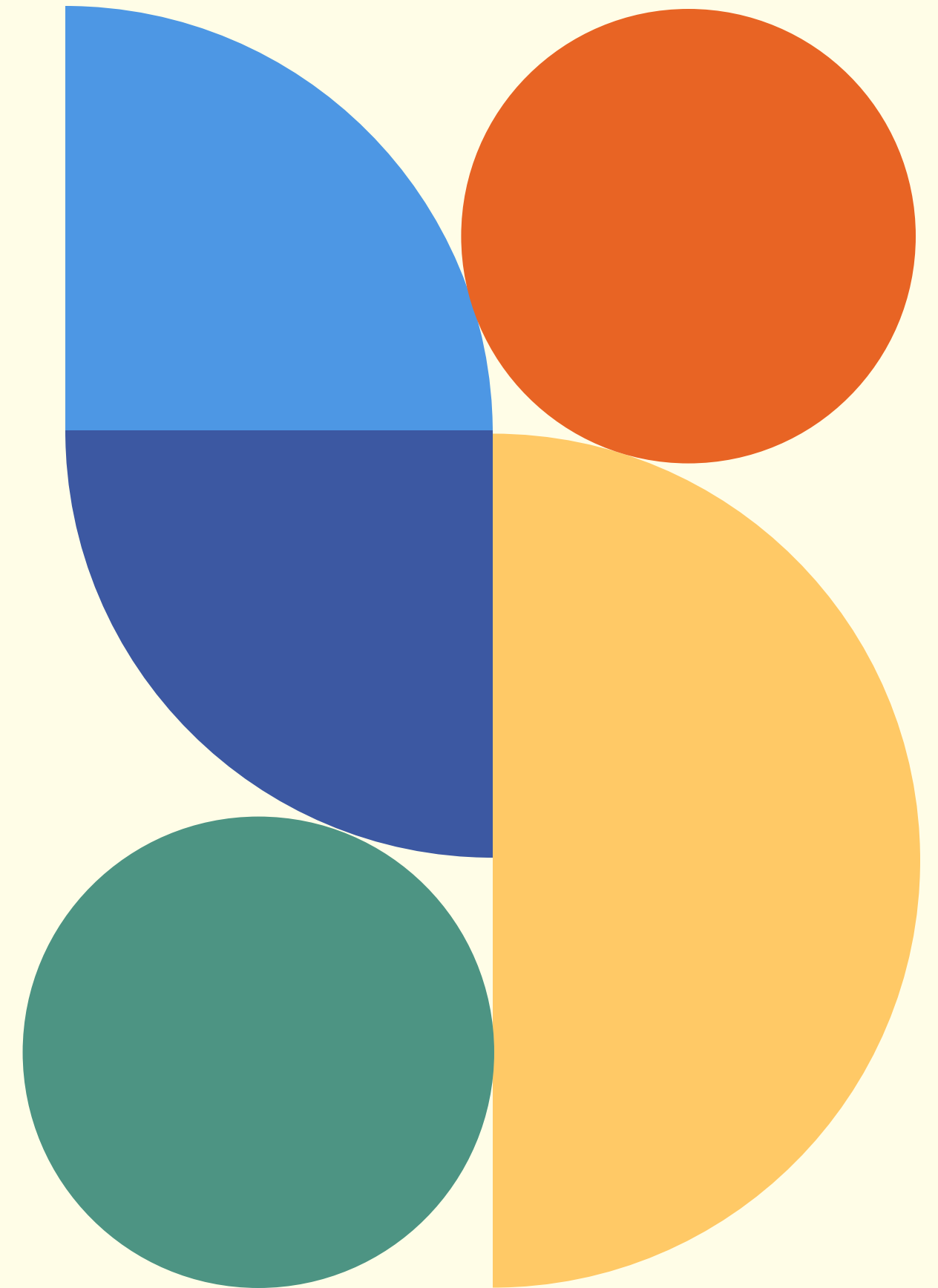


Mental Health & Wellbeing

Tips and tricks to live a happy, healthy life.



