

# Health Matters!

 COMMUNITY FUND



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# About Women in Prison

Women in Prison (WIP) is a national charity founded by a former prisoner, Chris Tchaikovsky in 1983. Today, we provide support and advice in prisons and run three community women's centres - the Beth Centre in Lambeth, London, the Women's Support Centre in Woking, Surrey and WomenMATTA in Manchester.

WIP campaigns to reduce the number of women in prison and for the greater use of sentencing in the community alongside significant investment in support services for women so they can address issues such as trauma, addiction, mental health, substance misuse, domestic

violence, debt and homelessness. These are factors that are often the reasons why women come into contact with the criminal justice system in the first place.

WIP's services are by and for women. The support available varies from prison to prison and depends on where a woman lives in the community. If WIP can't help because of a constraint on its resources, it endeavours to direct women to other charities and organisations that can. WIP believes that a national network of women's centres, properly funded, that provide holistic support, is the most effective and just way to reduce the numbers of women coming before the courts and re-offending.

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## WIP's services include...

- Visits in women's prisons
- Targeted "through the gate" support for women about to be released from prison
- Support for women in the community via our women's centres in London, Woking and Manchester

- A Freephone line and Freepost address for women who wish to contact Women in Prison

- Magazine groups in several women's prisons, with plans to expand further in order to provide women with a channel for their opinions, a way to exercise their rights as active citizens, and an outlet for their creativity.

- RSG! A quarterly magazine written by and for women affected by the criminal justice system

- Women in Prison's services are open to all women affected by the criminal justice system in England. Women can choose to attend, leave, or return to our services. None are compulsory.

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## Got something to say?

Please contact Women in Prison at the FREEPOST address below. We may be able to visit you in prison or write to you.

### Write or call free:

Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON  
National freephone line  
0800 953 0125  
info@wipuk.org

WOMEN IN PRISON  
2ND FLOOR,  
ELMFIELD HOUSE  
5 STOCKWELL MEWS  
LONDON  
SW9 9GX  
TEL: 0207 359 6674.

### CONFIDENTIAL

Our service is confidential. Any information given by a service user to Women in Prison will not be shared with anyone else without the woman's permission, unless required by law.

### COMPLAINTS

If you are not happy with the service we have provided and wish to make a complaint, you are welcome to do so. Just ask for a copy of our complaints procedure.

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Suzy Dymond-White

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**H**ello... And welcome to the WIP Health Booklet which has been put together for you by the Health Matters team at Women in Prison. We hope you will find this booklet useful and informative. We also hope that it will help you feel a bit more in control of your health and inspire you to take care of yourself. As there are so many things to cover under the umbrella of health, we have chosen to focus on a few topics that have been suggested to us by the women we work with.

**Thank you!** This publication has been led by women affected by the criminal justice system, not professionals or prison staff. We would like to say a warm thank you to all the women - across prisons and in the community at the Ghost Academy - who have helped with this booklet either through focus groups or direct contributions such as poetry, art or writing. Your ideas, advice and creativity have been crucial! We also want to extend a big thank you to the National Lottery community Fund who funds our project, including the booklet you are holding in your hand.

**...so who is WIP?** Women in Prison (WIP) works in prisons and on the outside to support women. We also campaign for the rights of women affected by the criminal justice system.

**...so what is Health Matters?** Health Matters is one of the projects at Women in Prison. It was set up to support women in prisons and in the community around their health questions. The point of the project is to give information, advice and support to women but, unlike our other projects, this one is focused on health. We want to empower and support women to have a better understanding of their health. With so many other things to keep us busy in life and worry about, our health sometimes gets forgotten about or ends up being at the bottom of our list. We want to change that by encouraging women to think about their health and wellbeing and give it the attention it deserves. Also, we want women to think about how their mental health and physical health fit together. For example, how can you make yourself feel better by taking care of your body? Or how can your state of mind affect how your body feels? This includes a whole range of things such as healthy eating, exercising or taking care of yourself. And how can this, in turn, make you feel better mentally and enable you to fight stress, anxiety or a low mood?

**...so can Health Matters help me?** The Health Matters project works with women in HMP Downview and HMP Bronzefield and in the community in London. Unfortunately we are only a small team, which is why we are not able to work in all prisons or across the country. BUT we thought we would share some information and knowledge with all of you, so we put together this health booklet. That way, we can pass on some information and tips about health and well-being, no matter where you are!

**...anything else?** As an organisation, we do our best to support women with any problems they might have. However, we also know that the system is unfair and needs changing. This is why we make the case for change. We tell politicians and other people in power what needs to change about prisons and society to give women a better chance. Because we work in the prisons, we are able to speak to women directly to hear their views and can pass them on to those who make decisions. This project is no different. We know that healthcare in prisons is not perfect and it can sometimes be difficult to get the appointments you want. We also know that many women don't get all the support they need in the community.

If there is anything about health that you think those in power should know, please let us know by writing to us. We hope that we can help you directly through our work but also that we can help make the entire system a little better by sharing what we learn from you.

Warm wishes,

THE HEALTH MATTERS TEAM  
Charmaine Williams, Frederika Lorie,  
Julia Henman, Suzanne Smith,  
Jade Coulon and Sofia Gullberg

Art direction & production Henry Obasi & Russell Moorcroft @PPaint

Disclaimer: This health booklet is designed to give information, advice, and support around different health conditions and we hope that you find it useful. We are not trained medical professionals. The information presented in the booklet is accurate to the best of our knowledge but please consult with a trained medical member of staff for more extensive information and advice if you have any concerns about your health. Any suggestions in this booklet are purely suggestions and should not be taken as anything more than that.

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# GUEST ARTICLE

BY SUZY DYMOND-WHITE

GOVERNOR OF HMP EASTWOOD PARK AND  
WOMEN'S LEAD ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Suzy Dymond-White,  
Governor of HMP Eastwood  
Park, explains her work to  
improve health and well-being  
for women in prison

I am Governor of HMP Eastwood Park, a women's prison in South Gloucestershire. In 2016 I was commissioned to conduct a Thematic Review into Health and Wellbeing in Women's Prisons. I worked with Bronya Finnegan, Deputy Governor at HMP Drake Hall and we looked at various aspects of services delivered across women's prisons. Some broad pieces of work emerged such as the delivery of P.E. and what provision was made to cater for the different needs and tastes of women in custody. We feel there is a need for specific training for staff who will go on to work in women's prisons as provision of P.E. is quite particular to that population. We are keen to ensure that every woman in our

care has the opportunity and is encouraged to make use of facilities to increase their physical fitness. We are fully aware that physical activity has a positive effect on mental health. We studied what encouraged women to take part in gym activities and indeed what may be off-putting for women who were not used to using P.E. equipment and may have body image and confidence issues.

Another aspect of the review highlighted the need for specific nutritional guidelines for women at different stages of their lives such as menstruation, maternity and menopause. Addiction recovery and previous lifestyles are also areas where particular attention is needed to ensure quality nutrition. We are working with the Liverpool School of Nutrition to draw up guidelines for catering managers and promote easy to follow and informative menu choices. We also like the idea of being able to enhance the nutritional value of the prison diet by growing produce on site and using it in the kitchen. This could be linked to horticultural skills and knowledge of how



to use fresh vegetables, herbs and salads to create tasty and nutritious meals at low cost. Not just valuable for women but also for their families.

We also became aware that there was a lack of P.E. kit designed specifically for women and that the gyms within women's prisons were only able to access P.E. kit designed for male prisoners. We looked at whether it might be possible for women to design and manufacture gym wear within the existing Industries structure but this was not a viable option and we are currently looking to purchase standard tops and bottoms suitable for gym use. It may also be possible to have a higher end range of sportswear available for women to buy through shops within the prisons. We

will soon be able to start purchasing gym wear that will be styled to fit women and give good performance during sporting activities.

There are other aspects of the project

such as the introduction of wellness assessments and setting up Wellbeing Committees in all Women's Prisons that can share ideas and best practice. We plan to work with outside agencies such as Public Health England and some charities to engage with national events such as Flu jab promotion and fun runs as fundraising events. We hope to keep women's health and wellbeing

high on agendas across the country to ensure women leave custody with a better understanding of how health and wellbeing can make such a positive difference to life.

**“We are fully aware that physical activity has a positive effect on mental health.”**

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# TIPS ON DEALING WITH STRESS

## IDENTIFY YOUR TRIGGERS

- Keep a diary and identify issues that come up regularly, including any ongoing stressful events
- Try to work out how you operate under pressure and develop different coping mechanisms
- Once you've figured out what your stress factors are, you can take steps to try and deal with and reduce them

## TAKE CONTROL

- Practice empowerment and positive thinking
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, as this can help reduce your stress and make you feel more positive
- Take charge of how you deal with things

## CONNECT WITH PEOPLE

- Laughter and social support can help reduce stress

## TAKING TIME FOR YOURSELF

- Take time to do something you enjoy or find relaxing, such as yoga, singing, drawing, reading or exercise. Find something that you enjoy doing!

## CHALLENGE YOURSELF

- Set yourself goals and challenges and get involved in something positive

## ACCEPT THINGS YOU CAN'T CHANGE

- Changing a difficult situation isn't always possible. Try to concentrate on the things you do have control over

## TRY TO BE HEALTHY

- Try to have a well-balanced diet and keep active
- Try to minimise the amount of caffeine, sugar and alcohol you have and try to reduce the amount you smoke – or even better – try to get support to help you quit for good!

## SUPPORT TO HELP DEAL WITH STRESS

- Use your support network such as friends, family, listeners, peer support, group support and women's centres. Ask for help if you are feeling stressed and overwhelmed

## PRESERVE GOOD BOUNDARIES

- Maintain good boundaries- know when to say no and that it is OK to do that
- Practice time management

## CREATE A TOOL BOX OF TECHNIQUES THAT CAN HELP YOU DEAL WITH YOUR STRESS

- Think of some healthy techniques that work for you to help you deal with the stress in your life when it arises. These techniques can give more control and structure to deal with that stress head on

## EMBRACE MISTAKES AND LEARN FROM THEM

- Write a list of things you have learnt from previous stressful situations and what you could do differently next time that may help

# CREATING A QUIET SPACE

**Rachel from HMP Downview encourages mindfulness:**

Meditation brings calm. Don't underestimate the improvement and balance it can bring to your psyche, battered by prison pressures and old wounds that need healing.

For a beginner, the duration of meditation is a very personal matter. It all depends on the length of time you can maintain the body position without moving. Beginners are urged to be cross-legged on the floor, sitting on a pillow, or comfortably in a seat. A relaxed body can help the mind.

The ideal sitting time is in the early morning when we arise and the mind is free from distractions, thoughts and pictures.

The first few times, it is best to time yourself and see how long you can hold the position you are in without moving; e.g. if you can sit for 10 minutes quite still without pain, then sit for 10 minutes.

