



Boost your Physical Health

Ensuring we are physically fit and healthy is vital. Take time this month to assess your physical health.

Use this guide to help identify any early signs of physical health problems; and see what positive changes you can make to improve your physical health.



Scan here to access our wellbeing library

Our Sept Wellbeing Wednesday guide will be coming out on the 8th Sept.

It's not too late to sign up to this months' Amey Centenary Challenge.

What will your challenge be?

Register for our webinars:

Know Your Key Health Numbers

Safe Start to Exercise

Cook-along with Zane Chetty:

Live cook-along

Six week metabolic boost programme.

Click here to sign up

Are you aged 40-74? Click here for more information on your free NHS health check.

NHS health check

Part 1:

Know your numbers



Part 2:

Blood pressure



Part 3:

Body Mass Index (BMI)



Part 4:

Cholesterol



Part 5:

Blood sugar levels and Diabetes



Part 6:





Resources and support



Part 1:

Know your numbers

The four health numbers key to your physical wellbeing are:

-  Blood pressure
-  Cholesterol
-  Blood sugar
-  Body Mass Index (BMI).

Did you know?

An ideal blood pressure is under **120/80mmHg**

Six million people in the UK have high blood pressure and don't know it

A healthy person should have a resting pulse rate of between **60 to 100** beats per minute

Every day in the UK, **350 people** have a stroke or heart attack that could have been prevented

Part 2:

Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is a measure of the force that your heart uses to pump blood around your body.

When you have your blood pressure measured, you will be given two numbers, a top number and a bottom number.

- **Systolic blood pressure** - This is the top number displaying the highest level your blood pressure reaches when your heart beats.
- **Diastolic blood pressure** - The bottom number displaying the lowest level your blood pressure reaches, as your heart relaxes between beats.

The numbers you need to know:

- Ideal blood pressure is considered to be between **90/60mmHg** and **120/80mmHg**
- High blood pressure is considered to be **140/90mmHg** or higher
- Low blood pressure is considered to be **90/60mmHg** or lower.

Having a blood pressure test is the only way to know if you have high blood pressure.

A blood pressure check is quick and painless, and could save your life. You can get a check for free at your GP surgery, and some pharmacies and leisure centres. Or, you can buy your own machine for around £30 to £40.

It's not only your diet that affects your blood pressure, it's your lifestyle.

High blood pressure is often related to unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as smoking, drinking too much alcohol, being overweight and not exercising enough. Left untreated, high blood pressure can increase your risk of developing a number of serious long-term health conditions, such as coronary heart disease and kidney disease.

TIPS TO HELP LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE NATURALLY:

Cut your salt intake to less than 6g (0.2oz) a day, which is about a teaspoonful

Find out how you can reduce the amount of salt in your diet

Eat a low-fat, balanced diet – including plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables

Get tips on eating healthily

Be active

Get tips on getting more exercise

Cut down on alcohol

Get tips on cutting down

Download a drinks diary to keep track

Lose weight

Read advice on how to lose weight

Stop smoking

Get help quitting

Drink less caffeine – found in coffee, tea and some soft drinks

Water, drinks and your health - NHS

Taking these steps today will not only help to lower your blood pressure they will also work to help keep your heart and body healthy.

Part 3:

Body Mass Index (BMI)

What is the body mass index (BMI)?

The body mass index is a measure that uses your height and weight to work out if your weight is healthy, dividing weight in kilograms by height in metres squared. For example, a BMI of 25 means 25kg/m².

BMI RANGES

For most adults, an ideal BMI is in the 18.5 to 24.9 range.

For children and young people aged 2 to 18, the BMI calculation takes into account age and gender as well as height and weight.

If your BMI is:

- Below 18.5 – you're in the underweight range
- Between 18.5 and 24.9 – you're in the healthy weight range
- Between 25 and 29.9 – you're in the overweight range
- Between 30 and 39.9 – you're in the obese range

If you want to calculate your BMI, try the BMI healthy weight calculator

Visceral fat

Most of us know it's not healthy to be carrying excess body fat. But certain types of fat, such as visceral fat, can be even more harmful than we may realise, especially if we develop too much of it.

Visceral fat can cause some real health complications. These fat cells do more than just increase the notch on your belt - they can change some of your body's vital functions, increasing your risk of developing certain medical conditions such as:

- Heart disease
- Heart attacks
- Type 2 diabetes
- Strokes
- Breast cancer
- Colorectal cancer
- Alzheimer's disease.

Waist size

Waist size is important because it's all about where you store your fat. If you store your fat around the waist then it's sitting around your vital organs such as the liver and kidneys, which will increase the chance of getting diabetes and high cholesterol.

- The ideal waist size is 35 inches for men and 32.5 inches for women
- A waist size of 40 inches for men and 35 inches for women comes with increased health risks.

Alternatively, you can calculate your waist to hip ratio by measuring your hip at the widest point and your waist just above your belly button. You then divide your waist size by your hip size.

- A ratio of 0.95 or below is considered good for men, whilst 0.8 and below is good for women
- 1.0 or higher for men and 0.85 or higher for women puts you at greater risk of poor health.