Content

We have three qualified Mental Health: Workplace First Aiders in the business.

Champions of good mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, Jayney Bell, Megan Parker, and Richard Pope will:

- Help raise awareness of the importance of good mental health in the workplace.
- Be a point of contact and advise on the available help and support if needed.
- Help with the response to a mental health issue.

Jayney, Megan and Rich are not trained to be therapists or psychiatrists, but they can offer initial support through non-judgemental listening and guidance. So, if you want or need to talk to someone about a mental health issue, you can now turn to a qualified Mental Health First Aider in the business, as well as a manager or the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

If you'd like to learn more or want to have a confidential conversation about a mental health issue, please get in touch with one of our Mental Health First Aiders directly.

01

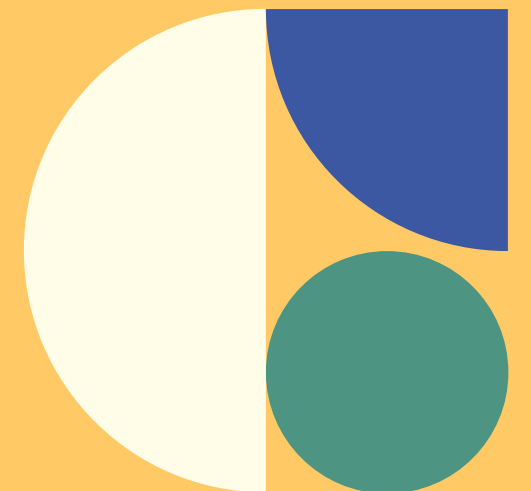
Mental Health
and Wellbeing
tips and tricks.

02

Physical Health:
Know your body.

03

Support and
Resources.



Section 1

Mental Health and Wellbeing tips and tricks.

We all need good mental health and wellbeing – it's essential to living happy and healthy lives and can help us sleep better, feel better, do the things we want to do and have more positive relationships. It can also help us deal with difficult times in the future.

This section will give tips and tricks to help you live a happier, healthier life.



Exercise



Food



Sleep



Mindfulness



Breathing



Nature



Money



Exercise

Step right up! It's the miracle cure we've all been looking for.

It can reduce your risk of significant illness. It's free, easy to take, has an immediate effect, and you don't need a doctor to prescribe it. What is it? Exercise.

To stay healthy, experts recommend that adults try to be active every day and aim to do at least two and a half hours of physical activity each week through various activities.

Walking more is an excellent place to start. Cycling, dancing, the gym, running, or team sports are some ways we can hit that two and half hour target each week.

Still, trying to figure out where to start? Why not try one of the 'Move' videos available via the [RewardHub?](#) The 'Move' videos are great, but don't forget to get outside too!

