



# **Healthy Lifestyle Information**



**Northampton  
General Hospital**  
NHS Trust

## Introduction

This leaflet aims to give you information about how to improve your health by stopping smoking, safe drinking and alcohol harm reduction, healthy eating and ways to increase your levels of physical activity especially prior to coming in to hospital for surgery.

For any advice on the above please contact:-

Giving up Smoking:- your local Stop Smoking Service  
First for Wellbeing- 0300 126 5700

Alcohol: - Substance 2 Solution – Northamptonshire. Integrated Recovery Service for Drugs and Alcohol Advice.

[northants@cgl.org.uk](mailto:northants@cgl.org.uk)

Tel: 01604 211304 (Standard Charge)

Healthy weight:- [www.nhs.uk/Change4Life](http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life)

Physical Activity:- [www.northamptonshiresport.org/get-active](http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/get-active)

Northampton General Hospital operates a smoke-free policy. This means that smoking is not allowed anywhere on the Trust site, this includes all buildings, grounds and car parks.

## Risks and Benefits

Adopting healthier lifestyles can benefit everyone and may actually reduce your stay in hospital and help you to recover more quickly. By making a few small changes to the way you live can make big changes to your health!

# Key Messages for Healthy Lifestyles

## ***Stopping Smoking***

There are over 4,000 chemicals in a cigarette and 69 of these are known to cause cancer.

As soon as you quit smoking your body begins to repair itself straight away.

The longer you manage to stop smoking the more repair work your body can do. Research shows that on average smokers spend two days longer in hospital recovering from an operation than non-smokers and have a one-in-three risk of post-operative breathing and heart problems and have a greater risk of developing wound healing complications.

## ***'Stop before the op', you can do it!***

Every year thousands of people successfully quit smoking. If you want to stop smoking, help is available from the NHS Stop Smoking team who are here to support people in Northamptonshire to stop smoking and you could be one of them! Quitting with professional help gives you a four-times better chance of quitting for good.

Speak to a member of hospital staff today on how to be referred to your free local Stop Smoking Service or call the Stop smoking helpline: 0300 126 5700

[www.goodbyesmoke.co.uk](http://www.goodbyesmoke.co.uk)

## ***Alcohol Harm Reduction***

New research (January 2016) suggests any amount of alcohol can increase the risk of cancer. The new advice says men and women who drink regularly should consume no more than 14 units a week - equivalent to six pints of beer or seven glasses of

wine. It also says if people drink, it should be moderately over three or more days and that some days should be alcohol-free. The new guidance differs from previous advice in that the guidance does not differentiate between men and women, reducing recommended intake to 14 units across the whole week.

Another major factor in the new guidance is the evidence that has been found in terms of alcohol increasing the risk of cancer. It says the evidence suggests the risk of a range of cancers, such as mouth, throat and breast, increases with any amount you drink on a regular basis.

## ***Informed decisions***

England's Chief Medical Officer has said: "Drinking any level of alcohol regularly carries a health risk for anyone, but if men and women limit their intake to no more than 14 units a week it keeps the risk of illness like cancer and liver disease low" (January 2016). The aim of the guidelines was to give the public the most up-to-date scientific information to allow them to make "informed decisions" about their drinking habits.

## ***Tips for cutting down:***

- Having alcohol free days
- Not drinking at home before going out
- Swapping to low-alcohol or alcohol free drinks
- Using smaller glasses
- Drinking a glass of water between alcoholic drinks

If you or someone you care about is worried about alcohol consumption or dependency and would like free confidential support then speak to a member of staff who will be able to offer brief advice or refer you to the Alcohol Liaison Nurse. You can also speak to your GP confidentially.

## ***Healthy Eating***

Being overweight can seriously affect your health. If you are overweight you are more at risk of developing health problems such as heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes.

Most overweight people are overweight because they consume more calories than their body needs.

The best way to lose weight is to make achievable, lasting changes to your eating and physical activity habits by reducing your calorie intake and increasing your daily activity levels.

