

A practical guide to help you age well in Ipswich & East Suffolk

Live healthily, happily and independently for longer



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Who is this guide for?

This guide provides information on the support available in Ipswich and East Suffolk to help you live well and remain healthy and independent for longer. The advice is aimed at people aged 65 years or older, and anyone who supports them such as family, friends or carers (although it is never too soon to start thinking about getting older).

While we can't control our age, we can slow down any decline in our health with smart choices along the way. From the foods we eat and how we get active and exercise, to our friendships and retirement goals - it all affects how quickly or slowly our bodies age. The good news is that it's never too late to get started! You might have already thought of some of the suggestions in this guide but you may find some new ideas along the way.

A good way to create new habits or try new things is to set simple goals. On every page you will find sections to help so you can lead a healthier and happier life as you get older. At the end of this guide there is a list of organisations that can provide support for the ideas and suggestions given on the following pages.

How to age well

Get active: Ageing affects your balance, muscle strength and bones, but daily exercise helps you to stay strong and healthy. It will lower your risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and even cancer. If that wasn't enough, staying active can boost your self-esteem, improve your sleep, and give you more energy.



The recommended activity level is 30 minutes, five times a week - gardening, vigorous housework, cycling and daily walks all count. When sitting for long periods, try getting up and walking or stretching every 20 minutes. Experts also advise twice-weekly muscle strengthening exercises for the over 65s.

If that sounds like a lot, try starting small - as you get stronger you may well be able to work up to those amounts. Why not look to attend a weekly strength and balance class, or contact your local leisure centre or community centre to find out what's going on there?

Stay connected: Spending time with other people can improve your mental health and help to prevent you from feeling lonely or anxious. If you find that you are no longer able to do the things you used to or are unsure what activities you can get involved with locally, there is support to help you take up new hobbies and interests. You could even find out about how you can get involved in volunteer work.



A Social Prescribing Link Worker (Community Connector) can help you to find local support for your social, emotional and practical wellbeing by connecting you to voluntary and community services in your area. Further information can be found at the end of the leaflet.

Reduce the amount you smoke: Smoking is linked to a whole range of health problems, including heart disease, lung cancer and bronchitis. The good news is that if you stop smoking, regardless of your age, your circulation, lung capacity and energy levels will improve.



Feel Good Suffolk supports people in Suffolk to improve their health and wellbeing, which includes stopping smoking. If you wish to stop smoking, Feel Good Suffolk advisors are there to offer support through your 'quit journey' and will tell you about the services and resources available.

You can find out more on the Feel Good Suffolk website (www.feelgoodsuffolk.co.uk), including details of how to be referred into the service, or by speaking to your health care professional.

Watch what you eat and drink:

A balanced **diet** is crucial for good health, energy and preventing illness. An ideal diet should be low in **saturated** fat with lots of fruit and vegetables, wholegrains, oily fish, and small amounts of low-fat dairy and lean meat.

The sensation of **thirst** can decrease with age, so don't forget to top-up with water regularly throughout the day to avoid dehydration, especially during hot weather.

Dehydration can make you feel tired and confused and can even cause urinary tract infections.



Tea, coffee and fruit juice will also help you to stay hydrated but avoid sugary fizzy drinks. It's recommended you drink no more than 14 units of alcohol a week, spread across three days or more, with at least two days per week booze-free. Fourteen units is approximately six medium (175ml) glasses of wine, or six pints of 4% beer. There's no completely safe level of drinking but sticking within these guidelines lowers your risk of harming your health.



I will improve my health by:

Completed?



The basics of good health

Check vaccinations and routine screenings are up to date

- As we age, our immune system becomes less efficient at protecting us. A number of different vaccinations are available to older people free on the NHS. The NHS App or your GP surgery can be used to check that your vaccinations, routine screenings and health checks are all up to date.



