

# How to Stay Healthy in Later Life



EAT WELL AND STAY ACTIVE...

**The good news is that people alive today can expect to live longer than previous generations. With those extra years potentially on offer it makes sense to do whatever we can to make them enjoyable and fulfilling. Maintaining good health promises not only to reward us with more years of life but to make those years good ones.**

Whether you're hoping to encourage a loved one to maintain their wellbeing or yourself, the keys are to keep our minds and bodies active and to eat well. Good nutrition and a range of stimulating activities are features at all of our care homes because they are so beneficial.

The advice to eat well and stay active sounds simple enough but how should you go about it? What are the most important things to do or to avoid as you get older? This guide should help you find the answers you need to implement changes whether you're caring for a loved one or are receiving any level of care.



## Healthy Living

If you are a smoker the single most important thing you can do to protect yourself from heart disease, strokes and many other health issues is to stop. Today!

This might seem daunting after decades of being a smoker but there are plenty of programmes and aids available to help. Your local GP practice will have all you need.

Controlling your weight will also be a big help. Obesity is rapidly becoming the biggest cause of ill health including heart disease and diabetes. This doesn't mean you can't enjoy a cream cake or a portion of chips every now and then. It's a case of enjoying those treats within a healthy and balanced diet along with plenty of exercise.

**Limiting your alcohol intake also helps in a number of areas. It reduces your risk of heart disease and obesity and will probably help you sleep better, which is really important as you'll see later.**

## Getting Fitter - It's Never Too Late

Even if you're not the sort of person who's ever been in the habit of running or visiting the gym it's never too late to start getting fitter. You'll feel the benefit and improve your life expectancy - whatever age you start. Improving your core strength means you're less likely to suffer falls.

You don't need special equipment or to undergo any pain. A 2013 study by the British Heart Foundation showed that simply walking for four hours each week at whatever pace you can manage reduces the risk of strokes in men aged 60-80. Low impact physical activity helps to keep your muscles and your brain working.



There's a lot to be said for keeping as physically active as you can for as long as you can. Gentle forms of yoga and pilates will also help maintain mobility levels and joint movement. Your GP surgery will be able to put you in touch with age-group classes in your area and give you information on suitable exercises.

The British Heart Foundation recommends being realistic about your goals and 'starting small' if you have to. The main thing is that you get started and try to include exercise in your daily routine. They also have a 10 Minute Living Room Workout available online to get you started.

**Regular exercise classes are popular activities in our care homes and make a huge contribution to the health and wellbeing of our clients.**

## Diet and Nutrition

The facts are well established. Eat more fresh vegetables, fruit and fish, reduce red meat intake and control carbohydrates, fat and sugar and you'll increase your life expectancy and general health.

Poor diet, particularly in later life, means you absorb fewer of the vitamins and minerals your body needs to function properly. It can also lead to obesity, high blood pressure, poor circulation and heart disease.

On the positive side, you can eat healthily and still enjoy a tasty and varied choice of meals. Healthy certainly doesn't mean bland or boring.



### Good things to include in your diet:

- Fresh fruit (but not too many bananas because they're high in sugar)
- Oily fish such as salmon, mackerel and sardines
- Green veg such as broccoli, kale and spring greens.
- Any other fresh or frozen vegetables.
- Beans and pulses.
- Eggs and dairy products in moderation.



## Keep An Active Mind

Learning a new skill or even a new language helps to keep your brain active, which helps with general health and wellbeing. There's also evidence that doing puzzles and games regularly helps to maintain mental agility. It seems that - a bit like your body - your brain needs a regular work-out to stay in shape.

Maintaining healthy sleep patterns is also really important. For most of us, getting seven or eight hours of shut-eye helps us to feel alert. There's also evidence that it helps to avoid general ill health and mental decline. People with prolonged inadequate sleep are at higher risk of depression, dementia, heart disease, obesity and falls.

Other good ways to maintain good mental health are - you've guessed it - stopping smoking, eating healthily and limiting your alcohol intake.

At Altogether Care, we tailor care plans to incorporate as many of these elements as possible, to ensure clients and residents remain comfortable, receive the right nutrition and maintain their health.

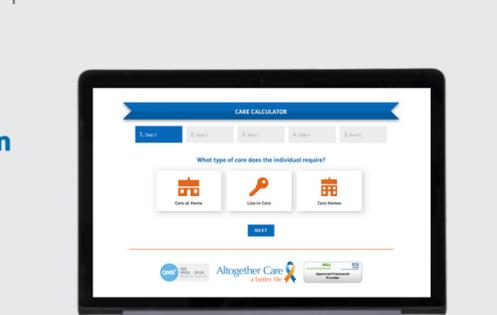
To find out more about our care services, find your nearest branch [here](#) or email us at [contact@altogethercare.co.uk](mailto:contact@altogethercare.co.uk).

## Try Our Step-By-Step Care Cost Calculator

Naturally, the first question most people have is how much will my care cost. The level of care each person needs is different. If, for example, high dependency care is needed, calculating an exact cost can become complicated.

**To make things easier, we've created a step-by-step care cost calculator. Just follow the steps in the guide and you will receive an accurate estimate of the cost of the care you need.**

This will help you make more informed decisions when it comes to arranging care - whether that is live-in care or an alternative.



Calculate care costs here:

[CALCULATE COSTS](#) ➔