

Men's Health Week

14-21 June 2021

How to be your own best mate

Make simple changes to improve your health

How to look out for your mates

Help aid conversations about mental health
with your friends



MENKIND: Be your own best mate

If your mate was having any of the difficulties in the figure below, you would be **KIND**, supportive and encourage them to seek support. No "man-up" or "crack on". You wouldn't hesitate to get specialised help for your car, your tech or for someone you care about. Don't neglect yourself. The sooner you reach out, the sooner you can get back on track. Think about ongoing maintenance rather than critical repair.

1 man in 5 will die before he reaches 65. Use our guide to live a longer and healthier life.

Lungs

Men are still more likely to smoke than women. Much more so between the **ages of 18 and 49**.

Men are **67%** more likely to die from types of cancer that affect both men and women.

Get support to stop smoking, check for changes in your body regularly and get any worries checked out*.

Liver

Men are more likely than women to drink alcohol at levels that are hazardous to health, and they're **twice as likely** to have liver disease. Drink sensibly and know your limits*.

Testicular cancer

In males **aged 25-49** in the UK, testicular cancer is the most common cancer, accounting for 14% of all cases. All men can benefit from understanding what feels normal for them, but don't hesitate to see a specialist if you're concerned.

Mind

4 out of 5 suicides are by men. Suicide is the biggest cause of death for men **under 35**, yet only $\frac{1}{3}$ of referrals for psychological support are for men. Reach out if you need support.

Heart

75% of all premature deaths from heart disease are male. As a man you're much more likely to die of circulatory disease than a woman. Make sure you exercise for at least half an hour a day*.

Obesity

67% of men are overweight or obese. Men are much more likely to eat too much salt, red and processed meat, and too little fruit and vegetables.

Diabetes

Middle-aged men are **twice as likely** to have diabetes and twice as likely not to know it. Watch your weight and eat healthily*.

***Simply making these changes can add 14 years to your life – enough to see your grandchildren grow up, see 3 extra world cups, or get back nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of your life.**

Nuffield Health can help you with a range of health issues. From GP appointments and health assessments, to physiotherapy and mental health support, if you have any concerns about your health, or you haven't had a check up in a while – reach out.



MENKIND: How to look out for your mates

It can be hard to start a conversation with your mates about their health, especially mental health. But it's more important than ever that we check in with each other, given the increase in mood-related difficulties. Talking is good for us and speaking about mental health can prevent problems from getting worse.

Here are
6 helpful tips
to check your mates
are REALLY
okay:

1

Make an observation

If you've noticed that your mate's mood has changed or they're acting differently – this can mean they're having difficulties and in need of someone to talk to.

You don't need to know what the problem is, but it can help to make an observation. For people who find it hard to open up about their feelings, here are some different ways you could get the conversation started:

"How are you?
You seem more tired than usual."
"Hey. How are you doing?
You don't seem your usual
self and I've been a bit worried
about you."



For more advice and support with your health and wellbeing,
visit nuffieldhealth.com/article/wellbeing-at-work

2**Share your experience**

One major barrier to seeking help, especially for men, is the fear of being singled out or seen as different. This means your mates will be less likely to seek the support they need to return to wellness. Sharing your own experience helps get rid of unhelpful myths about being tough. It shares the message that we all have mental health and helps your mate feel safe and understood. Here are some examples:

"Hey. How are things with you?
I know it can be hard to talk about
how you're feeling, but it can help.
When I was feeling anxious/having
panic attacks, chatting about it with
someone really helped me."

"Hi. How are things with you? I know
you've been having a tough time
recently. When I was feeling down last
year, I found it really hard to focus at
work, but it really helped me to talk
about it."

3**Acknowledge any difficulties
you know about**

Although you might not know what someone is going through exactly, you may have some awareness of their situation or problem. It can help to be direct in this case as it shows respect, care and concern. This can be easier than leaving your mate to bring things up and you can leave the invitation to talk open. For example:

"Hi. I know you've
been having some
difficulties with your
relationship recently.
How are things?"



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4**Ask twice**

If your mate responds with 'I'm fine' or 'I'm okay' it can help to ask again. This shows that you have genuine concern and interest, and it's more likely you'll have a meaningful conversation. You could say:

"Are you really okay?
I'm worried about you."

5**Walk and talk**

Sometimes doing an activity such as going for a walk can ease awkwardness. Engaging in an activity your mate enjoys can be a good way to get the conversation going in a neutral environment. What about saying:

"I've been hoping to
catch up with you for
a while. Fancy going
for a walk and getting
some fresh air?"

6**Signpost them to support**

You don't have to know all about a problem or how to offer solutions. Sometimes simply talking can be a great form of support. If you're worried about someone (especially if you notice an increase in risk-taking behaviour, substance use, or signs of loss of interest in life or hopelessness), signpost them to professional support such as their GP or a mental health professional.



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