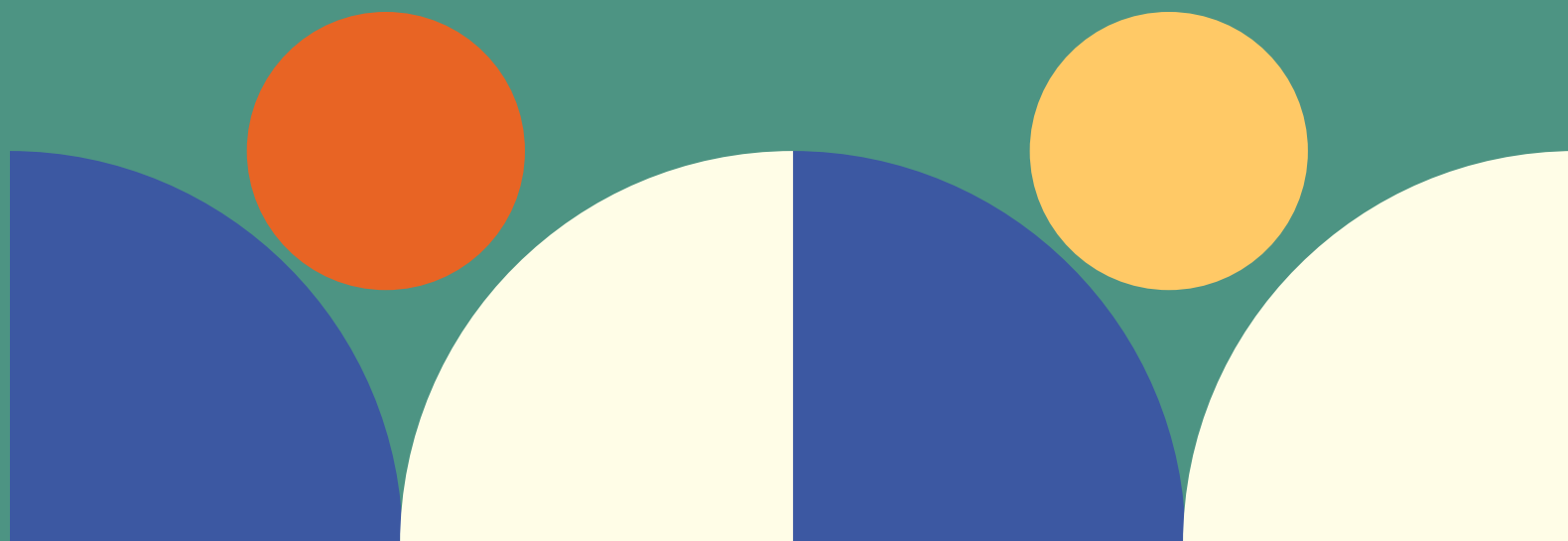
Food

Research shows a link between what we eat and how we feel; the healthier we eat, the better we will often feel.

The [Mental Health Foundation](#) have put these helpful tips about diet together.

- Eat regularly. This can stop your blood sugar level from dropping, which can make you feel tired and bad-tempered.
- Stay hydrated. Even mild dehydration can affect your mood, energy level and ability to concentrate.

- Eat the right balance of fats. Your brain needs healthy fats to keep working well. They're found in things such as olive oil, rapeseed oil, nuts, seeds, oily fish, avocados, milk, and eggs. Avoid trans fats – often found in processed or packaged foods – as they can be bad for your mood and your heart health.
- Include more whole grains, fruits, and vegetables in your diet. They contain the vitamins and minerals your brain and body need to stay well.
- Include some protein with every meal. It contains an amino acid that your brain uses to help regulate your mood.
- Look after your gut health. Your gut can reflect how you're feeling: it can speed up or slow down if you're stressed. Healthy food for your gut includes fruit, vegetables, beans, and probiotics.
- Be aware of how caffeine can affect your mood. It can cause sleep problems, especially if you drink it close to bedtime, and some people find it makes them irritable and anxious too. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, cola, energy drinks and chocolate.



Food

Want to know more?

The [Eatwell guide](#) on the NHS website has detailed information on achieving a healthy, balanced diet.

Mind has more [tips on eating well](#). It also advises managing your mood with food, including foods to avoid if you're taking certain medications.

The [RewardHub](#) also has many great recipes in the 'Munch' section of the portal.

If you feel you're using food as a negative coping mechanism to deal with emotional pain or as a way to feel in control, you may have an eating disorder. Read the [Mental Health Foundation page on eating disorders](#) to find out more, including where to go for help.



Sleep

Sleep is often the first thing that suffers when we struggle with our mental health. There is a close relationship between sleep and mental health. Living with a mental health problem can affect how well you sleep, and poor sleep can harm your mental health.

The charity [Mind](#) gives these suggestions for improving your sleep:

01

Try to establish a routine. It might be helpful to go to bed at the same time every night and get up around the same time. Or you might find it helpful to only go to bed when you feel sleepy, but still wake up around the same time.

02

Do something calming before you go to bed. This could include:

- Breathing exercises.
- Muscle Relaxation.
- Visualisation.
- Meditation.

