

MEN'S HEALTH

Men are often not very good when it comes to looking after their own health. Research tells us that men are often reluctant to access healthcare professionals until they have poor health, by which time their condition may have deteriorated unnecessarily.

One in five men has not seen a doctor in the past three years, and 2% have never seen one, according to a survey by insurance firm insureblue. Two-thirds of men have a family history of cancer, stroke and heart disease, but more than half have not had basic healthcare checks in the last year, while only 65% would definitely consult a doctor if experiencing chest pain.

Key men's health statistics

- 40% of men still die prematurely (before the age of 75)
- Unskilled manual men have a life expectancy of 73 and, in some parts of England, male life expectancy is as low as 65.
- Male death rates are significantly affected by social deprivation and unemployment
- Coronary heart disease kills more men than women and on average men develop it 10-15 years earlier. South Asian men living in the UK have an even higher premature death rate from heart disease and stroke than men generally.
- Men are 60% more likely than women to develop a non sex-specific cancer, and are 70% more likely to die from the disease.
- Men are more likely to drink alcohol above recommended levels, smoke cigarettes and eat a poor diet.
- By 2015, 36% of men will be obese and, by 2025, only 13% will have a healthy body mass index.
- Three times as many men kill themselves. The suicide rate for men is much higher in deprived areas.
- Men visit their GP 20% less frequently than women and are also much less likely to have regular dental check-ups or to use community pharmacies as a source of advice and information about health.
- NHS smoking cessation programmes are less well used by men than women as are weight management services and health trainers.

Useful websites –

BUPA Health Information

Publishes fact sheets and general health information on common health concerns

http://hcd2.bupa.co.uk/fact_sheets/Mosby_factsheets/mens_health.html

Men's health from the BBC

Deals with the common health concerns of men

http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/mens_health/index.shtml

Men's Health Forum

Information about male health issues

<http://www.malehealth.co.uk/>

Prostate Research Campaign UK

Offers free brochures on all prostate diseases (cancer, benign prostatic hyperplasia, prostatitis), a DVD/Video on treatment options for early prostate cancer, a quarterly newsletter and other publications. Also funds research into all aspects of prostate disease and awards grants for the training of medical professionals.

<http://www.prostateuk.org/>

Patient UK

Patient UK has information leaflets on a wide range of health and illness topics and an extensive directory of patient support and self help groups. In addition, our extensive web directory lists many other sites which provide information and support on specific illnesses and health issues.

<http://www.patient.co.uk/>

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is the single excellence-in-practice organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health. Contains a section on Men's Health.

<http://www.nice.org.uk/>