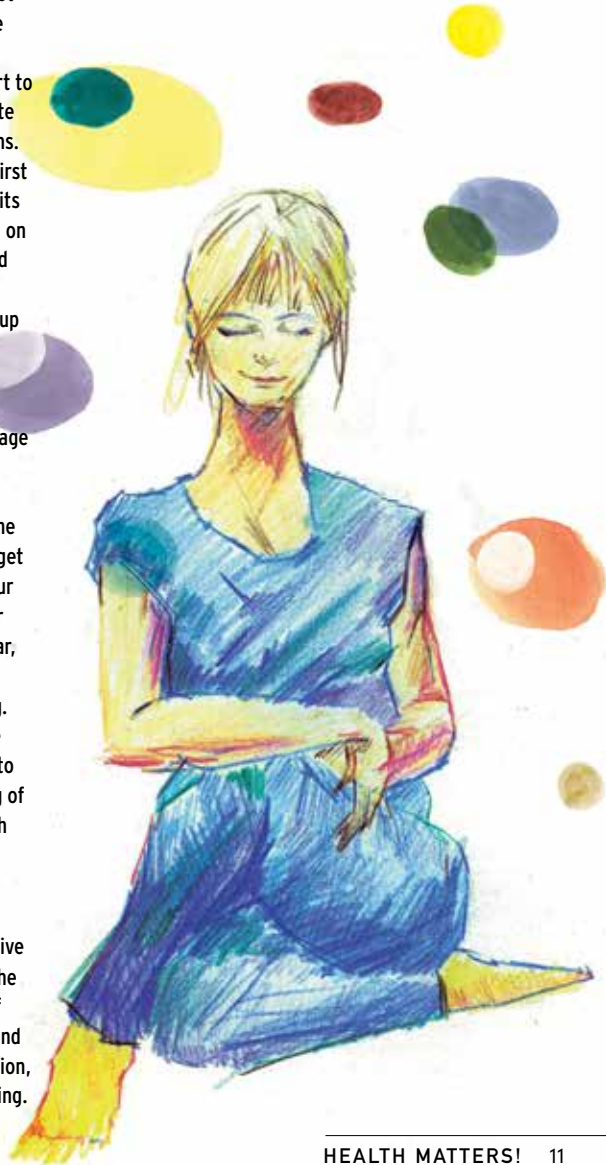
Once the body is in

an upright position, the eyes resting shut, the mouth closed, teeth not clenched, and with the tongue resting on the front upper teeth, start to unwind and concentrate on counting the breaths.

Count one on the first inhalation and two on its exhalation, then three on the next inhalation and four on its exhalation. Repeat this sequence up to 10, and then go back to one. It is said we can count to 10 in our first language without activating the mind too much.

Everybody has some distractions, so don't get discouraged! When your mind begins to wander and distractions appear, calmly put them aside and return to counting. Eventually, after some time, you will be able to eliminate the counting of breath and be one with your breath.

Silent meditation is very subtle but the positives you will receive from it will be worth the effort. After a while, if something comes up and prevents your meditation, you will miss your sitting.



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# COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT)

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a talking therapy that can help you manage your problems by changing the way you think and behave.

It is most commonly used to treat anxiety and depression. CBT is based on the concept that your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and actions are all linked, and that negative thoughts and feelings can trap you in a vicious cycle.

CBT aims to help you deal with overwhelming problems in a more positive way by breaking them down into smaller parts. The aim is to change negative patterns to improve the way you feel.

CBT deals with your current problems, rather than focussing on issues from your past; it looks for practical ways to improve

your state of mind on a daily basis. Even if you don't have your own CBT therapist, you can help make a difference to your life by using the key ideas of CBT yourself.

The Thought Record at the end of this article is a chance to see how you emotionally and practically respond to situations and to help you find a different way to think about things that can then improve the way you feel and act.

Look at the examples given in the "Alternate Thoughts" column. If you open your mind to other possibilities, for example that the person that you said 'hi' to just didn't hear you, or that they were in their own world and didn't see you, or they were having a really bad day themselves, there is more chance you won't feel such strong negative emotions and won't behave in the way you would have done that probably wouldn't benefit anyone, including yourself.

Why don't you give it a try? You can make your own once you fill this one up.

# THOUGHT RECORD

## SITUATION

e.g.  
You say 'hi' to someone as you pass them in a corridor but they don't reply

## THOUGHTS

"Why are they ignoring me?"  
"What is wrong with me?"  
"Do they think they are better than me?"

## EMOTIONS

Upset  
Angry  
Frustrated  
Helpless

## BEHAVIOURS

Take my emotions out on other people  
Doubt myself and lower my self esteem  
Start a fight with them?

## ALTERNATE THOUGHT/S

"Maybe they didn't hear me?"  
"Maybe they were in their own world and didn't see me?"  
"Maybe they are having a really bad day?"



Why DROWNED

ABUSED

Feeling criticised  
Feeling attacked  
Feeling useless

self-harm

isolated, ashamed and worthless.

lonely

RUNAWAY RAPE

RULE BREAKER

DRAMAS

scary

vulnerability

Where to go.

NEGLIGENCE

TRIGGER

ENVY

GREED

fear

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Psychosis distressed

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN?

HELP WANTED

Will I ever feel better?

Understanding

Treatment

Mental health crisis services

How can I help myself?

healing

Emergency (A&E) department

WAY TO COPE

psychology

Self-help books!

Dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT)

psychiatrist

therapist

counselling

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)

STRONG

self-worth

honest

WORTH

You deserve help, no matter what

You don't need all the answers.

SURVIVOR

power

SHARING

INSPIRING

Mentally ill need care not jail

Self-harm and suicide

struggle to meet mental

EMPOWER

ENCHANTING



SOBERLY CLEAN

BETTER LIFE

Street drugs and alcohol

addicted

anger

THE DARK SIDE

Burning myself

I cut myself

overeating

emotionally unstable

paranoid

Community Mental Health Team

Mental health problems

Antidepressants

Antipsychotics

Hospital services

Borderline personality

suicidal

THE PILLS TO POP

LEAVE WOMEN BEHIND

IMPRISONMENT

THE CLINIC

YOU'RE MEANT TO BE DOING THIS



# TOP TIPS FOR HEALTHY EYES



By Deanna Taylor PhD,  
MCOptom, AFHEA

## SMOKING

- As well as not being great for the rest of our body, smoking can have damaging effects on our eyes. It can put you at much higher risk of developing eye diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, which is the most common cause of blindness in the UK.

## DIET

- Although carrots can't actually help you see better in the dark, they do contain vitamins which are essential for healthy eyes! Vitamins that are good for eye health can be found in other fruit and vegetables including sweet potatoes, oranges, tomatoes, and green vegetables such as spinach and kale. Eating a balanced diet and keeping the rest of your body as healthy as possible will reduce your risk of eye problems.

## SUNLIGHT

- Sunlight can make our eyes age faster and put us at higher risk of some eye diseases. It's a good idea to wear UV blocking sunglasses (check for a CE mark to show that they are made to European standards) and a wide brimmed hat in the sunshine to protect your eyes.

## REGULAR EYE TESTS

- It's recommended that everyone has an eye test at least once every two years, even if you feel like your eyes are fine. This is because, as well as checking whether you need glasses or not, an eye test will check the health of your eyes and may pick up eye problems in their earliest stages when they are easier to treat. There are lots of reasons which may entitle you to a free NHS eye test – these include if you are in prison, if you're out of prison and receiving certain benefits or if you're known to have or be at risk of specific eye diseases.

# LOOK AFTER YOUR **TEETH** AND SMILE!

We all know that we should take care of our teeth but it can sometimes feel a bit boring and expensive. Here are some simple tips!



## BRUSH AWAY!

Brush your teeth twice a day—once in the morning and once in the evening. Brushing in the morning gets rid of bacteria from the stomach that have travelled up to your mouth in your sleep. Brushing in the evening cleans up after food and drinks you've had throughout the day. You can brush your teeth more often if you want to but, in the long run, that actually wears them out. Bacteria are responsible for tooth decay, gum disease and bad breath, so keep brushing!

When it comes to brushing, be gentle on your gums – use a soft brush and avoid brushing hard and pushing the gums upwards as this can lead to receding gums which, in turn, can lead to tooth loss.

On the other hand, if you don't brush around the gums then you may get plaque build-up on your teeth and in the worst case scenario you might develop gum disease which can lead to teeth becoming loose and falling out.



## FLOSS IS BOSS!

When you have the chance - floss! Flossing gets rid of any bits of food stuck between your teeth that would otherwise be attracting bacteria. Therefore flossing is great for your gums. Go easy though – floss carefully so that you don't accidentally end up cutting your gums and damaging them. At the end of your day, make flossing part of your routine by flossing first, then brushing. It can be really hard to get into the habit of flossing if you're not used to it but, once you do, you won't want to be without it!

## HEALTHY LOOKING TEETH!

Certain foods and drinks make your teeth go yellow. Coffee and tea are notorious for this and they can also stain your teeth. Likewise, smoking can give your teeth a more yellow tone but, above all, it can really stain your teeth. For many, it is hard to choose between white teeth and your favourite drink and many of us choose tea and coffee... However, if you are serious about white teeth, bear this in mind and cut down!

### How to register with a dentist in the community:

**You can register with any dental practice that is convenient for you, as long as they have capacity to take on more patients. Some people qualify for free NHS dental treatment - you don't have to pay for dental treatment if you're:**

- Pregnant or have had a baby in the previous 12 months
- Receiving low income benefits e.g. income support, ESA, income based JSA or Universal Credit (in certain circumstances)
- Under 18
- Under 19 and in full-time education
- Under 20 and a dependant of someone receiving low income benefits!

## TOP TIPS FOR YOUR TEETH!

**Avoid eating sugar** - we all know that sugar is bad for your teeth but, for most of us, it probably isn't realistic to give up sugar altogether. However, try to minimise your sugar intake. Also, bear in mind that sugar can be found not just in sweets but also lots of food such as ketchup, jam and many ready meals.

**Avoid snacking** - constant snacking means that your teeth never get to rest and recover. Try to not eat between meals, not even healthy things!

**Avoid soft drinks** - drink water when you are thirsty, not soft drinks. Think treat, not habit!

**Avoid fruit juices and sparkling water** - fruit juices and sparkling water are really acidic, which means they erode your teeth, so drink them in moderation.

**Stop using sugar in tea and coffee** - If you are used to having sugar in hot drinks you may find it difficult to imagine them without sugar. But if you wean yourself off sugar by decreasing your intake bit by bit over a couple of weeks, you will quickly find that any sugar is too much sugar for your new taste! Tea by itself is actually good for your teeth as it naturally contains fluoride, so do your teeth a favour and drink it without sugar!

**See a dentist** - If you have any problems such as tooth ache or swollen, sore, infected or bleeding gums, see a dentist! Most dentists recommend going for a check-up every six months, even if everything looks and feels fine. You may not have the opportunity to go for a check-up in prison but when you are in the community - go for it! It may feel like a waste of money to go for a check-up but look at it as an investment in the long run, as any problems can be picked up and dealt with straight away.

## 'SPICE'

### WHAT EXACTLY IS 'SPICE'?

'Spice' is a collective term used to describe synthetic cannabinoids. There are over 400 different varieties of 'spice' that have developed because of constant changes in the formula. 'Spice' comes in many different forms.

### IS 'SPICE' A 'LEGAL HIGH'?

No! Ever since the Psychoactive Substances Act in May 2016, any substance with a psychoactive effect is illegal. This includes all synthetic cannabinoids such as 'spice'.

### ISN'T 'SPICE' HARMLESS?

'Spice' is anything but harmless – it can cause extremely unpleasant hallucinations, psychotic episodes and mental health breakdowns. This is a particular risk if you have pre-existing mental health issues. Because there are so many different strains of 'spice' and it comes in so many shapes and forms, it is impossible to know its compound and strength. This makes it even more dangerous and Spice can even cause death.

