

# *Getting the most out of life?*

Leaflet 512 - Large Print

**March '09**

- Having your say
- Housing & the Home
- Health & Healthy Living
- Community
- Understanding Information
- Finance
- Learning & Leisure
- Getting Out & About

To make sure you're getting the most out of life, contact 'MyDevon':

**0845 1551 007**

**[www.devon.gov.uk/over50s](http://www.devon.gov.uk/over50s)**

## **Contents:**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>At Home</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Healthy Living</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Learning and Leisure</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Your Community</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Understanding Information</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Getting Out and About</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Having Your Say</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Getting Help for Health Problems</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Falls</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Strokes</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Heart Disease and Heart Attacks</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>NHS Direct</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>GP's Pharmacies and Walk-in Centres</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Minor Injuries Units</b>	<b>18</b>

# ***Getting the most out of life?***

**This is for you if you are over 50 years of age or care for someone who is, or if you have a physical disability.**

**It is designed to help you to get the most out of life – to think about the things that matter to you. We call it a 360 degree well-being check because it looks all around your life.**

**You can use this leaflet by yourself and then make notes on things you want to know about. You can talk about it with a family member or friend, or even use it for discussion in a group or club.**

**When you have done this, just call 0845 1551 007 for any information you need.**

**We have trained advisers who can answer your questions in confidence. It is a local rate whenever you are in Devon. Just ring anytime from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and from 9am to 1pm on Saturdays.**

**If you prefer, you can visit our website for the same information:**

**[www.devon.gov.uk/over50s](http://www.devon.gov.uk/over50s)**

**0845 1551 007**

# **At Home**

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- Making sure your home is warm enough.
- Being able to see who is at your door before you open it and checking your caller's identity cards.
- Making changes in your home to help you to get around more easily.
- Having a home safety / security visit.
- Making sure that home appliances, such as a cooker or gas fire, are safe.
- Having a smoke alarm fitted on each floor of your house.
- Getting in and out of your house (a poorly lit entrance, awkward steps or slippery paths?)
- Protection from abuse.
- Needing care and controlling it.
- Making sure your house is well lit and in good repair.
- Keeping your home clean and tidy.
- Moving home.

# Healthy Living

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- Staying fit and healthy.
- Smoking and drinking.
- Information about support for a specific illness.
- Feeling low or depressed.
- Falling over.
- Feeling anxious and worrying about things.
- Memory difficulties.
- Unsettling events such as moving house, illness or the loss of a loved one or pet.
- Feeling isolated or lonely.
- Checking your medicines work together safely.

**Notes:**

# **Learning and Leisure** \_\_\_\_\_

- **Opportunities for physical exercise activities**
- **Social and leisure activities.**
- **Creative or cultural activities.**
- **Volunteering.**
- **One-to-one rather than group activities.**
- **Social or creative activities in the daytime as well as evening.**
- **Preparing for retirement.**
- **Learning to use a computer or email.**

**Notes:**

# **Your Community**

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- Information about local recycling facilities and waste collection arrangements.
- Being more involved in your local community.
- Improving your relationship with your neighbours, and / or resolving any issues that have arisen.
- Feeling safe in your local community.
- Feeling safe in your own home.
- Faith groups, community activities.
- Volunteering.

**Notes:**

# **Understanding Information** \_\_\_\_\_

- **Getting information – who to ask and where to get it.**
- **Having someone explain information that you have received.**
- **Specialist advice about legal, financial, or home safety issues.**
- **Having someone explain things to other people on your behalf.**
- **Having someone make your case for you, (advocacy).**
- **Getting information from the internet.**
- **Getting information in another language or a different format, such as large print or on audio tape.**

**Notes:**

# **Finance**

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- **Getting a pension forecast.**
- **Making ends meet at your current level of income.**
- **Affording to heat your home and pay rent or other bills.**
- **Getting help with debt problems.**
- **Finding a job or training course.**
- **Managing your money.**
- **Using a bank account.**
- **Finding out about 'Devon Pound' – a credit union which could help you save or borrow money.**
- **Family or friends helping to manage your money.**
- **Making sure you get all the benefits that you are entitled to.**