SIX WAYS TO REDUCE VISCERAL FAT



Change your diet

Saturated fats, refined carbohydrates and sugars contribute heavily to our storage of fat. Firstly, try replacing sugar with healthy, natural sweeteners in moderation. Eating healthy fats like extra virgin olive oil, avocados and walnuts, or fermented foods like kimchi, live yoghurt and miso can benefit your insulin balance, gut bacteria, hormones, and weight management.

Lean and clean protein

Beat hunger and reduce insulin spikes with healthy protein choices. Avoid greasy hamburgers, bacon, and processed sausages in favour of fish, lean meats – such as turkey or chicken – and free-range eggs.

Reduce alcohol

Alcohol makes you gain weight around your midsection, without you realising. It's so easy to guzzle down hundreds, even thousands, of liquid calories by bingeing on beer, wine or cocktails. Extra alcohol units also place strain on the liver, which is already working overtime to break down the toxic, visceral fat acids. Give your liver a break – alternate beers with water or other sugar-free alternatives.

Quit smoking

As everyone is well aware, cigarettes take a toll on almost your entire body. Consider cutting down the number of cigs per week – quitting reduces your cardiac risk, which is also raised by excess visceral fat. Remember, you may gain weight as you stop smoking, but that weight gain does not usually last too long. In any case, the benefits of stopping smoking far outweigh the disadvantages of any temporary weight gain!

Drink more water

We need water to properly burn off or metabolise fat. This process is called lipolysis – the more water you drink. Some studies have shown that increased water leads to increased lipolysis and a loss of fat. The Eatwell Guide recommends aiming for 6-8 glasses of water per day. But if you're exercising or it's particularly hot weather, you should up your water intake to replace lost fluids through sweat.

Exercise

To guarantee visceral fat loss, it's best to combine a good fitness routine and healthy diet. Aerobic exercise for 30 minutes or more and high-intensity interval training (also known as HIIT) can be effective methods for losing visceral fat.



Remember, physical activity is not only good for your body, but great for your mind too.

Check out the resource section at the end of this guide.

Part 4:

Cholesterol

Elevated cholesterol levels are one of the risk factors of heart disease. Fortunately, a simple cholesterol test can tell you how much cholesterol is circulating in your blood. Keeping track of the numbers can motivate you to make the necessary changes, in order to adopt a cholesterol lowering diet.

When was the last time you checked yours?

Contact your GP to book a test.

When to get a cholesterol test

If you:

- Are aged 40-75 you should test your cholesterol every 5 years
- Have high cholesterol levels, you should check more regularly
- Are on medication to lower your cholesterol, you should check your levels every year.

Part 5:

Blood sugar levels and Diabetes

Sugar, in moderation, is an important part of your diet.

Insulin allows sugar (glucose) in your bloodstream to enter your cells, where it can be used for energy. If you don't have enough insulin, sugar stays in the bloodstream. Over time, high blood sugar levels damage your blood vessels. This can cause other problems, such as **coronary heart disease**, kidney disease and diabetes. It's important to know whether you have high blood sugar so that this can be controlled, reducing the risk of damage.

If you don't have enough insulin, sugar stays in the bloodstream.

For most people without diabetes, normal blood sugar levels are:

- *Between 4 and to 6 mmol/L before meals*
- *Less than 8 mmol/L two hours after eating.*

A high blood sugar level would mean you either have **diabetes** (type 1 or type 2) or have a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Although diabetes can have symptoms, such as thirst, urinating a lot, blurred vision, weight loss, recurrent infections and tiredness, you may only get these mildly, or not at all. That's why it's important to get tested. Your blood sugar levels are one of the checks available as part of the NHS health check (details below).

Matt Oaks, Procurement Manager in Amey Utilities, recently shared his experience supporting his son Flynn, aged seven, who was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. In a Lunch & Learn with colleagues, Matt spread awareness of diabetes and stressed the importance of assessing our health. You can listen to the recording below.

**Diabetes Awareness Lunch & Learn
- hosted by Matt Oaks**



Part 6:

Resources and support

Take part in our six week metabolic boost programme

The Metabolic Boost programme is a series of webinars by SuperWellness across six weeks, providing insight on how to make positive changes to your diet and live a healthy lifestyle. The aim is boost energy and natural fat-burning.

- 15 September - 2pm - **Week 1:** Metabolic Boost: Lose Weight & Gain Energy
- 22 September - 11am - **Week 2:** Practical meal planning
- 29 September - 1pm - **Week 3:** The Sugar Freedom Plan
- 6 October - 11am - **Week 4:** Super Challenge
- 13 October - 1pm - **Week 5 :** 10 Steps to Healthy Digestion
- 20 October - 1pm - **Week 6:** Fun Quiz!

Click the link below for a detailed explanation of each session.

[Sign up to the Metabolic Boost programme](#)

[Use this zoom link to access the weekly sessions](#)



Cook-along with Zane Chetty - 19th August, 18:00 - 18:30

Zane Chetty, who works on our National Housing Contract, successfully made it to the live rounds of Masterchef UK, celebrating his South African heritage. Join us for a live cook-along where Zane will be cooking a prawn chutney with rice.