## HYOSCINE BUTYLBROMIDE (BUSCOPAN)

### WHAT EXACTLY IS BUSCOPAN?

Buscopan is a medication sometimes prescribed to people with gastroenteritis. However, Buscopan is sometimes misused.

### DOESN'T THAT MAKE IT LEGAL FOR ME TO TAKE BUSCOPAN HOWEVER I LIKE?

No! Even though Buscopan is a legal medication, it is illicit if it's not prescribed to you or if it's prepared and used differently to how it was prescribed. This rule applies to all medications.

### ISN'T BUSCOPAN HARMLESS?

Buscopan is not harmless – reported effects include hallucinations (auditory, visual and tactile), amnesia, insomnia, palpitations, flushing, irritability and inability to concentrate. It can cause serious physical and mental harm.

# THE DANGEROUS 'LEGAL HIGH'

## TOP TIPS FOR RECOVERY

Not sure how to get help with recovery? Jacqueline gives her top tips on how to help yourself and get help from others!

**HAVE PATIENCE!** - Recovery is hard work and can be a long journey. It is a process, not an overnight miracle, so be realistic and don't expect the impossible from yourself!

**LAPSE VS. RELAPSE** - To lapse is to pick something up again once, to relapse is to go back to the habit. Lapsing or relapsing does not mean going back all the way to the beginning. If you lapse, don't give up or think this means there is no longer any point trying. Instead, use this as a learning experience to put things in place to avoid the same thing happening again.

**PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS...** - be mindful of your triggers. These will be different for everyone and you will know yourself what yours are – try to avoid them, if possible, and stay strong if you are exposed to them.

## WHERE TO GET HELP

### IN PRISON

All prisons have some form of Drug and Alcohol Recovery Team. Prisons also have mental health teams, which means that you may have both a recovery worker and a mental health worker who together will support you.

### IN THE COMMUNITY

Every single area in the UK has a local drug treatment service. These are either run by the NHS or by a voluntary sector agency. If you have a drugs worker in prison, they will usually arrange throughcare for you when you are leaving prison. You can also self-refer. Find out where your local drug service is by searching for it online or by asking a professional you work with to do so. You can also speak to your GP about substance misuse.

### Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

NA and AA are some of the most famous support networks in the world, offering 12-step programmes. They run meetings up-and-down the country - in prisons and in the community. Just ask a professional or search online for your nearest meetings [www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

### Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART)

SMART recovery is another self-empowering addiction recovery support group. Ask a professional or search online for your nearest meetings [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)

### Helplines and websites

Frank provides friendly, confidential advice about drugs. If you want to talk, you can call Frank on 0300 123 6600 or look on their website [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

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We spoke to Jacqueline Spark, Substance Misuse Case Manager at The Beth Centre, to clear things up!

# EPILEPSY AWARENESS

Luke in HMP Foston Hall explains what it is like to live with epilepsy and gives some guidance on how you can help support

I have been living with epilepsy for nearly 10 years now. It's a disorder that really affects many aspects of my life. Although I'm able to live day to day, I have a constant fear that I may have a seizure. My seizures are mainly brought on by high stress levels, becoming too hot or being exposed to flashing lights and lack of natural sunlight. I suffer from two types of seizures – absences and convulsions.

When I'm in an absence, I go blank and stare into space. I don't respond to others and I'm unaware of what is going on around me. Quite often, I will come round with lots of people surrounding me, and this causes me a lot of distress. One moment, there is no one near me; the next, people are rushing and watching me. I must admit it's not a pleasant experience.

My convulsions are somewhat harder to

describe, as I have no knowledge of what happens to me apart from descriptions from witnesses. As far as I can explain, this is how I look and act: my body goes completely rigid and my eyes roll back. My body shakes and spasms and I foam at the mouth. At times, I also lose control over my bladder and often bite my tongue.

To hear what happens to me doesn't really upset me; I'm actually curious. It may sound strange to read this, but I'd rather know what happens so I can teach other people what to look out for and what to do in the event I have one.

So what are the myths and facts?

Firstly, there are many forms of epilepsy. A lot of people may suffer with it but never show any outward signs like convulsions or blackouts. One lady I met used to feel like her stomach was doing gymnastics before she would have a seizure. Most sufferers get an aura – a taste, smell or feeling. This can be enough to be classed as having a seizure at times, depending on the severity. For me, I taste copper – like pennies, and my heart rate gets really fast. At this point, I know to get help and move into a safe space. But sometimes a seizure will take me by surprise.



That frightens me more than anything.

When I, or anyone else for that matter, go into a seizure, the best thing to do is put a soft cushion under the head, move anything around that could cause the patient to hurt themselves – check first that you're not putting yourself in any danger.

If the patient isn't too rigid, carefully try to place them on their side. This will prevent them from swallowing their tongue or vomit.

Don't put anything in the person's mouth though, especially not your fingers. Whilst in a convulsion, the jaw can clamp down with full force and you could end up with damage.

As soon as you recognise any of these signs, call for medical help immediately.

This all may sound very basic and easy, but it's surprising how many people panic

and forget what to do.

It's ok to be scared. Don't think you have to be a hero. Even a person who is worried or concerned can do amazing things. It's all about keeping calm around the person. Talk to them as you normally would. There is a possibility they can hear you and this can offer comfort.

I have been very grateful for the many men and women, doctors and nurses, who have looked after me over the years. Without their support and help, I would really feel I couldn't be able to live a normal life. I have limits to what I can do, but with the things I can't do, I don't dwell on them. We all have something in our lives that stops us from doing something. It shouldn't be made a big deal just because you have epilepsy. Life can be just as fun.

# PAIN KILLERS (IN PRISON) – FRIEND OR FOE?

At some point in our lives we have all encountered pain, from headaches to period pains to cuts and bruises. Pain, by definition, is unpleasant and when it attacks, you probably want to be rid of it immediately and completely.

## THERE ARE THREE STAGES TO PAIN RELIEF IN THE PRISON SETTING:

### STAGE ONE: Mild pain

● If you have a headache, or perhaps it is that dreaded time of the month, then you can go along to the hatch on your landing and ask a nurse for Paracetamol or Ibuprofen. Healthcare staff will usually supply you with a 2-3 day supply of these medicines. You should leave at least 4 - 6 hours between doses of these medicines as advised in the information leaflet in the pack. If healthcare only supplies you with a single dose you will need to wait 4-6 hours before you can have another one.

### STAGE TWO: Mild to Moderate pain

● If you find that stage one is not working for you, then you can contact a member of

the healthcare team via your landing officer or by making a healthcare appointment. Your landing officer will be able to advise you how to do this. When you see the nurse, doctor or pharmacist, they will assess your pain, try and identify the reason for the pain and provide you with a prescription or supply you with pain relief if they feel this will help the pain. Remember that in most cases, taking ibuprofen or paracetamol regularly for a short time will work for mild to moderate pain.

### STAGE THREE: More severe or chronic pain

● If your pain continues after 2-3 months, or gets worse after stage 2, then you need to see a GP (doctor). This is because they will examine you and investigate the cause of the pain and review the pain killers you have been taking. The GP will be able to choose between a variety of pain killers, refer you to a specialist or advise you to try other treatments to help you manage your pain.

Health professionals have a duty of care to you. This means that they have an obligation to use their knowledge and skills to suggest the right treatment for you. This is why strict guidelines and procedures are in place - they aid the health care department to monitor your health properly. For example, if you take pain killers continuously for a long period, the healthcare team will monitor your care and review your pain medicines regularly. This makes sure that you are still getting the benefits of the treatment and are not suffering from any side effects or complications.

**When it comes to pain relief, the best advice is to work with your health care professionals. Do ask questions so that you become part of your own health care options!**





**YOU CAN**

*Still-Be* **FREE**

*even when your*

**D***reaming*

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# 5 TOP TIPS FOR A HEALTHY HEART!

Your heart works hard for you nonstop for your whole life. Now it is time to show it some love and attention!

## SLEEP!

Some of us know we should go to bed earlier but it is easy to get distracted and stay up too late. The ideal amount of time to sleep is between 7-9 hours a night.

Sleep has been found to improve our memory, help us live longer, reduce inflammation, improve our attention, and reduce our stress. So enjoy your zzzs!

## GET ACTIVE!

Ideally, it is great to aim for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week of moderate exercise. That includes any activity that gets you moving around and breaking a slight sweat. Try going to the gym when/if you can but don't forget you can do exercises in your cells/rooms too!

## HEALTHY EATING!

Your heart works best when it runs on clean fuel. That means lots of whole, plant-based foods (like fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds). When you have a choice, try and pick the foods that you know are healthier for you.

One of the fastest ways to clean up your

diet is to cut out sugary drinks like fizzy drinks and fruit juice and stick to a nice glass of refreshing water! We drink so many calories that we don't need and that don't fill us up, so cutting those out can be really beneficial.

## GIVE UP SMOKING!

Smoking and secondhand smoke are bad for your heart. E-cigarettes are popular and don't contain the harmful chemicals in cigarette smoke, but they're not completely problem-free, as they still do contain nicotine. A life without smoking means a healthier and happier heart so, if you do smoke, perhaps it is something you can start to try to reduce.

## STRESS BUSTERS!

Managing stress in a healthy way is really important. Find the things you are able to do that make you feel better. For example, spend time with people who treat you kindly and who you can confide in, try some mindfulness or meditation to keep you focused on the here and now, write down your thoughts in a diary, or dance when your favourite song comes on the radio! Managing your stress is important for your emotional health and your heart.



FIND  
THE  
FIZZ  
IN

NO MATTER HOW  
SMALL THE SPACE  
TO EXERCISE YOU  
*CAN GET FIT!*

» **NEELAM**

GYM ORDERLY AT  
HMP FOSTON HALL,  
GIVES YOU  
10 EXERCISES  
TO STAY FIT

PHYS

# 10 WAYS TO PUT SOME FIZZ INTO PHYSICAL

## FIVE EXERCISES TO DO IN A CELL OR AT THE GYM

By Neelam

### 1 DONKEY KICKS

● Kneel on the floor on all fours, knees below the hips and arms below shoulders. Lift one leg keeping it bent, core engaged, until hamstring is in line with the spine, squeezing gluteus, then return to the start.

### 2 ALTERNATE HEEL TOUCHES

● Lie on your back with your knees bent, slowly crunch up, core engaged, and alternately touch your heels with your hands.

### 3 AB CRUNCHES

● Lie on your back with your knees bent, slowly crunch forwards,

keeping your neck straight, shoulders down (not up round your ears!), using your abs to pull you up, then lower yourself down and repeat.

### 4 SEATED KNEE TUCKS

● Seated on the floor, knees bent in front of you, hands at the side (off the floor to make it more difficult), lean slightly back, extend legs off the floor and retract again. See how many you can do without lowering your feet to the floor!

### 5 REVERSAL CRUNCHES

● Lie on your back, hands under your bum or by your side, flex both legs off the floor, take your bum off the floor then bring your bum down keeping the legs straight, hover feet off the floor (don't touch the floor!) and repeat as often as you can.

Repeat each exercise, building up to 3 sets of 10 repeats.

## ...AND FIVE EXERCISES FOR BEGINNERS TO IMPROVE BODYWEIGHT STRENGTH

by L. J. Flanders

### 1 SQUAT

2 sets of 20 reps

### 2 INCLINE PRESS-UP

3 sets of 10 reps

### 3 GLUTE BRIDGE

3 sets of 10 reps

### 4 SEATED KNEE TUCKS

3 sets of 15 reps

### 5 BENCH DIPS

3 sets of 10 reps

30 seconds rest between each period of exercise.