03

Make your sleep area more comfortable.

- Try different temperature, light and noise levels to see what works for you.
- If silence makes it harder to sleep, listen to music, nature sounds, a podcast or the radio.

Blue Light

Think about screens and device settings.

Screens emit blue light suppressing the body's release of melatonin, a hormone that makes us drowsy.

Exposure to blue light in the evenings can trick our brains into thinking it is daytime, disrupting our natural sleep cycles. To combat this, you could try:

- Avoiding screens an hour or two before bed.
- You can use a blue light filter, night mode or dark mode on your devices a few hours before bed.
- Adjusting other settings like the brightness and using silent, flight or do not disturb mode so your devices don't disturb you while you are trying to go to sleep.



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a technique you can learn which involves noticing what's happening in the present moment without judgement. The technique has roots in Buddhism and meditation, but you don't have to be spiritual, or have any particular beliefs, to try it.

Mindfulness works by focusing on the present moment and away from other thoughts. The benefits of doing this can include:

- Becoming more self-aware.
- Feeling calmer.
- Feeling more able to choose how you respond to your thoughts and feeling.
- Being kinder to yourself.



Mindfulness

The NHS recommends these ways to be more mindful:

- **Notice the 'every day'** – the sensation of things, the food we eat, the air moving past our body as we walk.
- **Keep it regular** – pick a time in the day when you set aside a few minutes to be mindful.
- **Try something new** – this could include sitting in a different seat during meetings or walking a different route to see the world in a new way.
- **Watch your thoughts** – rather than trying to clear your mind of any thoughts, practice learning to watch them come and go like clouds drifting across the sky.
- **Name thoughts and feelings** – it can be helpful to silently give names to feelings, for example, “this is anxiety”.
- **Free yourself from the past and future** – spending just a few minutes being mindful and focusing on the here and now can give you a break from reliving any past problems or worrying about what may be in the future.

There are multiple resources online to aid with mindfulness and apps you can download that will talk you through guided meditations, such as Headspace and Calm. You can also find information in the [Reward Hub – Mind section](#).



Breathing

Feeling overwhelmed, anxious or stressed? Stop for a moment... and take a slow, deep breath.

When you breathe deeply, you send your brain a message to pause and relax. When the brain receives this signal, it tells the rest of your body to calm down.

It's easy to forget about breathing, as we do it all the time, but taking a moment to think about how you breathe and employing some deep breathing methods could improve focus and engagement and reduce negative thoughts and feelings.

The [Monday Campaigns](#) website has some breathing visualisations that can aid in calming breathing.



Nature

A growing body of research points to the beneficial effects that exposure to the natural world has on health, reducing stress and promoting healing.

But how long does it take to get a dose of nature high enough to make people say they feel healthy and have a strong sense of well-being?

According to a recent study, the answer is precisely 120 minutes.

“In a study of 20,000 people, a team led by Mathew White of the European Centre for Environment & Human Health at the University of Exeter found that people who spent two hours a week in green spaces – local parks or other natural environments, either all at once or spaced over several visits – were substantially more likely to report good health and psychological well-being than those who don’t.”

Two hours was a hard boundary. The study showed no benefits for people who didn’t meet that threshold.

This study, which you can read in full [here](#), is only the latest in a rapidly expanding area of research that finds nature has powerful effects on people’s health – physically, mentally, and emotionally.



Nature

Stepping into nature with Mind. [This page](#) has some tips and suggestions for enjoying nature. Ideas include:

