



**Doctors
Clinic
Group**

How to stay healthy this winter



How to stay healthy during flu season

The best way to protect yourself against flu this year is by getting the flu jab – so well done on getting vaccinated.

With our immunity compromised after the last few years, looking after your health during the colder months is still key to stay healthy during the winter.

However, there are more ways than one to keep your health and fitness on the top of your priority list this year.

Here are our top 10 tips how to take control of your health.

1. Eat a healthy, balanced, and colourful diet

Cooler temperatures call for mince pies, hot chocolate or mulled wine.

But balance is key here. We are what we eat, and our diet not only affects our energy levels but how we feel mentally. Adding to that, being overweight or obese substantially increases your risk of Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease and different types of cancer. We all love to indulge in pizza, fish and chips and chocolates from time to time.

Eating a diet mainly consisting of fast food or highly processed foods can lead to us having a higher intake of salt and sugar. This kind of diet can also lead to a deficiency in valuable vitamins which can increase your risk of chronic illness and infection, including contracting flu.

By adding more fresh foods, seeds and vegetables to your diet, it can make a big difference to your overall health. Also, try to cut back on sugar and alcohol as it can negatively affect your gut health and immune system too.

We understand that losing weight on your own can be difficult. Consider seeking professional help. A dietitian can work with you on whether you are overweight or not and create a personalised diet plan or provide you with a dietary programme to help you to feel fitter and happier and also to improve your cholesterol levels and blood sugar.

2. Keep moving with regular exercise

From boosting your mood and self-esteem to improving your heart and bone health, regular exercise has an overall positive impact on your health.

The concept is easy – the more you exercise, the higher the chances are that you lower your risks to contract long-term illnesses. And you don't need to spend hours in the gym. Just 30 minutes of moderate-intensity training a few times a week, such as brisk walking or riding a bike can make a huge difference.

Exercise not only helps to manage your weight but also to lower your blood pressure, whilst building muscles and bone strength. At the same time, you will also reduce your risk of developing injuries, fractures, sprains, and strains as well as help prevent the development of a wide range of long term illnesses.

A 30 minute lunch time walk will not only boost your concentration, energy levels, and overall performance, but also lower your stress levels and improve your sleep.



3. Get outside to keep your Vitamin D levels topped up

Going outside and getting your body moving is not only good for your physical health, but for your mental health too.



Did you know that Vitamin D regulates the amount of calcium and phosphate in your body? These nutrients are needed to keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy.

Your body creates Vitamin D naturally from direct sunlight on the skin when outdoors. So, even if you wrap up warmly, make sure you go outside in the cooler months to get your daily dose of Vitamin D.

If you are concerned about your Vitamin D levels and spend most days indoors due to your job, some supplements may help. It is worthwhile having your Vitamin D levels checked by your doctor.

4. Prevention is key: Get an overall health check-up

Have you considered getting a check-up on your overall health? A health assessment can help with early detection of higher risks of developing certain health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and various types of cancer.

Early detection means early treatment, and a higher chance of cure, plus this will help you to become the healthiest version of yourself this winter.

Having a health screen is a great way to pro-actively ensure you are in a good shape. Blood tests are also a great way to help to determine your overall health and to keep track of your physical wellbeing. Getting tested regularly can also help to

see how your body changes overtime and to detect any areas of concern early on to prevent illness. Through a blood test you can also identify your nutritional profile, and Vitamin D levels.



5. See your GP for regular check-ups or any concerns



We know how difficult it has been over the last two years. From long waiting times to see a GP, to find the time to see a GP for an appointment between endless Zoom meetings.

However, it is important to see your GP for regular check-ups or something you are worried about, to not only detect illness early on but also to keep your mind at ease.

If you struggle to book in a face-to-face appointment with your local GP or are on a waiting list for a specialist referral, please refer to the back of this brochure for some more information.

6. Ask to see an Occupational Health specialist

Suffering from a stiff neck, aching back or are you struggling with low spirits or anxiety? If you're concerned about any aspect of your physical or mental health and feel it could be affecting your performance or your attendance at work, you might want to ask your manager or HR if it might be helpful to discuss your health with an Occupational Health Advisor. They can help advise you and your employer of any adjustments that might help to improve your health.