Look after your teeth

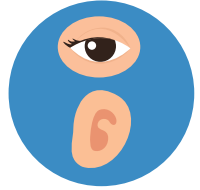
- Brush your teeth twice a day and floss daily. Flossing helps to prevent gum disease by removing pieces of food and plaque from between the teeth. If they are left to build up you might notice sore or bleeding gums, and gum disease can also be linked to diabetes, strokes, heart disease and rheumatoid arthritis. Have regular check-ups, and if you wear dentures or have a bridge, ask your dentist to check that they fit properly.



Keep your bones strong - Aim for two to three servings of **calcium-rich** food a day. Ask your pharmacist about vitamin D supplements and try to get 10 minutes in the sun every day from May to September



Take care of eyes and ears - Have your sight and hearing tested regularly or if you notice any changes. Eye tests are free if you're over 60. You can help keep your eyes healthy by not smoking, as smoking damages the eyes, making smokers more likely to develop eye-related conditions such as cataracts. Protect your eyes from the sun by wearing sunglasses and help reduce Ultra-violet (UV) rays from the sun.



Don't forget your feet - Washing your feet often and drying them well will help prevent infections. When cutting your nails, trim them straight across, never at an angle or down the edge as this may cause ingrowing nails. Keep your feet warm but avoid anything too tight.



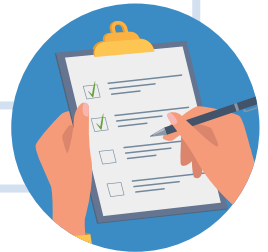
If your shoes fit well, they protect and support your feet and may improve your balance and stability.

Understand your medicines - You may be taking several different medicines, especially if you have a condition such as diabetes or asthma. It's important that your medicines and the doses are reviewed at least once every year. Your GP surgery or pharmacist will do this for you, but you may have to ask. They may recommend alternative medicines or change the doses of some you are on.



I will take care of myself by:

Completed?



How to reduce your risk of falls and stay safe at home

Around one in three adults over 65 who live at home will have at least one fall a year, but many of these accidents are preventable. Fall-proofing your home needn't be costly, it's mostly about spotting small risks that can be easily and quickly sorted out. Following these tips can help to avoid unnecessary injuries and hospital stays:

- Remove or tape down frayed carpet
- Replace worn-out slippers with ones that fit well
- Clear clutter, especially in passageways, bedrooms and around doorways
- Consider handrails around the house, including the stairs, shower and bath
- Ensure the hallway and stairs are well lit
- Put a torch by the bed, keep landing/hall lights on at night, using energy-saving light bulbs



- A surprising number of people trip over their pets. Buy them a bright collar and a bell to alert you to their presence
- Practise how to get up from the floor. If you do fall, it could turn out to be a life saver. Do this with someone present the first time you try it. There is a practical guide at the end of this booklet on how to get up off the floor / what to do if you fall
- Keep your phone charged, switched on and with you
- Suffolk County Council, through its partnership with the Cassius Digital Care partnership, offers a range of ***care technology products*** that support people to live independently at home and give carers peace of mind, real-time information and back-up support if it is needed



There are a range of devices - to keep people connected and living well, from video care phones and smart home technology, to sensors and GPS trackers for higher levels of risk

These devices can keep you safe by alerting others that you might need help, for example if you have a fall. Cassius also has other, more specialised items that would be available following a care needs assessment. To find out more, please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk and search technology to help you live independently

- The Suffolk Fire and Rescue service offers ***fire safety and security advice*** and support around health and how to reduce the risk of falls. For a free home visit, including fitting fire alarms, contact Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service on **01473 260588** or email them via **fire.businesssupport@suffolk.gov.uk**

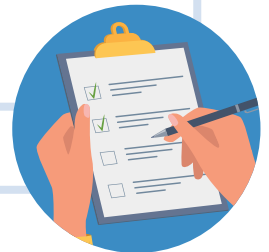


Top Tips

- ✓ Wear well-fitting low-heeled shoes and avoid wearing worn-out or loose slippers or shoes.
- ✓ Investigate walking aids and other helpful equipment as appropriate (Age UK and Citizens Advice have information and can provide financial help).
- ✓ Accept you may not be able to drink as much alcohol as you used to.
- ✓ Contact your GP surgery about persistent bladder or incontinence problems.

I will reduce my risk of falls by:

Completed?