- Take a walk in a green space. For example, a local park.
- Get creative. Draw or paint animals or nature scenes or let them inspire a poem or song lyrics. If you enjoy writing in a journal, try doing this outside.
- Eat meals outdoors. Have a picnic in a local park or sit in a garden if you have one. This might be something you could enjoy doing with other people.
- Watch the stars. Use a stargazing website, app or book to help you recognise different stars or enjoy looking at the night sky. Give your eyes time to adjust, as it can take about 20 minutes to see stars in the dark fully.
- Exercise outside. Run or jog through a local park or do yoga outdoors. You could try it yourself or look for classes in your local area.
- Join a local walking or rambling group. There are lots of different organised walking groups. For example, Walking For Health, Ramblers, and Black Girls Hike.
- Follow a woodland trail. See the Forestry Commission England and Natural Resources Wales (Cyfoeth Naturiol) websites to look for woodland near you.
- Go beachcombing. Visit the seaside and search the shoreline for exciting things.
- Try geocaching. Geocaching involves looking for items in hidden outdoor locations using a mobile phone or tablet. For more information on geocaching, see the National Trust website.

Money

Looking for expert guides, tips, and tools to help you manage your money better and improve your financial wellbeing?

If the answer to that question was yes, the [Money](#) section of the RewardHub could be great place to start. The RewardHub is also home to discounts and savings on everyday purchases and big-ticket items.

From budgeting & spending to saving, investing & retirement, the RewardHub has got it covered. You will also find useful Money Tools on the RewardHub, including a [Budget Planner](#) the [Pension Calculator](#) and more.

EAP

Looking for more? The team on the other end of the EAP phone offer advice on a wealth of different money related subjects.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP):

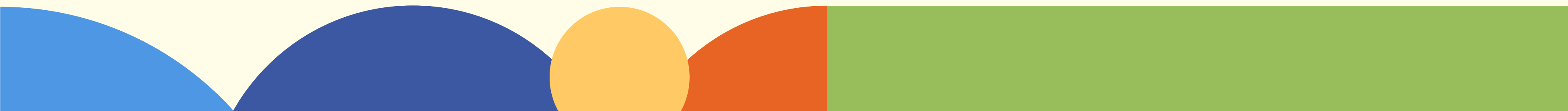
Telephone: 0800 028 0199
Username: Electrics
Password: EAP

Section 2

Physical Health: Know Your Body

Regular exercise and eating a healthy, balanced, diet will contribute to our overall health. But it can't fix everything.

Natural biological changes in our bodies, and unexpected changes in our health, can happen at any point in our lives. Knowing our bodies well is a good way to spot these changes early. In this section, we share some of the most common, but sadly often taboo, subjects that we feel we should be more comfortable discussing.



Prostate Cancer

1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer. Men over 50, if their black, or their dad or brother has had it are at an ever greater risk. As with all cancers, the earlier you catch it, the more likely it is to be cured. Understand the signs and symptoms and check if you're at risk [here](#).

Testicular Cancer

Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in young men in the UK.

Typical symptoms are a painless swelling or lump in one of the testicles or any change in the shape or texture of the testicles. So, it is important to be aware of what feels normal for you. Get to know your body and see a GP if you notice any changes.

Breast Cancer

Cancer Research UK exists to beat all forms of cancer through fundraising for research and developing policy.

Around 55,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year in the UK.



Breast Cancer

Signs and symptoms of breast cancer include:

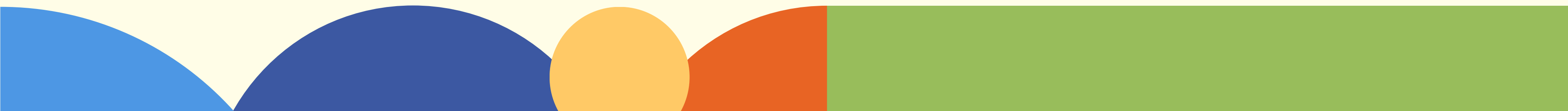
- A lump or swelling in the breast, upper chest or armpit.
- A change to the skin, such as puckering or dimpling.
- A change in the colour of the breast – the breast may look red or inflamed.
- A nipple change, for example, it has become pulled in (inverted).
- Rash or crusting around the nipple.
- Unusual liquid (discharge) from either nipple.
- Changes in size or shape of the breast.

On its own, pain in your breasts is not usually a sign of breast cancer. But look out for pain in your breast or armpit that's there all or almost all the time.