Increasing your activity and optimising your health can offer health benefits and reduce the risk of post operative complications.

## ***Practical Healthy Eating Tips***

Don't skip breakfast! Breakfast gives you the energy you need to face the day along with some of the nutrients needed for good health.

Reduce your fat intake and avoid processed meats:

- Choose lean cuts of meat and trim off any visible fat
- Choose low fat, polyunsaturated spread instead of butter
- Measure oil for cooking with teaspoons rather than pouring it straight from a container
- Grill, bake, poach or steam rather than frying and roasting
- Choose lower fat versions of dairy foods whenever you can

Aim to have 2 pieces of fruit (a handful if choosing berries) and 3-5 portions of vegetables everyday (2-3 tablespoons is a portion).

- Try fruit sliced over cereal for breakfast
- Snack on fruit mid-morning or mid afternoon
- Good sources of vegetarian protein are beans or lentils, add these to your casseroles and stews

- Stock up on frozen vegetables for easy cooking
- Remember – half of your lunch and your dinner plate should be vegetables or salad

If you are having concerns regarding your diet or weight please visit your GP who will be able to refer to an appropriate service.

## ***Physical Activity***

Regular physical activity can help reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis as well as raise your mood and self-esteem. It also can raise the levels of the 'feel good' hormones and reduces levels of stress. Inactive people have nearly twice the risk of developing heart disease.

Adults should aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more – one way to approach this is to do 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week.

Simple ways to getting more physically active:-

- Walking the dog
- Digging the garden
- Using the stairs rather than taking the lift,
- Getting off the bus one stop before your destination
- Joining a dance group, jogging club, games club or the gym.

# Useful websites and lifestyle support services

## **Giving up Smoking**

Northamptonshire Stop Smoking Service (First for Wellbeing) or by any other health care practitioner or speak to a member of staff who will be able to refer you.

Tel: 0300 126 5700

Email: [help@firstforwellbeing.co.uk](mailto:help@firstforwellbeing.co.uk)

[smokefree@firstforwellbeing.co.uk](mailto:smokefree@firstforwellbeing.co.uk)

[www.smokefree.nhs.uk](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk)

## **Healthy Weight Change4life**

[www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life)

Weightwatchers (self referral or by GP)

Tel: 0345 345 1500

[www.weightwatchers.co.uk](http://www.weightwatchers.co.uk)

## **Physical Activity Northamptonshire Sport Get Active**

[www.northamptonshiresport.org/get-active](http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/get-active)

Activity on Referral (Referral by GP)

[www.activityonreferral.co.uk](http://www.activityonreferral.co.uk)

Run In England (self referral)

[www.runinengland.co.uk](http://www.runinengland.co.uk)

walking for health (Self referral)

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

Activity on Referral (Referral by GP)

## **Drug & Alcohol Advice Service – Substance to Solutions**

Tel: 01604 211304

[northants@cgl.org.uk](mailto:northants@cgl.org.uk)

## Other information

Northampton General Hospital operates a smoke-free policy as part of its overall aim to develop a healthy campus. This means that smoking is not allowed anywhere on the Trust site, this includes all buildings, grounds and car parks. Any patient found smoking on site will be asked to stop smoking immediately and return to their ward/department. Any visitor found smoking on site will be asked to stop smoking or leave the hospital site.

Leaflets, information, advice and support on giving up smoking and on nicotine replacement therapy are available from the local Stop Smoking helpline on 0300 126 5700, the free national helpline on 0300 123 1044, email: [smokefree@nhft.nhs.uk](mailto:smokefree@nhft.nhs.uk) and pharmacies.

Car parking at Northampton General Hospital is extremely limited and it is essential to arrive early, allowing ample time for parking. You may find it more convenient to be dropped off and collected.

This information can be provided in other languages and formats upon request including Braille, audio cassette and CD. Please contact (01604) 523442 or the Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) on (01604) 545784, email: [pals@ngh.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@ngh.nhs.uk)

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[www.northamptongeneral.nhs.uk](http://www.northamptongeneral.nhs.uk)

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