If you need extra support

A **Social Prescribing Link Worker** (Community Connector) can help you to find local support for your social, emotional and practical wellbeing by connecting you to voluntary and community services in your area. Support can be provided around social isolation and loneliness, benefits and finances, bereavement, housing issues, and healthy lifestyles.

The Connect for Health social prescribing service can be accessed through local health and social care teams or your local GP surgery. You can also self-refer.

Further information can be found at the end of the leaflet.

Caring for others and yourself. Lots of older people rely on support and care from a family member or friend. This may include help with eating, helping them to get washed and dressed, or reminding them how to do day-to-day things. You may also be giving them emotional support, taking them to appointments or picking up their prescriptions.

Caring can affect your own physical or emotional wellbeing, so it is really important for you to look after yourself too!

Suffolk Family Carers can help talk you through how your caring role has affected you and help you access services that can support you in your caring role. Contact Suffolk Family Carers **01473 835477** or **www.suffolkfamilycarers.org**

You are entitled to a Carer's Assessment, regardless of how many hours you spend caring each week, your financial circumstances or whether the person you care for receives any other support. A Carer's Self-Assessment is now available and the best way to contact us for support is via the Suffolk Adult Care Portal (**www.suffolk.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/how-social-care-can-help/suffolk-adult-care-portal**) where you can identify your caring role and the impact this may have on your life.

Alternatively, you can also request a Carer's Assessment by contacting **Suffolk County Council** on telephone: **0808 800 4005**.

Further information can be found at the end of the leaflet.

Help to remain independent. If you begin to struggle at home, there are many forms of support available. Many of these can be accessed via www.suffolk.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults and include Help to stay at Home, Adult Social Care, Paying for Care, Help for Carers, Safeguarding and Reporting Abuse. Further information can be found at the end of the leaflet.

If you need social care in a crisis. If you have a social care emergency and need urgent assistance, please call **Customer First** on **0800 917 1109**.

Outside of normal working hours this number will divert to the Emergency Duty Service. They can deal with anything that can't wait until the next working day.

Further information is available at www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for how adult social care works.



Cost of living support. There is a lot of information out there about the support available, both nationally and locally, to help you with the cost of living. To make it easier to navigate, Suffolk County Council has compiled information about the different support and advice available around benefits, money and debt, food and essentials, fuel and energy, and housing costs, as well as specific help where you live, scam awareness and your mental health. Information can be found at www.suffolk.gov.uk.

The Government's **Cost of Living Hub** website (www.gov.uk/cost-of-living) also has lots of resources and links to support you and your family.

Suffolk County Council's **Cost of Living Support Leaflet** signposts to local services who can help. Translated versions of this information are available on the 'Helpful Resources' page.

Are you struggling with the cost of food? If you are struggling with the cost of food, support is available.

The Connect for Health social prescribing service can be accessed through local health and social

care teams, or your local GP surgery. You can also self-refer - further information can be found at the end of the leaflet.

You can also find a helpful map of foodbanks and pantries across Suffolk at

www.infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/food

How to keep money and information safe from scams. A scammer may try to approach you on your doorstep, by post, over the phone or online. They'll often pretend to be someone they're not or make misleading offers of services or investments. Remember a bank will never call you asking for your pin number. Further information can be found through Help for Households - www.suffolk.gov.uk

For extra support I will contact:

Completed?



How to stay safe throughout the year

Winter weather

- There are practical things that you can do to prepare for winter weather, which may bring cold, ice, snow, and high winds. Remember that cold weather can start in October.
- Icy pavements and roads can be very slippery. Take extra care if you go out and wear boots or shoes with a good grip on the soles. Rubber snow/ice grips that attach to outdoor shoes are very effective, or you can use a stick for balance.
- Consider fitting a grab-rail if you have steps at your front or back door.
- Speak to your friends, family or your carer if you are feeling under the weather, down or need some practical help. They may be able to help you.