(ASK A GYM ORDERLY FOR HELP, IF MYSTIFIED)

# ICAL!

# BREAST AWARENESS

Taking time out for yourself and knowing your body should be at the top of your list of priorities. We all come in amazing different shapes and sizes including our breasts and knowing what's normal for you can help you look out for any changes that may occur with your breasts. So, whatever your age, shape or size, it's always important to be breast aware!

We will look at some normal changes that can occur with your breasts throughout life and some unusual changes you should look out for.

**Our breasts can all look and feel different. They are unique to us!** It is normal for one breast to be bigger than the other and our breasts will change a lot throughout the course of our lives, from adolescence through to the menopause. How your breasts feel and look is affected by different hormone changes in your body.

Breasts tissue can feel more tender, lumpy and heavy just before your periods. You can experience breast changes during pregnancy

such as tingling and soreness and your breasts and nipples can become larger and fuller with the production of milk.

During the menopause your breasts can also start to feel different, sometimes softer, and you may experience some discomfort along with a change in size and firmness. It can also be common for your breasts to become lumpy or show benign (non-cancerous) nodules. If you do find any changes at all, you must always get them checked out.

Try to check your breasts as part of your daily routine in a way that suits you best. This can be done in the shower, in front of a mirror or when you are getting changed. Try to check the whole of your breast, under your armpits and to your collar bone, so that you cover all areas.

## SOME CHANGES YOU SHOULD LOOK AND FEEL FOR:

- A change in size or shape
- A change in texture or appearance of



your breast skin

- Redness or swelling
- A rash on the skin or around the nipple
- A lump
- Thickening of the skin
- Pain in the breast or armpit
- Liquid that is oozing from the nipple
- Change in the shape of your nipple

If you find a change, you should always go and see your G.P and get it checked out. It may be nothing but it will put your mind at ease and help make sure your breasts are kept healthy.

## BREAST CANCER:

Sadly, we may all know someone who has been affected by breast cancer, as it is one of the most common types of cancer that can affect both women and men. It is a hard topic to talk and think about. However, that is exactly why it is so important to be breast aware and proactive if you notice any changes, and aware of some of the risk factors.

### Risk factors for breast cancer:

- Age
- Genetics and family history

- Previous diagnosis of breast cancer
- Early puberty
- High breast density
- Late menopause
- Alcohol consumption
- Weight and weight gain
- Some forms of contraception
- Hormone replacement therapy (HRT)
- Previous benign (non-cancerous) lumps

## BREAST SCREENING:

Breast screenings aim to pick up breast cancer early, before any signs and symptoms are present. At breast screenings, a test called a mammogram is used. A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast that can pick up a cancer that is too small to notice otherwise.

As you get older, your risk of breast cancer increases. Women between the ages of 50 -70 years are asked to have regular breast screenings. If you have been told by your GP that you have an increased risk of developing breast cancer, you may be invited for a breast screening earlier than this.

The earlier breast cancer is caught, the better the chance of beating it!

# THE LIFE & TIMES OF SCABIES

We have all grown up hearing the myths that surround scabies such as “only dirty people get it” and “only people with pets get it”. WRONG!

Scabies is an infestation of the skin. Tiny mites called *Sarcoptes Scabiei* set up camp and make a home for themselves in the outer layer of human skin. The mites burrow their way through layers of skin and once inside the skin they then lay eggs. This invasion causes relentless itching and a very angry looking rash.

## What are the symptoms, I hear you cry??

● As previously mentioned, the main symptom of scabies is an intense itchy rash in different areas of the body. The itching is often worse at night, which is due to the fact that our skin is warmer during this time.

## Did you know that it could take up to 6 weeks after the infestation has occurred for the relentless itching to start?

● This is due to the length of time it can take for the body to respond to mite droppings inside the skin. A scabies rash consists of tiny red spots which, if scratched, can cause sores to develop. You can identify the burrow marks with a magnifying glass. The lines are approximately 1 cm long (or smaller) silver coloured and wavy, with a black dot at one end.

In adults these marks tend to appear in the following areas of the body:

- Folds of skin between fingers and toes
- The palms of hands
- The soles and sides of the feet
- The wrists
- The elbows
- Around the nipples (in women)
- Around the genital area (in men)

The rash attacks the whole body except for the head. The areas affected the most are:

- The underarm area
- Around the waist
- Lower buttocks and lower legs
- Shoulder blades
- The female genital area
- The groin
- Elderly people, those with low immune system or young children can get a rash on their neck and head.

## How do you catch scabies?

- Main cause - Skin to skin contact with someone who already has the condition.
- Rare occasions - Objects such as clothing or bedding of someone who is infected.
- There is a rare form of scabies called Crusted scabies. It occurs in patients who are elderly, unwell or immunosuppressed. This kind of scabies causes there to be thousands of scabies mites on the skin and is highly contagious.

## So, can scabies be treated?? Yes it can!

- You'll be happy to know that, after all the stomach-turning details we have provided you with, should you become infected with scabies, it can be treated! The sooner you get to your GP the better, as the infection will last as long it goes untreated. Once you follow the prescribed instructions from your GP, it will clear up quickly and completely. The itching will usually last for a few weeks after the mites have been killed. This is because the dead mites and dead eggs remain in the skin until the skin grows out.



# HEPATITIS

Hepatitis is a label used to describe inflammation of the liver. It is usually the consequence of a viral infection or damage caused to the liver. There are five categories of hepatitis - A,B,C,D and E - some of which are less serious than others.

Hep A is transmitted by eating and drinking contaminated food and water.

Hep B is transmitted from an infected person through blood or other bodily fluids.

Hep C virus is transmitted through small quantities of blood e.g. unsafe injection practice associated with drug use.

Hep D is a ribonucleic acid virus that responds to hep B virus causing a 'super infection'. It is transmitted through blood or other bodily fluids.

Hep E is transmitted through faecal-oral route which, basically, is water contaminated with poo.

Hep B and C are the most common forms in this country and Hep C is more common within the prison population.

**People at increased risk of HCV (Hepatitis C Virus) infection include:**

- People who inject drugs and share needles
- People who share razors

- People with sexual partners who are infected with HCV
- People with an HIV infection
- People who have been given infected blood products or who have been treated in health care facilities with poor infection control
- Children born to mothers who are infected with HCV

## Symptoms:

Approximately 80% of people infected with HCV will not show any symptoms. However, those who do show symptoms can exhibit fatigue, fever, decreased appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, grey coloured faeces, yellowing of skin and whites of eyes (Jaundice).

## But never fear - help is here!

You should have been offered a BBV screening at reception on, or shortly after, your arrival into the establishment. If you declined this then you can request one at any time during your time in the establishment - just put an app into healthcare. The infection can be treated, so try not to worry about being tested!

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# BIRTH CONTROL WHICH TYPE IS BEST FOR ME?

There are plenty of different contraceptive methods out there but which one is the best one? Well, it all depends on things like personal preference, lifestyle and health. Without going into detail of how they all work, here is a run-down of the pros and cons of the most common methods:

## CONDOMS

**What it is:** There are actually two types of condoms – male and female ones. Male condoms are by far the most common, though, and probably what springs to mind when you hear the word condom.

**Available** to pick up for free in clinics or available widely to buy in shops

### Pros:

● Condoms are the only contraceptive method that protects you against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)!

● Widely available in shops, no need to see any healthcare professionals, to get any prescriptions, or to go through any procedures to get them

● Reliable – when used correctly, it is over 98% effective at preventing unwanted pregnancies

### Cons:

● Sometimes considered a bit fiddly and impractical

● If you don't have any on you, then you're not protected

● They can break, making them useless

## COMBINED PILL OR “THE PILL”

**What it is:** A pill taken every day for 21 days with a 7 day break, before starting over again.

**Available** from GPs, community contraception clinics, sexual health clinics and some genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics

### Pros:

● Reliable – when used correctly, it is over 99% effective at preventing unwanted pregnancies

● It can reduce the symptoms of PMS (Pre-Menstrual Symptoms)

● Helpful to regulate your periods if you have problems with frequent, heavy or irregular periods

### Cons:

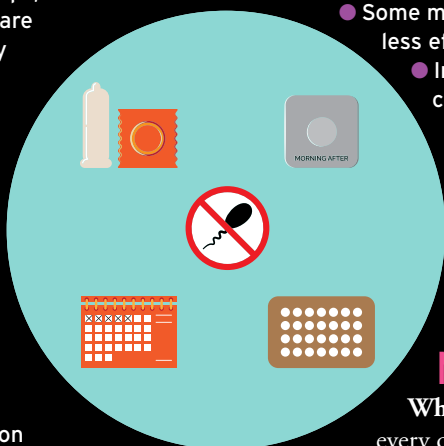
● Does not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

● You need to remember to take it every day

● Should not be taken in combination with smoking by women over the age of 35 or by any women over the age of 40 due to increased risk of side effects

● Some medications can make it less effective

● Increases the risk of certain health conditions such as high blood pressure, blood clots and breast cancer



## PROGESTERONE-ONLY PILL OR “POP” OR “THE MINI PILL”

**What it is:** A pill taken every day.

**Available** on prescription from GPs, community contraception clinics, sexual health clinics and some genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics

### Pros:

● Reliable – when used correctly, it is over 99% effective at preventing unwanted pregnancies

● It can reduce the symptoms of PMS

● You can use it at any age – even if you smoke and are over 35

● Most women who are healthy can take the POP until they reach the menopause or the age of 55



## CONTRACEPTION

### Cons:

- Does not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- Like the combined pill, you need to remember to take it every day. The mini-pill also needs to be taken around the same time every day
- Different women have different experiences with periods on the mini-pill - some women find that their periods stop altogether, some women get "spotting", others get irregular periods. If you find the idea of this annoying, it is probably not for you
- Some medications can make it less effective

## CONTRACEPTIVE PATCH

**What it is:** The contraceptive patch is a sticky patch, a bit like a nicotine patch, measuring 5x5cm. It delivers hormones into your body through your skin. Each patch lasts for one week. You change the patch every week for three weeks, then have a week off without a patch. It works in the same way as the combined pill in terms of preventing pregnancies through hormones. **Available** from GPs, community contraception clinics, sexual health clinics and some genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics

### Pros:

- Reliable - when used correctly, it is over 99% effective at preventing unwanted pregnancies
- Convenient - once it's on, you don't have to think about it and don't have to remember to take any pills

- Unlike the pill, it still works even if you have had diarrhea or vomiting

### Cons:

- Does not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- It has the same potential side effects as the pill in terms of health risks

## CONTRACEPTIVE IMPLANT

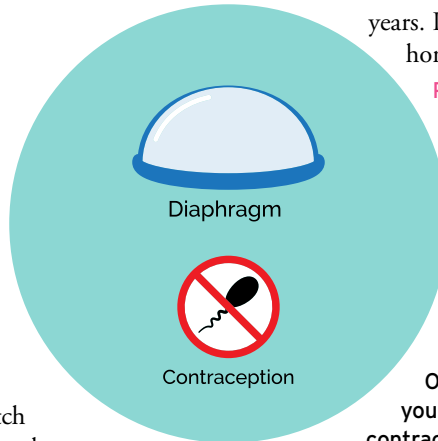
**What it is:** The contraceptive implant is a small flexible tube about 40mm long that's inserted under the skin of your upper arm. It's inserted by a trained professional, such as a doctor, and lasts for three years. It delivers the progesterone hormone into your body.