**Notes:**

# **Getting Out and About** \_\_\_\_\_

- **Getting about when you are inside or outdoors, with or without a stick or frame.**
- **Managing steps, stairs or slopes safely.**
- **Getting in and out of a car.**
- **Public transport services or community transport schemes in your area.**
- **Finding or using public toilets when you are out and about.**
- **Accessible public toilets for wheelchair users.**
- **Getting a Senior Railcard or free bus pass if you are over 60.**
- **Getting a wheelchair, mobility scooter, or other mobility aid.**
- **Driving safer for longer.**

**Notes:**

# Having Your Say

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- Having a say in planning local services and identifying priorities that matter to older people.
- Influencing the shape and future of your community.
- Using your skills and experience to help local agencies improve decision making.
- Taking part in practical action to improve the quality of life of older people.
- Having equal access to goods and services.
- Not being discriminated against.
- Complaints or compliments about public services you use.
- Joining the Senior Council in your area.

**Notes:**

# **Getting Help for Health Problems \_\_\_\_\_**

**The following pages contain important information on tackling the major health concerns affecting the lives of older people.**

**How to recognise the symptoms of a stroke or heart attack, and what to do in such cases, are vital pieces of information that everyone should know.**

**Equally, falls for older people can cause long-lasting injuries and health problems that can be easily prevented with a little care and attention to the advice on the following pages.**

**As we get older, we may need to call upon Health services more often.**

**Making the best use of the range of services available is vital to answer your health needs quickly, and keep emergency services available for those that urgently need them.**

**Our guide to NHS services will help you get the best and most appropriate treatment.**

# Falls

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**Falls should not be ignored – they can lead to... injury, reduced quality of life, reduced mobility and loss of independence.**

**You are more at risk of a fall if you have:**

- fallen before
- taken 4 or more medicines
- had a Stroke or have Parkinson's Disease
- a problem with your balance
- difficulty getting up from a dining chair without using your arms.

**Every 5 hours an older person dies as a result of a fall in the UK. Every day 22 people in Devon call an ambulance due to a fall.**

**Help and advice on prevention is available from:**

- your GP, Health Visitor, District Nurse or Therapist
- Care Direct Tel. 0845 1551 007
- NHS Direct Tel. 0845 46 47
- Adult & Community Services website:  
[www.devon.gov.uk/falls](http://www.devon.gov.uk/falls)

# Strokes

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**If you suspect someone may be having a stroke, act FAST.**

- F** – Facial weakness
- A** – Arm weakness
- S** – Speech problems
- T** – Time to call **999**

**FAST** requires an assessment of three specific symptoms of stroke:

- Facial weakness - can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?
- Arm weakness - can the person raise both arms?
- Speech problems - can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?
- Time to call 999

For more information go to: [www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

Prompt action can prevent further damage to the brain and help someone make a full recovery. Delay can result in death or major long-term disabilities, such as paralysis, severe memory loss and communication problems (aphasia).

# **Heart Disease and Heart Attacks \_\_\_\_\_**

## **Can a heart attack be prevented?**

**Coronary heart disease and heart attacks can often be prevented. Even if you have had a heart attack there are several things you can do to reduce the risk of heart problems in the future.**

**These include:**

- **stopping smoking**
- **controlling high blood pressure**
- **reducing blood cholesterol levels**
- **keeping physically active**
- **achieving and maintaining a healthy weight**
- **if you have diabetes, controlling your blood glucose as much as possible.**

**The Heart Helpline is open Monday to Friday 9 am - 6pm on 0300 330 3311 (local rate).**

**For more information visit the website:  
[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)**

**The following pages explain when and how to contact your local NHS service...**

# **NHS Direct**

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NHS Direct can give initial advice on many health problems if you are unsure what to do.

NHS Direct is a 24-hour telephone and online service providing advice and information. Call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 or visit: [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

## **When to call 999 or go to Accident & Emergency**

An emergency is a critical or life threatening situation. If you or someone with you has:

- lost consciousness
- severe chest pain
- lost blood
- possibly had a stroke – this may have happened if their face has dropped on one side, if they cannot talk or lift an arm.