- Keep some food supplies in a cupboard or freezer in case you can't go out for a few days.
- Ask your family, neighbours or friends if they could call or visit you more often if a period of cold weather stops you getting out and about. Keep cold, flu and sore throat remedies in the house.
- Order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time, particularly if bad weather is forecast.
- Take up offers of vaccinations for COVID or flu.
- Have your heating system serviced before winter arrives. If you are struggling with your heating costs speak to your local Citizens Advice, as there may be help and support available - Contact us - Citizens Advice at www.citizensadvice.org.uk.



Warm spaces

- Sometimes these are referred to as warm rooms or hubs, they are a safe, warm and welcoming space within your local community, which people can attend regularly and free of charge to keep warm, enjoy a hot drink and meet new friends.
- The Connect for Health social prescribing service can assist with access to warm spaces and can be accessed through local health and social care teams or your local GP surgery, and you can also self-refer. Further information can be found at the end of the leaflet.



Summer weather

- When the weather is hot it is important to increase your daily fluid intake to function effectively and avoid dehydration.

You may need to drink about eight cups (two litres) or more of water. If you start to feel dizzy and at risk of falling you may need to drink more water during the day.



- Stay out of the full sun, particularly on hot days, and wear sun cream and a hat to avoid the risk of sun burn and sunstroke.
- Wear sun glasses to avoid damaging your eyes.
- Plan ahead by ordering repeat prescriptions in advance if you are planning to go away.

I will plan to:

Completed?



How to improve your mental health and wellbeing

Are you feeling low, anxious or lonely?

Here are some things you can do to help or improve your mental wellbeing. Connecting with others can make all the difference.



- Get involved with local community activities - singing, walking groups, book clubs, bingo etc.
- Help others - volunteering can be a great way to stay involved and meet new people.
- Invite a friend round for a cup of tea or keep in touch by phone.
- Try to do something every day - plan small things to look forward to.
- Learn to love computers - connect with others online and browse the web.
- The Connect for Health social prescribing service can assist with connecting people and can be accessed through local health and social care teams or your local GP surgery.

You can also self-refer - further information can be found at the end of the leaflet.

- The **Silverline**, which is run by Age UK, is a free telephone service that offers support and conversation 24 hours a day - Telephone **0800 470 8090**.

Concerned about memory loss?

Not all problems to do with our brain are caused by dementia and many are reversible such as vitamin deficiencies, medication side effects or an under active thyroid. If you have concerns about memory loss or brain function such as:

- Struggling to recall recent event
- Forgetting the names of close friends or everyday objects
- Lack of concentration such as putting your keys or wallet in the wrong place
- Loss of motivation to do things
- Losing the drift of what you are saying
- Finding everyday tasks confusing to perform
- Changes in your personality, mood, behaviour or social functioning



it is important to get things checked out by contacting your GP surgery.

Some conditions make us more at risk of developing dementia but there are also things we can do to help reduce the risk such as:

- Make sure your hearing is as good as it can be by accessing hearing services.
- Try to exercise regularly.
- Aim to reduce smoking by accessing smoking cessation services.
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol (less than three units per day).
- Ensure someone is keeping an eye on your blood pressure.
- Look after your diabetes if you are living with this condition.
- Keep an eye on your weight as obesity can increase your risk.
- Connect with other people socially as this helps keep your brain active.
- Relax and aim to get a good night's sleep (eight hours).

If you are concerned, you can call **Dementia Connect** on **03331 503456**. They can offer support, information and signpost you to relevant services. Other support services are at the back of this guide.



If I'm concerned I will:

Completed?



How to plan for the future

Have you considered how you would like to be looked after in the future?

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) (for both health and finance) These are legal documents by which you give someone else (the Attorney) the power to act on your behalf and in your name when you are no longer able to make decisions yourself. This would make it easier for your support network to meet your needs if you are not able to do so yourself. ***It can be drawn up at any time while you have capacity to do this,*** but it has no legal standing until it is registered with the Office of the Public Guardian. This can be completed at the Office of the Public Guardian (www.gov.uk). A solicitor can help with the process if required.