### Pros:

- Reliable - when used correctly, it is over 99% effective at preventing unwanted pregnancies
- Convenient - it's very useful for women who know they don't want to get pregnant for a while. Once the implant is in place, you don't have to think about contraception for three years.

### Cons:

- Does not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- Being progesterone-only, it has the same potential side effects as the mini-pill in terms of health risks
- It can be a bit painful to insert and after it is first put in, you may feel some bruising, tenderness or swelling around the implant.
- In the first year after the implant is fitted, your periods may become irregular, lighter, heavier or longer. This usually settles down after the first year. A common side effect is that your periods stop altogether.



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## CONTRACEPTIVE INJECTION

**What it is:** A hormonal injection containing progesterone.

If you opt for this, you will need to see a medical professional every 8-13 weeks for another injection.

### Pros:

- Reliable - when used correctly, it is over 99% effective at preventing unwanted pregnancies
- Not affected by medication

### Cons:

- Does not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- It can take up to a year for your fertility levels to come back to normal, so not suitable if you want to have a baby in the near future
- Your periods may become more irregular, heavier or longer, or stop altogether. On the other hand, the injection may reduce heavy, painful periods and help with premenstrual symptoms for some women.

## INTRAUTERINE DEVICE (IUD) “THE COIL” AND INTRAUTERINE SYSTEM (IUS) “THE HORMONAL COIL”

**What it is:** A small t-shaped device that is inserted into the womb through the cervix. The IUD contains copper whilst the IUS releases progesterone. It's inserted by a trained professional, such as a doctor.

### Pros:

- An IUD is effective as soon as it is put in
- Once in, it will last for 5-10 years, depending on the model
- Reliable - when used correctly, it is over 99% effective at preventing unwanted pregnancies

### Cons:

- Does not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

- Can be quite painful to have inserted
- There is a small risk of infection just after the coil has been fitted
- There is a small chance your body may expel it
- Changes to your periods (for example, being heavier, longer or more painful) are common in the first three to six months after an IUD is put in, but they're likely to settle down after this. You might get spotting or bleeding between periods

## EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION “THE MORNING AFTER PILL” OR “PLAN B”

**What it is:** The morning-after pill is not a contraceptive method but is to be used if you want to prevent a pregnancy and other contraceptive methods have failed.

**Available** from GPs, community contraception clinics, sexual health clinics and some genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics as well as over the counter at pharmacies.

### Pros:

- prevents pregnancies for up to 72 hours when other methods have failed (although more effective the sooner you take it)

### Cons:

- expensive
- can make you feel sick and dizzy

## OTHER TYPES OF CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS

If you are interested in investigating further, there are other methods out there, including the cap, the vaginal ring, the diaphragm, the female condom, natural family planning or sterilisation. Speak to a doctor or health professional for more information!

# CHILD

# BIRTH

# THE PAIN AND THE PLEASURE, AND THE

# OPPORTUNITY PREGNANCY

Laura Godfrey-Isaacs, midwife and birth activist, explains what influences your choices in pregnancy and shapes early motherhood

# GIVES FOR CHANGE





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**W**E LIVE IN AN AGE WHERE IMAGES OF BIRTH are everywhere, including popular TV programmes, such as *One Born Every Minute*, Hollywood pregnancy rom-coms like *The Back-up Plan*, and numerous websites, mobile phone apps and social media platforms.

Most of the portrayals in the mainstream media tend to reinforce certain dominant ideas, such as birth as a medical process, which is scary and very painful, with doctors making all the decisions. It is therefore very easy to become influenced by these images, feel fearful about birth, and expect that your experience may be similar, allowing you little room for choice.

However, every woman has an individual experience of pregnancy and birth, and you have the right to exercise your own choices. Increasingly, maternity services are moving away from a medicalised view of birth and towards the idea of birth as a normal, natural process. This means that women who have uncomplicated pregnancies would best be supported by midwives in as non-clinical a setting as possible, with the woman having as much control as she can over the process.

If you gain access to information and a wider depiction of birth, it should provide the opportunity for you to make your own decisions, whilst taking on board advice, and, ultimately, for pregnancy and birth to be an empowering, positive experience. In addition, pregnancy can provide the opportunity for change, where you consider addressing any lifestyle issues you feel are negative for you and the baby, and seek to use the time to turn over a new leaf and move towards healthier behaviour and choices in the future.

If you are out of prison, a number of the new media platforms about birth can assist, as they give easy access to trusted, free and supportive information and help, such as the Baby Buddy app (endorsed by The Royal College of Midwives). You can download it and use it throughout your pregnancy, or The Gas & Air Blog written by midwife Clemmie Hooper, which has an “Ask the Midwife” section. There are also some great new books on the market that are very user-friendly with lots of drawings and cartoons, which make it easy to access information.

**I** WOULD ALSO LIKE TO TAKE THE opportunity to share some of the principles of good maternity care and maternal health that we promote as midwives. They include:

- The importance of remaining active and well, during pregnancy and post baby, with good nutrition and mental health.
- During labour and birth, remaining as upright, in control, and as active as you can, so that you use gravity and your own body’s natural processes to aid progress. The old-fashioned practice of labouring women lying flat on their backs is not the best or easiest way to deliver your baby.
- In the early stages of labour, using natural sources of pain relief, such as water – either a bath or hot shower, or, if available, a birth pool. Also, using ways to distract from and

soothe away any pain, such as massage, moving around (or even dancing!) and watching your favourite TV programmes, music or films on a device.

● It has also been shown to increase a women's sense of control and improve her experience of birth to have a trusted birth companion. Therefore, if possible, make sure you can have the person you want with you. If you don't have a birth partner, or think you would benefit from someone else supporting you during birth, then it may be possible to use a doula or birth companion. These are professionally trained birth supporters who can be with you, providing emotional support and advocacy. There are a number of hospitals that provide doulas for women, such as the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London or organisations such as Birth Companions ([www.birthcompanions.org.uk](http://www.birthcompanions.org.uk)).

● Finally, the power and importance of early skin-to-skin contact with your baby, immediately after birth, cannot be

overestimated, as it aids bonding and facilitates the start of breastfeeding. Feeding your baby yourself, either via breastfeeding or with expressed breast milk, if you are separated, can be empowering, as only you can provide this nutritious, life-enhancing food and comfort for your baby, the process of which also aids your own health.

**A**S A PREGNANT WOMAN OR NEW mum in the criminal justice system, I hope that, after reading this article, you will feel more aware of the positive choices you can make around your pregnancy and birth of your baby, and the ways you can get support. There is a list of some of the organisations, free blogs, apps, books and social media sites recommended below.

*If you are not in prison and you would like a right to reply to this article, please contact me:*

*Email: [laura.godfreyisaacs@gmail.com](mailto:laura.godfreyisaacs@gmail.com)*

*Twitter: @godfrey\_isaacs or write to Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON*

## WEBSITES/BLOGS

### Gas & Air blog

[gasandairblog.com](http://gasandairblog.com)  
(with a Ask the Midwife section)

### Tell Me a Good

**Birth Story website**  
[tellmeagoodbirthstory.com](http://tellmeagoodbirthstory.com)  
(with a Find a Birth Buddy feature)

## ORGANISATIONS

**Positive Birth Movement**  
[positivebirthmovement.org](http://positivebirthmovement.org)  
(find a local Positive Birth Group, resources & blog)

## Mumsnet

[mumsnet.com](http://mumsnet.com) (free Baby Bundle app, information, online forums, blogs)

## Maternity Action

[maternityaction.org.uk/](http://maternityaction.org.uk/)  
(info & advice about rights with a Free Maternity Rights Action Line)

## FREE APPS

### Baby Buddy Best Beginnings

[bestbeginnings.org.uk/baby-buddy](http://bestbeginnings.org.uk/baby-buddy)

**Baby Bump** [babybumpapp.com/babybump/home](http://babybumpapp.com/babybump/home)

## BOOKS TO BORROW FROM THE LIBRARY



**The Positive Birth Book**  
by Milli Hill  
(birth activist)  
published by Pinter

& Martin (£12.99)



**How to Grow a Baby and Push it Out**  
by Clemmie Hooper

(midwife), published by Vermilion London (£8)

# MENOPAUSE

The menopause is something all women will go through at some point. You may be lucky and breeze through it, or you may be getting fed up with all those hot flushes and feeling like you're losing control of your body! So, let's get some of the facts down and some tips to try and help you along the way.

## WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

- The menopause is the time when you stop having your periods and are no longer able to get pregnant naturally\*. This is caused by a change in the balance of the body's sex hormones, which occurs as you get older. Your ovaries stop producing as much of the hormone oestrogen and progesterone and you no longer release an egg each month from your ovaries. Therefore your periods will stop and changes start to occur in your body.
- Periods usually start to become less frequent over a few months or years before they stop all together. Sometimes they can stop suddenly, though.
- The menopause is a natural part of ageing and usually occurs between the ages of 45-55.
- Some women, however, can experience premature menopause before the age of 40. This can be due to genetics, illness, or having had certain medical procedures such as a hysterectomy, damage caused to the ovaries or having received chemotherapy.

## HOW DO I KNOW WHEN IT'S HAPPENING?

You may suspect yourself that you are going through the menopause, based on some of the symptoms you are getting. You know your body best, so you are probably spot on. It's best to go and have a chat with your doctor to find out for sure, though. You should also keep track of your periods and when they start to change.

### Some of the symptoms you may experience

- Night sweats
- Pain
- Hot flushes
- Vaginal discomfort or dryness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Low mood or anxiety
- Reduced sex drive
- Problems with memory and concentration
- Mood swings
- Fatigue
- Racing heart
- Headaches
- Joint and muscle pain
- Bladder control problems
- Depression

Not all women get all of these symptoms, so don't panic! But you may experience a few.

## SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER

- With less oestrogen in your body due to the menopause, you need to start giving your body a little extra TLC (Tender Loving Care) and making sure you're keeping healthy.

- 
- You can be at greater risk after the menopause of developing certain health conditions such as osteoporosis (bone weakness), heart disease, reduced skin elasticity and difficulties with your waterworks.
  - Therefore it's a good excuse to make sure you spend that extra time and energy on yourself and look after your health.

## SELF-HELP TIPS TO HELP DEAL WITH THE MENOPAUSE

With lots of changes that occur with the menopause, it can feel like you are losing control over your body and this can impact how you feel. So, here are a couple of self-help tips that you can try to ease some of the symptoms:

### RELAX

- Take some time out to relax. You will have lots of different thoughts and feelings whilst you are going through the menopause. You may experience tiredness, mood swings, feeling anxious or low in mood at times. Therefore it is important to take some time out for yourself and enjoy doing something that helps you relax.

### SLEEP

- Get that extra rest and sleep in. Sleep is really important in keeping you healthy, both in mind and body. Getting that extra rest in whilst you're going through the menopause can help you manage the changes and ease some of the symptoms.

### EXERCISE

- Getting some regular exercise in can help keep you healthy and active but it can also help ease some of the symptoms of menopause and keep your bones and muscles healthy.

## KEEP COOL

- Trying to keep cool can help ease two of the main symptoms of the menopause - hot flushes and night sweats. Things that may help include avoiding hot flush triggers such as spicy food, smoking, alcohol and caffeine. Try to also keep active, wear lighter clothes, keep a fan on at night and, if possible, try to reduce your stress levels.

