Ageing Well Pack

Why have I received this pack?

This pack offers practical guidance on ageing well.

It covers physical activity, falls prevention, nutrition and hydration, social connection, mental wellbeing and future planning.

Who is this information for?

Older adults, carers, and anyone seeking accessible ways to support wellbeing and independence.



IMPACT
Improving Adult Care Together
UKRI Economic and Social Research Council
The Health Foundation
NHS
Eileanan Siar
Western Isles

Physical activity

Stay active, stay independent

Regular movement supports strength, balance, confidence, and independence.

- Walking, swimming, gentle yoga and stretching all help.
- Focus on enjoyment and consistency.
- Strength exercises help with balance, mobility and energy.

Make movement part of daily life

- Take short walks, stretch during TV breaks and use stairs when possible.
- Do quick strength exercises while the kettle boils.
- Fit short, regular movement breaks into your routine.

Activity groups and community support

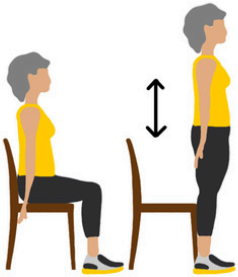
Walking groups, chair-based classes - gentle yoga, dance sessions, community physiotherapy, sports centres, and online classes all support activity and social connection.

Simple home exercises



Heel raises

Hold a steady surface, lift heels and lower slowly. (10 repetitions)



Sit-to-stand

From a chair, stand up slowly and sit back down. (5-10 repetitions)



Gentle stretching

Arms overhead, side reaches, shoulder rolls.



March on the spot

Hold a surface if needed; lift knees one at a time for 30-60 seconds.

Safety tips for exercising

- Wear comfortable shoes and use stable support.
- Start slowly and stop if you feel pain, dizziness or breathlessness.
- Stay hydrated and seek advice if you have long-term conditions.

Reducing your risk of falls

Many falls can be prevented by slight changes at home and in daily routines.

Common causes

- Reduced strength or balance.
- Medication side effects, vision or hearing changes.
- Foot pain or unsuitable footwear, or home hazards.
- Tiredness, rushing, and long-term conditions.

If you have fallen

- Tell a health professional even if uninjured.
- Expect checks of balance, strength, medications and home safety.

Building confidence

- Regular movement and small changes help reduce risk and build independence.

Practical prevention measures

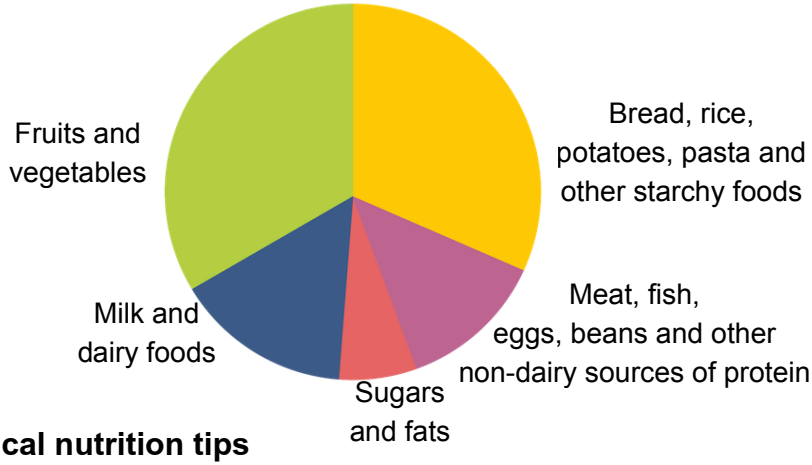
- Keep moving: walking, Tai Chi, gentle yoga, strength or chair-based exercises.
- Make your home safer: remove clutter, improve lighting, add non-slip mats and grab rails.
- Wear well-fitting, non-slip footwear.
- Have regular vision and hearing checks.
- Review medications with your GP or pharmacist.
- Stay hydrated and eat balanced meals.

Good nutrition

Balanced eating supports strength, mobility, immunity and wellbeing

Balanced diet essentials

- Fruit and veg: aim for five portions daily.
- Whole grains: choose higher fibre varieties.
- Protein: include fish, eggs, meat, beans, lentils, and dairy.
- Dairy: choose calcium-rich or fortified options.
- Healthy fats: use unsaturated fats (e.g olive oil).
- Fluids: drink regularly throughout the day.



Practical nutrition tips

- Keep regular mealtimes and include a mix of foods.
- Add protein, fruit or vegetables to meals: use milk powder to boost dishes.
- Choose small, frequent meals or softer foods if your appetite or digestion changes.
- Make meals social to improve enjoyment and intake.

When to seek help

- Unintentional weight loss, low appetite, weakness or reduced mobility.
- Difficulty shopping, cooking, or preparing meals.