Although rare, men can get breast cancer. The most common symptom of breast cancer in men is a lump in the chest area.

Cancer Research UK have pulled together this really useful information on [breast cancer](#).

[CoppaFeel!](#) also offers excellent advice on how to check yourself, and you can sign up for free text reminders to check your boobs each month.



Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer is cancer that is found anywhere in the cervix, which is the area between the womb and the vagina.

Symptoms of cervical cancer can include:

- Vaginal bleeding that's unusual for you. This could be during or after sex, between your periods or after menopause.
- Changes in vaginal discharge.
- Pain during sex.
- Pain in your lower back, between your hip bones or in your lower tummy.

If you notice and are concerned about any of these symptoms, make an appointment to discuss them with your GP. You can also find more information about cervical cancer on the [Cancer Research website](#).

The NHS cervical screening programme invites women between 25 and 64 for cervical screening. Cervical screening is also for anyone within this age range which has a cervix, such as trans men and non-binary people. The screening test aims to pick up changes early that could develop into cervical cancer if left untreated. More information about cervical screening can be found on the [NHS website](#).



Menopause

Let's break the stigma around menopause.

What is it?

The menopause is when a woman stops having periods. It's a natural part of ageing that usually happens between 45 and 55 years old.

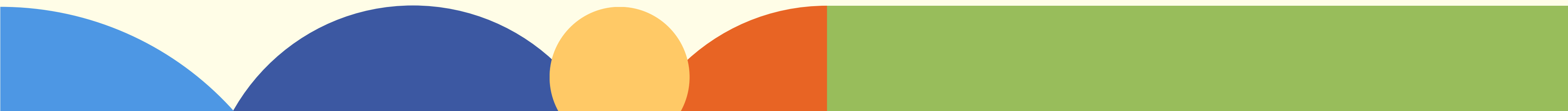
Symptoms of the menopause include hot flushes, night sweats and vaginal dryness.

The main treatment for menopausal symptoms is hormone replacement therapy. Not all women need treatment.

Getting help. You can access support through your local GP practice if you need help managing your symptoms. This can help you decide what treatments are best for you.

Sometimes, just knowing what to expect and how to manage specific menopausal symptoms can really help. There are different ways to manage menopausal symptoms, some of which are outlined in the [NHS Inform blog](#).

How can you help a colleague, friend or loved one going through the menopause? Find out [here](#).



Section 3

Support & Resources

When we are struggling with our mental health, it can feel isolating. Although it can take a lot of courage to tell someone else how we are really feeling, talking things through with another person can help and often feel like a relief.

As well as friends and family, there are a wide selection of people you can talk to about your mental health. You'll find more information about who you can turn to in this section.

- [MH: Workplace First Aiders](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#)
- [More Support & Resources](#)

Support & Resources

Let's talk.

You can now turn to a qualified Mental Health First Aider in the business, as well as a manager or the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

Our **Mental Health: Workplace First Aiders** are Jayney Bell, Megan Parker and Rich Pope. If you'd like to learn more or want to have a confidential conversation about a mental health issue, please get in touch with Jayney, Megan or Rich directly.

You can contact our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) using the details below.

EAP

Telephone: 0800 028 0199
Username: Electrics
Password: EAP



Support & Resources

Where to Find Further Support

Industry Specific Support ([ABTT blog](#))

[Hub of Hope](#)

[NHS Every Mind Matters](#)

Mental Health Charities

[We Are Aware](#)

[Campaign Against Living Miserably](#)

[Movember](#)

[Mind](#)

[Samaritans](#)

[Heads Together](#)

[Rethink Mental Illness](#)

[Mental Health UK](#)

[SANE](#)

[Mental Health Foundation](#)

[Turning Point](#)

[Princes Trust](#)

[Andy's Man Club](#)

Apps

[Headspace](#)

[Calm](#)

[CBT Thought Diary](#)

[MindShift CBT](#)

[Moodfit](#)

Webinars

[Good, Bad and Ugly Stress](#)