You should call 999 for an emergency ambulance or go to your nearest Accident & Emergency Department (A&E).

Remember to keep calm, do everything you can to help the person but don't put yourself in danger and don't give the person anything to eat, drink or smoke. **16**

## **A&E departments are located at:**

**Torbay: Torbay General District Hospital  
Tel. 01803 614 567**

**Plymouth: Derriford Hospital  
Tel. 01752 777 111**

**Exeter: Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital  
Tel. 01392 411 611**

**Barnstaple: North Devon District Hospital  
Tel. 01271 322 577**

## **GPs, Pharmacists and Walk-in Centres**

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**When to call or visit your GP (Doctor) for  
prescriptions, medical advice and care.**

**If you become ill outside of normal surgery hours, or at weekends, call your local GP surgery, an answerphone message will refer you to the out-of-hours doctor service. The out-of-hours doctor service should only be contacted for medical problems that cannot wait until the surgery is next open.**

## **What a Pharmacist/Chemist can do for you**

**Pharmacists are available on the high street and can**

provide advice and information on prescriptions and medicines. Over the counter products can be purchased for most minor illnesses and injuries. For location and opening hours of your local pharmacies contact NHS Direct Tel. 0845 46 47.

## **Walk-in Centre information**

NHS Walk-in centres offer fast and convenient access to healthcare advice and treatment for minor injuries and illnesses. They have been introduced to help anyone whose modern, busy lifestyle, or practical circumstances and particular needs, make flexible and accessible services so important. They don't replace local GP or hospital services but complement existing local services. No appointment is needed and assessments are carried out by experienced NHS nurses who provide a skilled, safe and caring service. NHS Walk-in centres are open and available to anyone who can normally access NHS services. They are located at:

- Walk-in Centre, Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital (RD&E), Exeter
- Walk-in Centre, Sidwell Street, Exeter.

## **Minor Injury Units (MIU)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Minor Injury Units (MIU) provide a non-urgent service for a range of conditions**

**This includes cuts, bruises, broken bones, sprains, and minor head injuries (excluding concussion). MIUs are developing an increasing range of services often led by nurses. Treatments are also available for minor illnesses including throat and ear infections and some skin complaints.**

**The service is linked to the GP out-of-hours service. Their website is [www.devondoctors.co.uk](http://www.devondoctors.co.uk)**

### **Your local MIU within your community hospital:**

- **Ashburton Hospital (10am - 6pm)**
- **Bovey Tracey Hospital (10am - 6pm)**
- **Dartmouth Hospital (8am - 10pm)**
- **Dawlish Hospital (10am - 6pm)**
- **Exmouth Hospital (24 hours)**
- **Honiton Hospital (24 hours)**
- **Kingsbridge Hospital (9am - 5pm)**
- **Moretonhampstead Hospital (10am - 6pm)**
- **Newton Abbot Hospital (8am - 10pm)**
- **Okehampton Hospital (8am - 10pm)**
- **Ottery St Mary Hospital (8am - 4pm)**
- **Sidmouth Hospital (10am - 6pm)**
- **Tavistock Hospital (8am - 10pm)**
- **Teignmouth Hospital (8am - 10pm)**
- **Tiverton Hospital (24 hours)**
- **Totnes Hospital (24 hours).**

**If you are not sure whether your injury is minor and can be treated in a minor injuries unit, contact your local unit, or NHS Direct on: 0845 46 47.**

# *Getting the most out of life?*

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**This leaflet is designed to help you to get the most out of life – to think about the things that matter to you. We call it a 360 degree well-being check because it looks all around your life.**

**For further copies of this leaflet please contact:**

**Devon County Council, Adult & Community Services,  
County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QR.**

**Tel. 0845 155 1015 (local rate)**

**email: [customer@devon.gov.uk](mailto:customer@devon.gov.uk)**

**SMS: 0777 3333 231**

**This leaflet is available in a range of formats such as large print, or on tape, and in languages other than English.**

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