## QUIT THAT CIGARETTE

- Try to reduce those cigarettes or - even better - quit all together! Smoking has many bad side effects on your health and it doesn't help with the symptoms of the menopause either. Often it can make them worse and your body doesn't respond as well to some of the treatments available. So, give it some thought!

## HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (HRT)

- Hormone replacement therapy is the provision of additional hormone oestrogen to help replace some of the decline occurring in your body. HRT can help reduce some of the symptoms that may accompany the menopause and is available in different forms such as tablets, skin, patches, gel or implants.
- HRT can be very helpful for lots of women. However, there are some potential side effects to be aware of, including headaches, vaginal bleeding, breast tenderness and other complications. Make sure you go through all of this with your doctor so that you are aware of all the pros and cons before you make the decision to use HRT.

*\*Fertility levels and women's ability to conceive go down before the menopause starts. However, the menopause is a definite cut-off point for being able to get pregnant.*




# PERIOD PAINS

As women, many of us know the uncomfortable feeling and sometimes the pains that can come with our periods every month. Period pain is very common but can vary from one woman to another. Some of the common symptoms you may experience can be tummy cramps and spasms, back pain, thigh pains, breast tenderness, headaches, bloating and dull tummy ache.

Some tips that could help to try reduce your period pains. They will not all work for you, but hopefully one may.

- Herbal teas, especially green tea, has been shown to help with cramps and peppermint tea can help with bloating.
- A hot bath or shower can help relieve muscle tension and can help you relax both mentally and physically.
- Exercise is the last thing you may think of when you're on your period but keeping active can actually help reduce some of the pain. Try taking a walk, going for a jog, yoga or some stretching.
- Keep well hydrated.
- A hot water bottle can help relax your tummy and back muscles.
- You may want to indulge in some comfort foods whilst on your period, but these types of food can often be high in sugar and fat and can actually make you feel worse and cause further bloating. Try to eat healthy and maintain a well-balanced diet.
- A massage around your lower abdomen and back may also help reduce some of the pain.
- If you have really painful cramps and your quality of life is being impacted by your period pain, you should go and speak to your doctor.





# DISABILITY IN PRISON

Living with a disability can be really tough at times, especially if you are in prison. Here are a few tips which should hopefully make these circumstances a little more bearable.

**The Equality Act 2010** - This act is designed to help stop victimisation, discrimination and harassment related to certain personal/"protected" characteristics. "Protected Characteristics" are particular features that can be used to discriminate against others. These characteristics are defined in the Equality Act 2010 section 4 as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or beliefs
- Sex (female/male)
- Sexual orientation

Illustration by PPaint

If you have a disability, the healthcare team are there to assist you but you need to make your concerns known to them so that they can offer you the support you need.

Remember - they are just like the doctors' surgery in the community; if you don't make an appointment, then the nurses and doctors won't know that you need support! Putting an app in to see the nurse is the first step. From this point, all the necessary referrals can be made.

There is a Diversity team in each establishment, so, please, talk to them and they will be able to advise you on the provisions that may be available to you. Alternatively, you can speak to your Offender Manager who is also able to make referrals on your behalf.

The key to accessing disability support in prison is... **Communication, communication, communication!**

# ARTHRITIS

Ever felt stiff and achy in your knees or elbows? Feel like your body could do with a good old oiling? You may (or may not!) suffer from arthritis.

## WHAT IS IT?

Arthritis is a common condition that causes pain and inflammation in a joint.

There are many types of arthritis but the two most common types are:

- Osteoarthritis
- Rheumatoid arthritis

**Osteoarthritis** is the most common type of arthritis in the UK, affecting 8 out of 10 people with arthritis. Osteoarthritis initially affects the smooth cartilage lining of the joint. This makes moving around more difficult than usual and leads to pain and stiffness.

Once the cartilage lining starts to roughen and thin out, the tendons and ligaments have to work harder. This can cause swelling and the formation of bony spurs, called osteophytes.

**Rheumatoid** arthritis occurs when the body's immune system targets affected joints, which

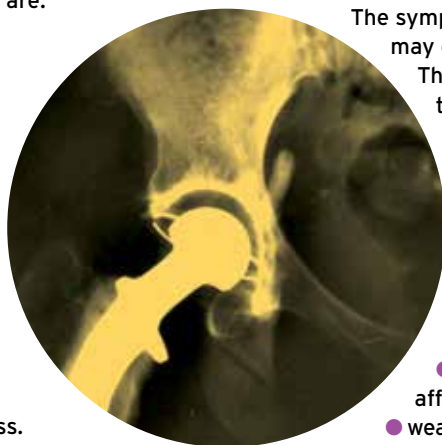
leads to pain and swelling. The outer covering of the joint is the first place affected. This can then spread across the joint, leading to further swelling and a change in the joint's shape. This may cause the bone and cartilage to break down. People with rheumatoid arthritis can also develop problems with other tissues and organs in their body.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The symptoms of arthritis you may experience will vary.

Therefore it's important to have an accurate diagnosis. See a doctor if you have:

- joint pain, tenderness and stiffness
- inflammation in and around the joints
- restricted movement of the joints
- warm, red skin over the affected joint
- weakness and muscle wasting



## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

There is no cure for arthritis but there are many treatments that can help slow down the condition.

For osteoarthritis, medications are often prescribed, including:



# RITIS

- painkillers
- non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- corticosteroids

In severe cases, a surgical procedure may be recommended.

Treatment for rheumatoid arthritis aims to slow down the condition's progress and minimise joint inflammation or swelling.

This is to try and prevent damage to the joints.

Recommended treatments include:

- analgesics (painkillers)
- disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs) - a combination of treatments is often recommended
- physiotherapy
- regular exercise

## ARTHRITIS – TRUE OR FALSE

1. Arthritis only affects old people
2. Osteoarthritis can develop in children and young people as a result of an injury
3. Arthritis is very rare
4. Arthritis is more common in women than men
5. All in all, there are more than 10 types of arthritis and related conditions
6. Gout is a type of arthritis
7. The most commonly affected joint are those in the hips, hands, knees, and spine
8. If you're overweight,

- losing weight can really help you cope with arthritis
9. Being active can help reduce and prevent pain
10. You should try to reduce the stress on your joints while carrying out everyday tasks like moving and lifting

### ANSWERS

1. False. It affects people of all ages, including children. However, it usually develops in adults who are in their 40s or older
2. True
3. False. In the UK, around 10 million people have arthritis

4. True. In fact, women are 3 times more likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis than men
5. True
6. True
7. True
8. True. Too much weight places excess pressure on the joints in your hips, knees, ankles and feet, leading to increased pain and mobility problems.
9. True - as long as you do the right type and level of exercise for your condition
10. True

*Source: NHS Choices*

# THESE FEET WERE MADE FOR WALKING

Even if the sun isn't shining that doesn't mean your foot care should be on hold. 'The show must go on' as they say (even if they are not on show). Here are some simple steps to follow to maintain your feet in good condition.

## DRY FEET

We have all suffered from dry feet at some point in our lives, especially on the heels of



feet. You can avoid the build-up of dry or cracked heels by scrubbing your feet using an exfoliator or a pumice stone, and by moisturising regularly.

### Why not try....

Making an exfoliator for your feet by mixing lemon/lime with salt. This is an extremely cost-effective way of getting rid of dry skin on the heels of your feet. You can also use the mixture to exfoliate the rest of your body, so this, really, is a gift that keeps giving.

## ATHLETE'S FOOT

Athlete's foot is a highly contagious fungal skin infection. The rash tends to appear in moist, dark areas between the toes. Swimming pools, gym showers or locker rooms are hot spots for fungus exposure as you tend to walk around bare feet.

There are some quick and easy ways to avoid Athlete's foot: firstly, dry your feet thoroughly after your shower/bath, taking great care to dry in between the toes, as dark damp conditions allow the foot fungus to flourish.

When visiting places like a public swimming pool or shared showers, make sure you bring a pair of shower slippers to walk around the area in; this should stop you from picking up the infection.

## TOP TIPS

- Wash your feet regularly
- Dry your feet well
- Exfoliate hard skin with pumice stone once a week
- Moisturise your feet daily
- Cut toenails regularly - cut them straight across and avoid cutting or filing the side of the nail as this can cause ingrown toenails
- Change your socks often to avoid developing smelly feet
- Wear shower slippers in communal areas



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TO FINISH OUR BOOKLET OFF, OVER THE NEXT FEW PAGES ARE A FEW FUN THINGS FOR YOU TO DO. YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING WHAT THIS HAS TO DO WITH HEALTH. WELL, DID YOU KNOW THAT KEEPING YOUR MIND OCCUPIED CAN HELP IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH? AND BETTER MENTAL HEALTH MEANS BETTER PHYSICAL HEALTH! SO ENJOY THIS LAST SECTION AND TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!

# QUIZ COLOUR

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READING  
GAMES  
ZES  
RING  
PUZZLES  
PUZZLES

# PASSPORT TO A BETTER WORLD

## - THE PLEASURE AND VALUE OF LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE

*Yvonne Roberts explains the pleasure of the written word*

One in six people has difficulty reading. The reasons why are numerous. They may include too little attention from an adult in those first early years; a problem with eyesight that isn't detected; a childhood hearing condition, such as "glue ear"; and a difficulty with words that the ancient Greeks called dyslexia and that too many times is misunderstood as signalling that a boy or girl is "dim" or stupid.

Albert Einstein, Whoopi Goldberg, Tom Cruise and Jamie Oliver are among a number of famous people diagnosed as dyslexic. Stupid they are not.

Short-sightedness, blurred hearing, the lack of support to tackle the alphabet when you were a toddler – all of these are challenges that can be overcome in different ways, no matter what your age.

If you can't read and someone else is reading this aloud to you now, it doesn't mean you won't read in future. You can start by looking for the support that suits you, and opening a book. Literacy, the ability to read and write, is often seen as a measure of whether a person is "thick". That's wrong. Often, to get by in life pretending to be able to read requires creativity, intelligence, skill and determination. Tap into that determination, and you are already on your way.

You might say: "I've done all right so far. Why try to learn now? What if I fail? What if everybody discovers that I'm a grown-up who can't do what a seven-year-old can do? How embarrassing and humiliating is that?"

The reply is that it's worth taking the risk. Everybody knows somebody who has

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difficulty with books and magazines and comics and the internet. The lack of literacy is widespread, so you are not alone. Set against the risk, the rewards are enormous.

Reading matters for practical reasons. It means a woman is self-reliant. She can read letters, fill in forms, help with her children's homework, navigate the internet, stand as an equal with those who would otherwise choose to exploit or bully her because they know what is on the page and she doesn't.

It matters because the ability to read means access to information – which is why libraries are so important. Information increases knowledge and helps us to make better choices.

Reading and writing also matters for magical reasons. The Reading Agency is a charity that inspires people to read and share their enjoyment of reading, “because everything changes when we read”.

Four years ago, Neil Gaiman, the playwright, writer, master of science fiction and graphic novelist, gave a lecture for the Reading Agency. It was called, “Why our future depends on libraries, reading and daydreaming”. He said: “Fiction can show you a different world...Once you've visited other worlds...you can never be entirely content with the world that you grew up in. And discontent is a good thing: people can... improve their worlds, leave them better, leave them different.”

Reading, in other words, provides

enjoyment; it reveals fresh horizons; it can motivate and bring hope. It can offer temporary escape from a grim situation and provide insight, empathy and knowledge denied if you don't open that book or pick up a magazine. Reading casts a spell; it unlocks our imagination; it encourages us to believe things can be different; it inspires us to make a difference. Reading is a good thing – so why deny yourself something good, and free?