[Cook-along with Zane Chetty](#)

[Ingredients list for prawn chutney and rice](#)

Webinars

Know Your Key Health Numbers

Hosted by Darren Vine from Medigold, this webinar provides an overview of what the essential numbers are; what value they should be; and how you measure up to these benchmarks. We will focus on realistic and practical lifestyle and behavioural adaptations to develop a simple and personal action plan.

[Wed 18th August: 11.30am–12.30pm](#)

Safe Start to Exercise

Hosted by Mark Pinches from Medigold, this workshop focuses on assisting you to implement an effective exercise programme, that helps you to plan and monitor your weekly exercise routine and achieve your goals. Including exercise recommendations, the principles of training and examples of effective exercise programmes for weight management, endurance, and flexibility.

[Wed 25th August: 1pm–2pm](#)



The Centenary challenge

It's not too late to take part in the Amey Centenary Challenge. Celebrate Amey's 100th year and raise money for Cancer Research UK by taking part in a challenge focused on the '100' them. You can choose to get creative or take part in a fitness challenge, with Amey match funding the first £10,000 raised.

[Click here to find out more and sign up](#)

What will your challenge be?



Jamie Talks... Sports and Performance

This month Jamie will be talking to Eamonn Sheridan, retired professional Rugby Union player who now works as a Strategic Sales Consultant at Yulife, about why its important to manage your energy levels in order to optimise performance.

[Jamie Talks](#)



Wellbeing web pages

All the content tools and resources featured in our wellbeing guides can be found on our website. Remember, you don't have to be on the Amey network to access these web pages, you can access them on any device.

[Amey Wellbeing Website](#)



My Healthy Advantage App

This app is free to all Amey employees and has loads of useful information about improving your wellbeing. Download today and use the code **MHA147812**. The app features wellbeing tools (self- help guides) and factsheets, videos and webinars and is designed to help improve your overall wellbeing by using personal metrics to set goals and achievements.

[Listen again to a webinar hosted by Health Assured](#)

health assured

Employee Assistance Programme (0800 130 3414)

Our EAP, provided by Health Assured, offers a wide range of services to Amey employees (and their immediate family) which are free and confidential. Call for confidential counselling and information on **0800 130 3414** (available 24/7, 365 days a year).

[Employee Assistance Programme](#)



Meditation Monday at 1pm

John-Paul Powell, Senior ITS Engineer in Highways, leads a relaxing 30 minutes of meditation. Start your week off the right way, everyone is welcome to join.

[Book Meditation Monday](#)



Friday Yoga at 2pm

Amey Defence's very own Felicity Pryke will be using her experience as a yoga teacher to offer all Amey employees free yoga sessions every week for 30 minutes. Move into the weekend feeling relaxed.

[Book Friday Yoga](#)



Vitality monthly calendar

Open to all Amey employees, free classes (pilates, mindfulness and cardio), events and talks.

[Vitality monthly calendar](#)



Vitality Digital GP

All employees have access to four free online GP consultations a year.

[Vitality Digital GP](#)



Save with Amey Wellness Centre

The Save with Amey wellness centre has lots of useful information.

[Save with Amey Wellness Centre](#)



Feel Happy.
Feel Energised.
Feel You.

Cycle to Work Scheme

Benefit from Tax and National Insurance savings on a new bike and spread the cost of a new bike (and accessories) over 12 months. Click below for more info.

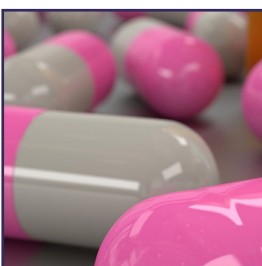
[Cycle to work scheme](#)



Gym membership

This is an Anytime Benefit – choose this option at any time of year between the 1st and 15th of each month. Gymflex is our gym supplier that offers you discounted membership at over 2,500 gyms across the UK.

[Gym Membership Benefit](#)



Health Cash plan

This is an Anytime Benefit – choose this option at any time of year between the 1st and 15th of each month

[Health Cash Plan](#)



Super wellness

Smart workplace nutrition setting new standards for your employees' physical and mental wellbeing.

[Super wellness](#)



Top tips for a good nights sleep

[Top tips for a good nights sleep](#)



Tips for sustainable healthy weight loss

[Tips for sustainable Healthy Weight Loss](#)



Nutrition tips for nightworkers

[Nutrition tips for nightworkers](#)



**MEDIGOLD
HEALTH**

Medigold Portal

Features a number of essential medical and wellbeing-focused services, available on demand and can be accessed by managers and employees. Login using password: AMEYMGHSUPPORT

[Medigold Portal](#)



Get your free NHS health check

If you're between the ages of 40 and 74 without a pre-existing condition, you should receive a letter from your GP surgery or local council, inviting you for a free NHS health check every 5 years. You can also call your GP surgery to book a Health check. The aim is to pick up on early signs of stroke risk, diabetes, dementia, and heart and kidney disease.

[NHS Health Check](#)