Wills Even if you don't have much to leave, it is important that what you do have is left to those you care about. If you do not make a will, your spouse will be the main beneficiary unless stated otherwise. If you are not married to your partner,

they will not automatically be a beneficiary, so you need to make arrangements in advance. This is also the case with other statuses. The absence of a will causes lengthy delays, so organise things in advance.

Completing a ReSPECT form (Recommended Summary Plan for Emergency Care and Treatment) will ensure your wishes are recorded if you are not able to make decisions in an emergency. Your local health care provider will complete this with you.

A **‘This is me’ passport** can be used to record details about a person living with dementia who can’t easily share information about themselves. This can help health and social care professionals better understand the person they are supporting and help them to deliver the appropriate care. Make sure that a trusted person, such as the executor of your will, knows who you bank with and where any medical or life insurance policies are held.



Consider where you might leave **next of kin details** in your home, should they need to be contacted by a health or care professional on your behalf.

I will make decisions about my future by:

Completed?



Directory of contents

NHS 111 - can help if you think you need medical help right now. You can get help from NHS 111:



- by using 111 online
- in the NHS App
- by calling 111

We can direct you to the best place to get help if you cannot contact your GP during the day, or when your GP surgery is closed (out-of-hours). Depending on what you need, you might be advised to:

- call 999 or go to A&E in an emergency
 - go to an urgent treatment centre
 - see an evening and weekend GP (out-of-hours GP)
 - book a call back from a nurse
 - get urgent specialist support, for dental or mental health problems
 - contact your own GP surgery
 - see a pharmacist for help with a minor illness
 - look after yourself safely at home
-

Connect for Health

Social Prescribing - depending upon where you live, please contact us at one of our email addresses or phone numbers below:



For **Ipswich**

E: C4h.ipswich@nhs.net T: 01473 298637

For **all other locations** below

E: C4h.suffolk@nhs.net T: 01394 332265

- Woodbridge (Kesgrave, Martlesham, Wickham Market and surrounding areas)
 - Felixstowe (surrounding areas)
 - Saxmundham and North East (Saxmundham, Leiston, Framlingham and surrounding areas)
 - South Rural area (Shotley, Holbrook, East Bergholt, Hadleigh, Bildeston and surrounding areas)
 - Eye and North West (Eye, Fressingfield, Debenham and surrounding areas)
 - Central Suffolk (Stowmarket, Needham Market and surrounding areas)
-

Bespoke Connect for Health
service for people from **multi-ethnic
communities across Suffolk**



E: info@bscmulticulturalservices.org.uk

T: 01473-429740

www.suffolkandnortheastsex.icb.nhs.uk

and search for Social Prescribing
and Community Outreach Services

Suffolk Infolink - details all the support
in your community which is local to you
and through various national charities
and organisations. It also links to
national and local websites providing advice
and tips which you may find useful.



www.infolink.suffolk.gov.uk

Feel Good Suffolk - to support people
in Suffolk to improve their health and
wellbeing, help you to stop smoking,
manage your weight and be more active.
There are lots of useful tips, advice and resources
on the website and you can also contact their
customer service advisors for more support.



T: 0345 603 4060

www.feelgoodsuffolk.co.uk

NHS tools and support - to help you lose weight, get active, quit smoking, drink less and lift your mood
www.nhs.uk/better-health



Suffolk's care technology service - to help people to live happy, independent and connected lives
www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for Technology to help you live independently



Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service - free home safety check
T: 01473-260588
E: fire.businesssupport@suffolk.gov.uk



Dementia Connect - can offer support information and signpost to relevant services
T: 0333-150 3456



Dementia UK - the specialist dementia nursing charity that is there for the whole family
T: 0800-888 6678
E: helpline@dementiauk.org
www.dementiauk.org/about-us



Alzheimer's Society - support for daily living, carers, independent living, and financial and legal matters



T: 0333 150 3456

www.alzheimers.org.uk

On the Alzheimer's Society website, there is also the 'This is me' passport

T: 0333 150 3456

www.alzheimers.org.uk

and search for This is Me

Further information on **how Social Care works** can be found:



www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for How Adult Social Care Works

Social Care in a crisis - If you have a social care emergency and need urgent assistance, please call Customer First on:



T: 0800 917 1109

Outside of normal working hours this number will divert to the Emergency Duty Service. They can deal with anything that can't wait until the next working day.