7. Reach out for Mental Health support



You may feel worried or anxious about your health, finances, or your loved ones. Or you might find yourself feeling bored, frustrated or lonely. It's important to remember that those feelings are valid and totally normal, and that everyone reacts differently.

From speaking to loved ones, keeping a routine, avoiding the news, writing down your feelings in a journal to engaging in relaxation exercises such as yoga or meditation can help to boost your mental health.

But if you are feeling you need help or know of someone you think is struggling, make sure to reach out to seek professional help. You might want to speak to your Manager or seek advice from HR. If you have an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) they may be able to offer counselling support or you can visit a GP who are all trained in mental health.

Taking good care of your mind is as important as of your body. Humans need certainty to function. For many of us, the last couple of years have put a strain on our mental health.

9. Get enough ZZZZzzzzzz

We all have nights where we keep tossing and turning and even old remedies such as hot milk with honey won't help. And this is totally normal.

How much we sleep and how much we need also differs from person to person and changes as we get older.

Try to create a restful environment as dark, quiet, and cool bedrooms generally make it easier to fall and stay asleep. Avoid looking at a screen right before bedtime or reading the news and create a night-time routine to signal to your brain that it's time for sleep.

Sleeping problems usually sort themselves out within a month, but longer stretches of poor sleep can have an impact on our overall wellbeing.

However, if those problems exist for longer and you feel it has an impact on your mood or



performance at work, it is important to speak to your doctor. You can track sleep patterns with wearables and get specialist feedback to manage and optimise your sleep.

8. Long Covid Symptoms: Seek treatment or get a referral

Most people who catch COVID-19 won't become severely ill and will get better relatively quickly. However, some people experience long-term problems after recovery for more than 12 weeks after infection, and even if they weren't very ill in first place, and this includes younger people.

Also known as long COVID, these lingering symptoms may present themselves for

weeks or even months after testing negative. Symptoms include persistent fatigue, joint pains, breathing difficulties and any ongoing symptoms affecting your lifestyle.

If you are interested, please speak to your HR department and refer to the back of this brochure for some more information.



10. Don't forget to get your COVID booster



While life has mostly returned back to normal and most restrictions being removed, including mass testing, it is still important to protect yourself against Covid this winter.

Our immune systems might still be more prone to catching viruses after social distancing for almost two years.

By getting the booster vaccine, this will not only help to protect yourself, but also those around you and the overall population, especially people over 50 and those with a weakened immune system. This will also help to reduce the spread of the virus and the chance of exposing those who are at a higher risk of getting critically ill.

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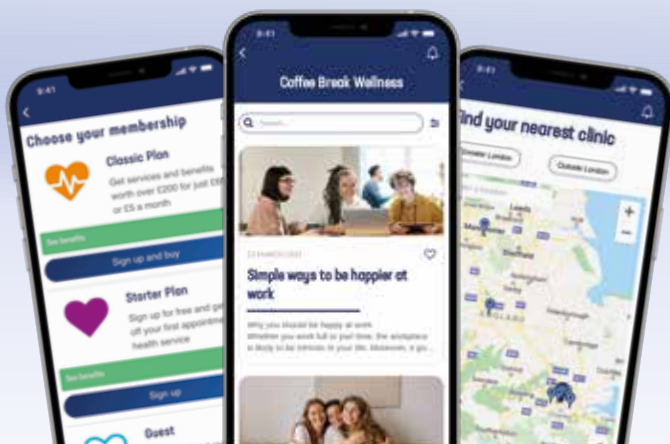
Your one-stop-shop for all things healthcare

The Doctors Clinic Group offers a full range of services to help you stay fit and healthy and put your health first.

We can help you with easy, convenient, **same day face-to-face and video GP appointments and onward referrals** to specialists including x-rays and scans, physiotherapy, health assessments, dietitian and weight management, mental health services as well as virtual health services.

If you have private medical insurance, you may be able to claim for some costs under your policy or you can use the Doctors Clinic Group services on a self-pay basis. Please check full details for terms and conditions.

The easiest way to book appointments and access all services whether these are included in your employee benefits or via self-pay is via our Doctors Clinic Group App.



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CONTACT US



corporateservicing@doctorsclinicgroup.com



0203 880 0034