When you've finished reading this, we hope you will start writing. Send us your ideas, thoughts, poems, short stories on anything and everything, including the (occasional) pain of learning how to read and the joy of embracing both fiction and non-fiction so, no matter what your circumstances, the world becomes a much, much bigger place (Freepost address on the inside back cover).

Albert Einstein, physicist and genius, was asked once how we could make our children intelligent. He said: “Read them fairytales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairytales.”

So, in that spirit, once upon a time, a woman who had always stumbled over written words, picked up this magazine and, at her own pace, began to learn to read. Eventually, she was able read this issue cover to cover – a very happy ending.

**“Reading brings enjoyment, hope, escape and it's free – so why deny yourself?”**

## MY LIFE

by Josa

My life flashes before me,  
Like lights blinking through a foggy haze in  
the velvet night,  
Full of pain, it causes me despair which  
cripples me, wounds me,  
I hunch over, winded,  
My stomach a mass of snakes writhing and  
tightening around my inner organs,  
I struggle to inhale,  
Breath trapped in lungs that feel ragged and  
sharp as though they are coated with razor.  
My eyes, sting, burn as though fire has  
scorched them, drying tear tracks like snails  
to my face.  
My head feels heavy, overwhelmed with  
thoughts that I dare not claim as my own.  
In fear of the distress and disorder they are  
bound to bring me.  
I reach out but there is no one there,  
So my hands grasp furiously into the midst,  
Forever coming up empty,  
My heart it beats too fast,  
Surely it will soon implode,  
My mind frozen to a particular time and  
space,  
Like a black and white silent movie - it  
replays and replays,  
Eyes heavy, body fatigues  
I dare not give into my exhaustion,  
For all dreams carry demons that I shall be  
weaker  
To battle while under the heavy curtain of  
sleep  
So I plod on slowly, downtrodden;  
In such emotional pain that I feel I shall  
wither and die,  
Yet others all remain oblivious;  
As I continue this journey behind the veil of  
a smile.

## UPS AND DOWNS

by Davina

I was diagnosed as having bi-polar but  
that's just how it goes.  
It's something that I live with in everyday  
life.  
The ups and downs' the pain and strife a  
long, long struggle with the battle of my  
mood swings affecting what I say and how I  
act and how I do things.  
People say I'm different. Some people say  
I'm odd. But none of them can judge me  
because none of them are god!  
I'm in a very dark place. A bottomless pit.  
I'm always in denial and I never can admit  
that it scares me.  
I feel like I'm alone with nobody to talk to.  
I'm so lucky to have friends and family I can  
phone but then I have my good days when  
I'm feeling up. I get a boost of confidence  
and people show me love.  
The world is underneath me, I'm laughing  
to myself. If you could walk in my shoes you  
would see that I am bruised.  
People say I'm deluded but they mean  
confused.  
I went to the psychiatrist but he kept  
delaying my appointments. He put me on  
the wrong medication at first. Now I'm  
finally on the right medication which I take  
twice a day.  
I still cry myself to sleep most nights when  
I'm going through changes recognising  
these faces and hearing these voices.  
The problem with this world is no equality  
or fairness.  
I sing this song for you today and hope I  
raise awareness.



## BAD PEACE DESTROYER

by Jay C

I get this feeling someones talking bad  
about me,

My head has this monster.

It always pushing people away.

It tells me not to trust,

And it makes me have distorted views.

This label I have is no good,

People judge me,

Before they even know me.

Some days it feels like I'm in a race,

My thoughts are going at a too fast pace.

They say I'm unstable emotionally

Or that I'm antisocial.

It's like I'm right at the

**BORDERLINE!!**

If I am bored I can guarantee

trouble.

I have to tell my head to

shut up.

I have a monster; bad peace destroyer

But you may know it as

**BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER!!**

## I'M THE ONE

by Anni

I'm the one that's suffering with stress

While you've created all this mess

You swerve things you should address

Ignore the things you should confess

My fault for not being able to second guess

But you should've said no instead of yes

## HEALTH QUIZ

1. What is the biggest human organ?
2. How many hours sleep do you need on average a night?
3. How many teaspoons of sugar on average are in a can of fizzy drink?
4. Can laughing lower levels of stress and strengthen your immune system?
5. Can you kiss your own elbow?
6. The left side of your brain controls the movement in the right hand side of your body?
7. Is your hair alive or dead?
8. Does singing exercise your lungs, heart, and release endorphins which make you feel good?
9. How many different scents can your nose remember?
10. Is hot flushes one of the most common symptoms of the menopause?
11. Are breasts meant to be perfectly symmetrical?
12. Do babies have more bones than an adult?
13. Is sweat itself odourless?
14. Similar to fingerprints, does everyone also have a unique tongue print?
15. Is the average amount of blood in the human body 20 litres?

15. No: answer is 7% of your body weight

12. Yes 13. Yes 14. Yes

9. 50,000 10. Yes 11. No

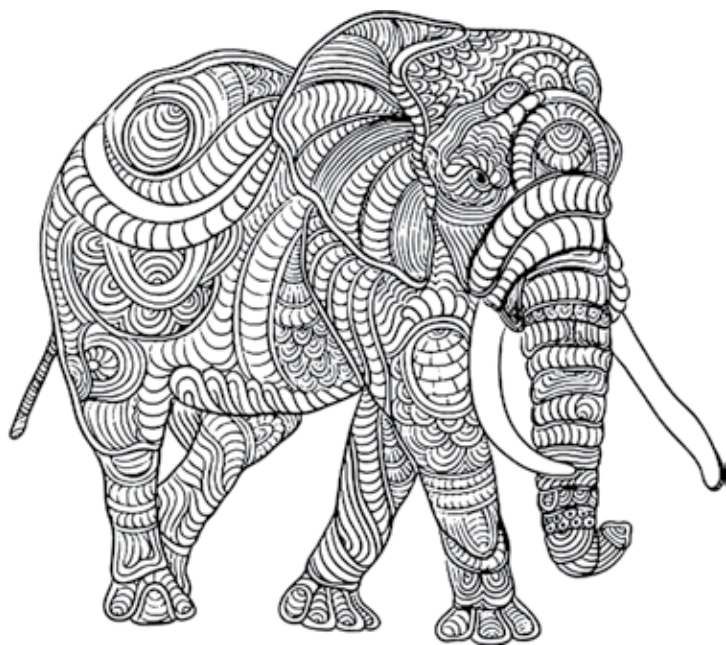
5. No 6. True 7. Both 8. Yes

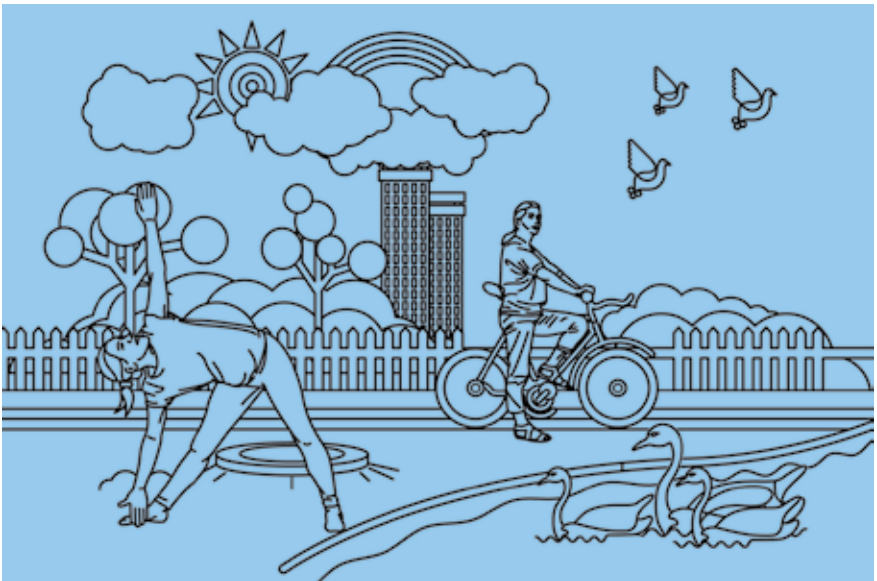
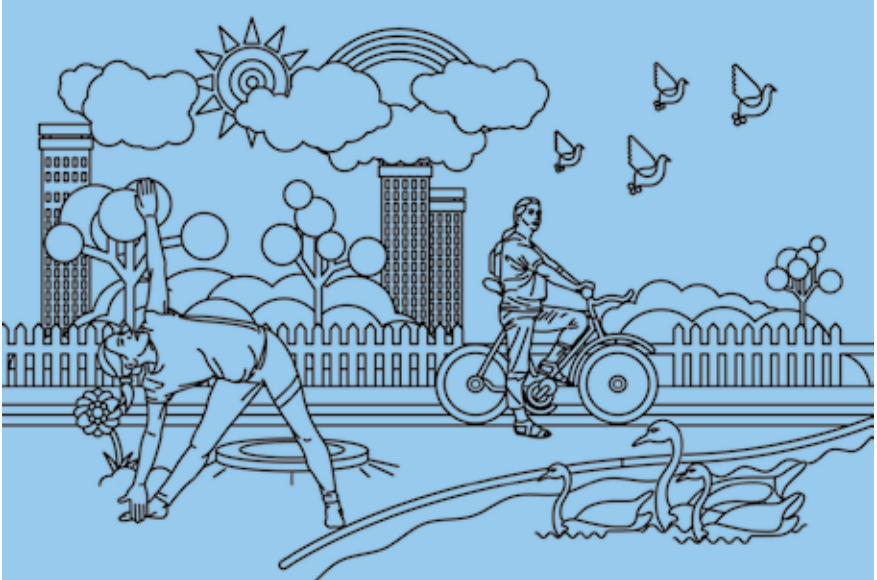
1. skin 2. 7-9 3. 10 4. Yes

# 31 RANDOM AND FUN THINGS TO DO INSTEAD OF SMOKING

<b>Day 1.</b> Read a book.	<b>Day 2.</b> Draw a picture.	<b>Day 3.</b> Write a goodbye letter to cigarettes	<b>Day 4.</b> Do a crossword puzzle.	<b>Day 5.</b> Take a nap.	<b>Day 6.</b> Speak to a friend.	<b>Day 7.</b> Listen to a relaxation tape or some favorite music.
<b>Day 8.</b> Focus on listening to yourself breathing - it will help you relax and go to sleep.	<b>Day 9.</b> Watch a funny movie on TV.	<b>Day 10.</b> Breathe deeply and challenge your lungs!	<b>Day 11.</b> Drink some water.	<b>Day 12.</b> Give someone a huge hug.	<b>Day 13.</b> Slather on rich, creamy hand lotion and rub, rub, rub! It keeps fingers busy, and reminds you how nice it is not to have tobacco stink on them.	<b>Day 14.</b> Brush your teeth.
<b>Day 15.</b> Think about something positive and add it to your positivity jar	<b>Day 16.</b> Clean your room.	<b>Day 17.</b> Create a list of things to do with the money you will save from giving up smoking.	<b>Day 18.</b> Create a cookbook.	<b>Day 19.</b> Try a new exercise routine.	<b>Day 20.</b> Whistle!	<b>Day 21.</b> Practice smiling in the mirror (it releases endorphins!)
<b>Day 22.</b> Make lists of all the problems with smoking.	<b>Day 23.</b> Look at and compare pictures of healthy lungs with smokers' lungs	<b>Day 24.</b> Write a poem.	<b>Day 25.</b> Write a letter.	<b>Day 26.</b> Crank up the music and dance like no one is watching.	<b>Day 27.</b> Write a list of things you are grateful for.	<b>Day 28.</b> Do your nails (it is hard to smoke with wet nails).
<b>Day 29.</b> Do some jumping jacks.	<b>Day 30.</b> Jog on the spot.	<b>Day 31.</b> Make a to-do list for the week ahead.				



