

Staying Well at Home





Message from Linda Robinson CEO Age, NI

Welcome to our first edition of our 'Stay Well at Home' newsletter aimed at providing hints and tips to help you develop your own 'Take 5' plan to stay well, active and connected during these challenging times.

I would also like to remind you that Age NI is here to help you and your family with any issues or concerns. In response to COVID-19, we have set up a new "Check in and chat" service for older people who are feeling isolated or anxious while shielding or in self-isolation. Our expert team is here to provide guidance and our volunteers are ready to make regular friendly, reassuring calls to you or your loved ones.



Message from Lady Mary Peters LG, CH, DBE, DStJ

Now more than ever, we need to be kind to ourselves and each other. As an Age NI Ambassador, I would like to emphasise the importance of us all staying physically and mentally active and connected.

That's why I would like to encourage you to remain busy, exercise as much as possible and to stay positive. I am spending my time knitting, quilting, cleaning and staying in touch with friends. Stay well and safe!



Wash your hands more often for 20 seconds. Use soap and water or hand sanitiser when you;

- Blow your nose, sneeze or cough
- Are about to eat or handle food
- Have been outside and come back into the house



Most of us know when we are mentally and physically well, but sometimes we need a little extra support to keep well. There are five simple steps to help maintain and improve your wellbeing.

Try to build these into your daily life –think of them as your 'five a day' for wellbeing.



Connect

Connect with the people around you. We are all in this together. Keep in touch with family, friends, colleagues or neighbours through calls, text or video links like FaceTime, WhatsApp, Messenger or Skype. Arrange a daily telephone call, especially with those who may be at home alone.



Be Active

Exercising makes us feel good mentally and physically. We have to be a little creative in our new situation. Gardening or housework count as physical activity. Maybe try an online exercise video. The NHS website

<http://pha.site/workout> has a range of options, or there are a number of fun videos available free on YouTube for all ages and different levels of ability.



Take Notice

Stop, pause and take a moment to be still and look around you. Reduce your time watching the news and browsing social media. Let go of what none of us can control right now and focus on what you can control. Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings and be kind to yourself. It is normal not to feel 'normal' during this time. Listen to gentle music or try relaxation apps and videos. Know that this is temporary and things will get better. Take notice of your habits. Avoid smoking or drugs, and try not to drink too much alcohol. It can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour that end up making you feel worse.



Keep Learning

We are all learning how to do things differently for now; learning new ways of doing things and how to enjoy ourselves. Use this time for some discovery. Learning new things gives us a sense of achievement, increased confidence and enjoyment. Use this as an opportunity to teach your children new skills or maybe sign up to an online course.



Give

We are all helping our community and our health service by staying at home. This is the greatest gift you can give right now

Physiotherapists from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy have designed a set of six simple exercises that you can do from your own home to make sure that you are getting some exercise. Strengthening your muscles will improve your mood, help your sleeping patterns, bring benefits for your overall health and wellbeing and importantly prevent deconditioning which can be caused by inactivity. Getting started is easy, try out the strength and balance six exercises. Get on your feet and do them daily – or at least twice a week!

go online to youtube and search for 'Chartered Society of Physiotherapy' for our 'Stay active at home' Video



1.



Sit to stand

Sit tall near the front of a chair with your feet slightly back. Lean forwards slightly and stand up (with hands on the chair if needed). Step back until your legs touch the chair then slowly lower yourself back into the chair.

REPEAT 10 TIMES

2.



Heel raises

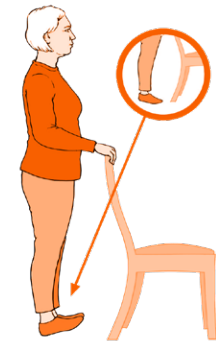
Stand tall, holding the back of a sturdy kitchentype chair or kitchen sink, then lift your heels off the floor, taking your weight onto your big toes. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control.

REPEAT 10 TIMES

Toe raises

Stand tall holding the same support, then raise your toes – taking your weight on your heels. Don't stick your bottom out. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control.

REPEAT 10 TIMES



3.

One leg stand

Stand close to your support and hold it with one hand. Balance on one leg, keeping the support knee soft and your posture upright.

HOLD THE POSITION FOR 10 SECONDS.
REPEAT ON THE OTHER LEG.



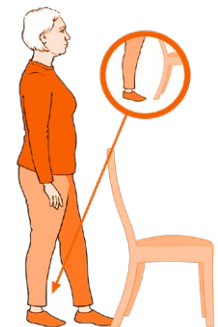
4.

Heel-toe stand

Stand tall, with one hand on your support. Put one foot directly in front of the other to make a straight line. Look ahead, take your hand off the support and balance for 10 seconds. Take the front foot back to hip width apart.

THEN PLACE THE OTHER FOOT IN FRONT AND BALANCE FOR 10 SECONDS.

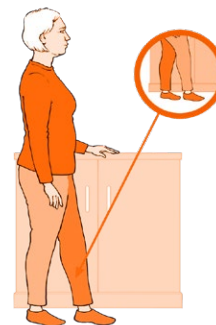
5.



Heel-toe walking

Stand tall, with one hand on a support like a kitchen cabinet. Look ahead and walk 10 steps forwards, placing one foot directly in front of the other so that the feet form a straight line. Aim for a steady walking action.

TAKE THE FEET BACK TO HIP WIDTH APART, TURN AROUND AND REPEAT THE STEPS IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.



6.

This Coping Calendar below from [actionforhappiness.org](https://www.actionforhappiness.org) lists 30 actions to look after ourselves and each other.

Select from these (or elsewhere) to complete your Take 5 plan!



1 Make a plan to help you keep calm and stay in contact

2 Enjoy washing your hands. Remember all they do for you!

3 Write down ten things you feel grateful for in life and why

4 Stay hydrated, eat healthy food and boost your immune system

5 Get active. Even if you're stuck indoors, move & stretch

6 Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them

7 Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help

8 Take five minutes to sit still and breathe. Repeat regularly

9 Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them

10 Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up

11 Notice five things that are beautiful in the world around you

12 Immerse yourself in a new book, TV show or podcast

13 Respond positively to everyone you interact with

14 Play a game that you enjoyed when you were younger

15 Make some progress on a project that matters to you

16 Rediscover your favourite music that really lifts your spirits

17 Learn something new or do something creative

18 Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity

19 Do three acts of kindness to help others, however small

20 Make time for self-care. Do something kind for yourself

21 Send a letter or message to someone you can't be with

22 Find positive stories in the news and share these with others

23 Have a tech-free day. Stop scrolling and turn off the news

24 Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go

25 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths

26 Take a small step towards an important goal

27 Thank three people you're grateful to and tell them why

28 Make a plan to meet up with others again later in the year

29 Connect with nature. Breathe and notice life continuing

30 Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time





Check in and chat

Contact the free telephone
advice service for the over 60s on

0808 808 7575

Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm or email info@ageni.org

COPNI
Commissioner for Older People
for Northern Ireland

 **Age NI**
Love later life

For more hints and tips for
'Staying Well at Home',
sign up to our newsletter:

<https://bit.ly/agenisignup>

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