Suffolk Family Carers

T: 01473-835477

www.suffolkfamilycarers.org



Carer's Assessment

(Suffolk County Council) - regardless of how many hours you spend caring each week, your financial circumstances or whether the person you care for receives any other support. A Carer's Self-Assessment is now available and the best way to contact us for support is via the Suffolk Adult Care Portal, where you can identify your caring role and the impact this may have on your life

www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for Suffolk Adult Care Portal

Or you can request a Carer's Assessment on:

T: Suffolk County Council on **0808 800 4005**

Carer's Allowance - How to claim for Carer's Allowance

www.gov.uk/carers-allowance



Cost of living support can be found at:

www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for Cost of Living Support, and select the option for Cost of Living Support



Suffolk County Council's
Cost of Living Support Leaflet
[www.suffolk.pagetiger.com/
cost-of-living-support/scc1](http://www.suffolk.pagetiger.com/cost-of-living-support/scc1)



T: Suffolk County Council Customer Service on
0345 606 6067

The Government's
Cost of Living Hub
www.gov.uk/cost-of-living



Citizens Advice - Speak to your local office as there may be help and support available for **heating costs**. They can also advise on **benefits, financial, legal and health**:



T: Adviceline (England): **0800 144 8848**
www.citizensadvice.org.uk once on the website, enter your Country and then in the search box type contact us

Keeping people in Suffolk warm this winter - Support for any household experiencing hardship and in need of support to prevent ill health and keep warm
www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for keeping people in Suffolk warm this winter



Map of **foodbanks and pantries**

across Suffolk

www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for foodbanks and pantries



How to keep money and information safe from scams

T: Suffolk County Council

Customer Service on **0345 606 6067**

www.suffolk.gov.uk and search for Help for Households



Silverline - run by Age UK, this is a free telephone service that offers support and conversation 24 hours a day

T: 0800 470 8090



Lasting Power of Attorney -

more information can be found at:

www.gov.uk and search for Office of the Public Guardian



RESPECT - Recommended Summary Plan for Emergency Care and Treatment

T: Resuscitation Council UK

020 7388 4678

www.resus.org.uk/respect



How to get up off the floor – What to do if I fall, a practical guide



What to do if I fall



This leaflet gives you some useful tips if you fall.

Have a plan of action in case you should fall and keep this leaflet handy.

How to put a plan in place in case you fall

How do I get help?

Have you got a mobile phone on you?

You could consider a pendant alarm. Can someone get into your home to help you?

Consider getting a key safe.

Do your family, friends or neighbours have a key?

How do I get up if I fall?

Keep this leaflet handy and read it regularly so you know the steps.



Published February 2015. Ref. 3087a-2019_v1

What to do if you cannot get up

1. Attract attention. Bang on something and call for help.



2. Use your mobile to call a friend or neighbour, or push your pendant alarm.



3. Try and keep yourself warm with any clothing or blankets that you can reach.



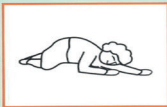
4. Move your joints and change position. If you go to the toilet, move into a dry space.



How to get up from the floor after a fall

Stay calm and check for injury

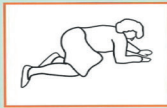
1. You have fallen over.



2. Ease onto your elbow.



3. Push up onto your hands and knees.



4. Crawl to some furniture like a table or chair.



5. Place your arms on a chair.



6. Place one foot forward and flat on the floor.



7. Push up on your arms and legs, swing round to sit.



8. Sit down and rest before you move.



If you are hurt seek help. Tell your GP about your fall. Consider getting a pendant alarm or a mobile phone.

Don't do this if you've had a hip or knee replacement in the last 6 weeks.



This booklet has been created by members of Ipswich and East Alliance.

The information provided in this leaflet is for guidance and educational purposes only and does not substitute for professional medical advice. Please seek medical advice via usual routes regarding any specific diagnoses or treatment if you are concerned.

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Website: suffolkandnortheastessex.icb.nhs.uk

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