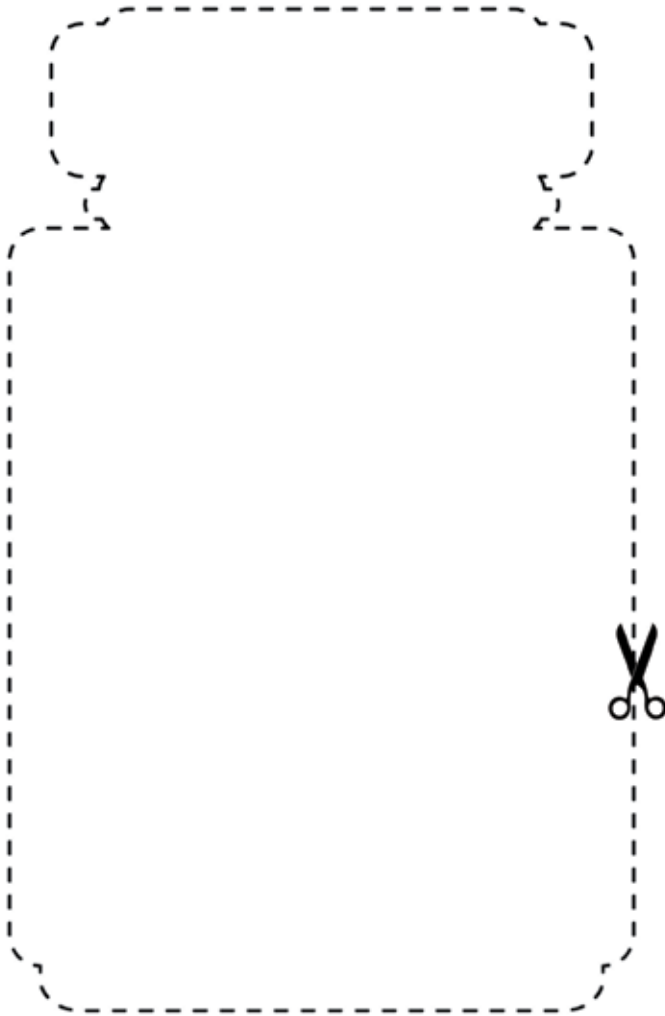




*Spot the difference answers: Missing Ruck sack on cyclist, Missing bird, Missing stripe on lady doing yoga, Missing flower, Missing cloud, Missing sun point, Missing tower block, One less fence panel*

# POSITIVITY JAR

Capture your hopes and dreams in this positivity jar! Think small or big - whatever makes you feel good. You can use your positivity jar for goal setting or to simply feel uplifted. Write directly on the jar or stick things on it. That way you can look at your ideas whenever you need some inspiration!



# MEMORY PAIRS



## HOW TO PLAY:

Memorise the pictures and match as many pairs of pictures as possible  
Minimum 2 players

### Preparation

Cut out the pictures  
Turn them upside down  
Mix them up  
Lay them out one by one, face down

### Playing

Pick two pictures - turn over and look at the images, letting all players see.  
If the two cards match, keep them!  
If the two cards don't match; put them back and try to memorise each card and where you put them.  
Next player's turn to do the same (but watch what

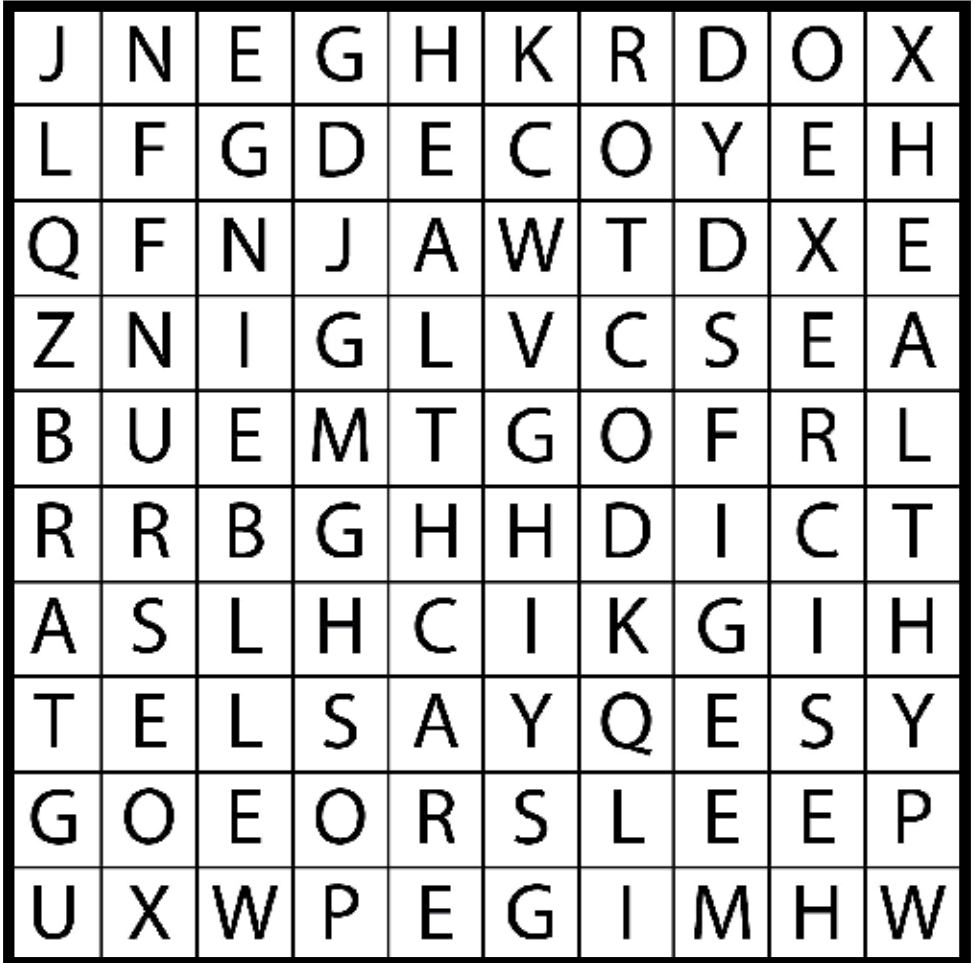
they do and memorise their cards!)

If there are several of you playing, then keep watching the other players turn over their cards and memorise them all for when it's your turn.

The game is over when all cards have been matched. The person with the most matching pairs wins!

# WORDSEARCH

Find the words – time yourself!



EXERCISE  
HEALTHY

SLEEP  
WELLBEING

DOCTOR  
NURSE

HEALTHCARE





# MENTAL HEALTH

1 IN 4 PEOPLE IN THE UK WILL EXPERIENCE A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM EACH YEAR... GET THE HELP YOU NEED AND DESERVE!

## How to access Mental Health services:

- Free on NHS but will most likely need a referral from GP
- Some services may allow you to refer yourself

## Useful numbers and information:

### RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS

0300 5000 927  
(Mon-Fri, 9.30am-1pm)  
Support and advice for people living with mental illness.

### ANXIETY UK

03444 775 774  
Mon-Fri 9:30am - 5.30pm  
Works to relieve and support those living with anxiety disorders by providing information, support and understanding via an extensive range of services, including 1:1 therapy.

### MIND

0300 123 3393  
(Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm)

Provides information on a range of topics relating to mental health.

### NO PANIC

0844 967 4848 (daily, 10am-10pm)  
A charity helping sufferers of panic attacks, phobias, OCD and anxiety.

### OCD ACTION

0845 390 6232 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm)  
Support for people with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Includes information on treatment and online resources.

### SAMARITANS

116 123  
(free 24-hour helpline)  
Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

### PANDAS FOUNDATION

0843 28 98 401  
(every day 9am-8pm)  
provides support and advice to any parent experiencing a mental illness, during or after pregnancy.

### YOUNG MINDS

0808 802 5544  
Provides information and advice for anyone with concerns about the mental health of a child or young person.

### AGE CONCERN

0800 055 6112  
Infoline on issues relating to older people. For info & advice about money, care, health or housing.

### SWITCHBOARD LGBT+ HELPLINE

0300 330 0630  
10am-10pm every day  
Provides information, support and referral services.

### REFUGE

0808 2000 247  
(24-hour helpline)  
Advice on dealing with domestic violence.

### CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE

0808 808 1677  
Monday-Friday

9.30-5pm  
(excluding bank holidays),  
extended hours on  
Tuesday, Wednesday  
and Thursday evenings  
until 8pm

# ADVICE & INFO

## Useful contacts:

### HOUSING

Shelter Helpline:  
0808 800 4444

NACRO information  
and advice line:  
0300 123 1999

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Women's Aid  
Helpline:  
0808 2000 247

### FAMILY SUPPORT

National Prisoners  
Families' helpline:  
0808 808 2003

### LEGAL & GENERAL ADVICE

PACT  
(Prison Advice &  
Care Trust) Helpline:  
0808 808 3444

Prison Reform Trust  
Advice and  
Information Service:  
0808 802 0060  
Freephone  
information line  
0808 802 0060.  
Open Monday  
3.30pm - 5.30pm  
Wednesday  
10.30am - 12.30pm

Thursday  
3.30pm - 5.30pm  
**Prisoners' Advice  
Service (PAS):**  
Prisoners' Advice  
Service,  
PO Box 46199,  
London, EC1M 4XA  
0207 253 3323  
Open Monday,  
Wednesday and  
Friday 10 am-12.30  
pm and 2-4.30 pm

### SUBSTANCE MISUSE SUPPORT

**Frank Helpline:**  
0300 123 6600  
24 hours, 7 days  
per week

**Action on  
Addiction Helpline:**  
0300 330 0659



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# Some inspirational quotes...

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"BE KIND. FOR EVERYONE YOU MEET IS FIGHTING A HARD BATTLE" IAN MACLAREN

THE CORE OF YOUR TRUE SELF IS NEVER LOST. LET GO OF ALL THE PRETENDING AND THE BECOMING YOU'VE DONE JUST TO BELONG. CURL UP WITH YOUR RAWNESS AND COME HOME. YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIND YOURSELF; YOU JUST HAVE TO LET YOURSELF IN." D. ANTOINETTE FOY

"IT'S NICE TO BE IMPORTANT BUT IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE NICE" JOHN TEMPLETON

"DON'T LET ANYTHING DULL YOUR SPARKLE." DOREEN VIRTUE

"EVEN HEROES HAVE THE RIGHT TO BLEED." FIVE FOR FIGHTING

"IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS, THERE IS ALSO OPPORTUNITY" SUN TZU

"I CAN AND I WILL. WATCH ME" CARRIE GREEN

"YES WE CAN" BARACK OBAMA

"AND STILL I RISE" MAYA ANGELOU

"LIFE IS 10% WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU AND 90% HOW YOU REACT TO IT" CHARLES R SWINDOLL

*Illustration by* **Babs Carter**