Good hydration

Hydration supports organs, digestion, energy and illness prevention

Signs of dehydration

- Dry mouth
- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Dizziness
- Dark urine, constipation
- Confusion
- Muscle cramps

How much to drink

- Aim for 6-8 glasses of fluid daily, drink more in hot water or when active.
- All fluids count: water, tea/coffee, milk, diluted juice, soup, herbal tea and soft drinks (in moderation).

Easy hydration strategies

- Keep drinks close by, use favourite cups, add fruit for flavour.
- Sip little and often.
- Include hydrating foods like fruit, veg, yoghurt, soups and stews.
- Link drinking routines with medication times, toilet visits, meals and TV breaks.

Health conditions and hydration

- If you have fluid restrictions, seek personalised advice from a GP or nurse. If you are worried about continence issues, please speak to your GP or nurse.

Tips for carers

- Offer drinks regularly, watch for any changes, use straws or lidded cups, keep drinks within reach.

Social connection

Relationships support health, happiness and independence

Common causes of isolation

- Living alone, bereavement, reduced mobility or energy, health conditions, caring responsibilities and reduced transport.

Ways to connect

- Join local groups: cafes, walking groups, exercise groups, book clubs, and crafts.
- Stay in touch by phone, video calls or short visits.
- Try activities like gardening, gentle movement, music or arts.
- Use online options, considering volunteering.

Building confidence

- Start with small steps and familiar places.
- Ask someone to go with you initially.

Staying connected boosts confidence, motivation and independence



Keeping your mind active

Mental stimulation supports memory, mood, confidence and independence

Changes with age

- Memory, focus, motivation, and sleep patterns may shift.
- Stimulation and routine support brain health.

Simple activities

- Learning something new: hobbies, crafts, languages, music and dance.
- Challenge your brain: puzzles, word games, reading, audiobooks, board or card games.
- Stay socially connected.
- Keep moving: physical activity aids brain health.
- Create routines with small goals, regular meals and enjoyable activities.

Emotional wellbeing

- Use relaxation or breathing techniques, spend time outdoors, enjoy music, and seek support if overwhelmed.

When to seek support

- Sudden memory changes, confusion, word-finding difficulty, increased anxiety, low mood, or difficulty managing daily tasks.





Planning ahead

Thinking about what matters to you now means you will be better prepared if things change.

What matters to you?

- Staying in your own home.
- Keeping in touch with family and friends is important.
- Carrying on with hobbies and routines.

Talking about what matters helps others support you in the right way.

Keep key information in one place

- A list of your medicines.
- Important contact numbers.
- Medical information.
- Details of services you use.

Tell someone you trust where this information is stored.

Share your care preferences

- Who you want to help make decisions.
- What helps you day-to-day.
- Where you would prefer to be cared for.

Talking about this early helps make sure your wishes are known.

Know where to get support

Find out what help is available locally, such as community groups, health services and advice organisations.

Be prepared

Making your home work for you

Small changes at home can help you stay safe, confident and independent.

Safety tips

- Keep walkways clear of clutter and loose rugs.
- Improve lighting, especially on stairs and in hallways.
- Use non-slip mats and grab rails, keep toiletries within easy reach.
- Make sure stairs have strong handrails and good lighting.
- Store everyday kitchen items at waist height.
- Keep paths and entrances clear, safe and well-lit.

An occupational therapist can give you personalised advice, even if you are managing well now.

Plan early, live confidently

Taking small steps now can help you stay independent, prepared and in control of your future.

Be prepared

- Ensure you have a Power of Attorney (POA) in place. This will help safeguard your financial and health wishes when you are alive but, for whatever reason, are no longer able to do so yourself. You may be eligible for Legal Aid, speak to your solicitor for further information.

Key takeaways

- Small, regular actions across movement, safety, nutrition, hydration, social connection and mental activity help support independence.
- Guidance from health professionals can tailor support to your needs.
- Community resources and simple routines make healthy habits easier to sustain.

Notes

You can use this space to keep any notes:

How was this pack created?

In 2025/26, IMPACT (Improving Adult Care Together) ran a project with the Western Isles Integration Joint Board and the NHS Western Isles on enabling people at risk of or living with frailty to Age Well in the Western Isles. The Western Isles Integration Joint Board is a Strategic Commissioning Board, who commission services with NHS Western Isles, Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar and third sector partners.

The shared aim of the Ageing Well project is to support older adults to remain at home, stay connected, and age well through local person-centred, community-driven support.

This guide was co-produced with the NHS Western Isles Frailty Group and our IMPACT project steering group.

Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice.Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor-patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you to interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

Find out more about IMPACT:

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