

What Are The Main Diseases Affecting Men's Health?

On average, men see a GP less than half as much as women do! Often ageing can trick men into thinking their symptoms are normal, or a reluctance to 'make a fuss' can prevent, or delay, men from making a doctor's appointment. Men in the UK are paying the price for neglecting their health with more than 100,000 premature deaths occurring every year.

It's important to be aware of changes to your health, regardless of your gender, and to act upon them by seeing a doctor as soon as possible if something's not right. This blog outlines the main diseases affecting men and tips on how to reduce the likelihood of them occurring.

Heart Disease

In the UK, 1 in 6 men die as a result of heart disease. 1.4 million men are living with heart disease, and each year approximately 110,000 suffer heart attacks. Although you can't control family history, gender or age, there are many things you can do to reduce your chances. These are; making sure you get regular exercise of 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week (or 75 minutes intense exercise a week), reducing or managing stress, eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight, getting enough sleep, not smoking and limiting alcohol. More than a third of men regularly exceed the maximum recommended level of alcohol consumption of three to four units of alcohol a day. As well as increasing the risk of heart disease this also leads to chronic liver disease and cirrhosis.



Just by reducing this or acting on any one or more of the above will go a long way to protecting yourself.

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. More than 30,000 men are diagnosed with it every year. Cancer cells enlarge the prostate gland which then presses on the tube which carries urine. This makes a common symptom difficulty in passing urine. Additionally, men can experience pain when passing urine and frequent trips to the toilet. There's no concrete lifestyle changes that reduce your likelihood getting prostate cancer except for regular exercise. However, it's worth noting that prostate cancer is very treatable when found early so the best advice is to see your GP straight away if you get any of these symptoms.

Depression

Men are much less likely to discuss their emotions than women and often feel greater societal pressure. One in eight men in the UK has a common mental health problem such as depression, anxiety or OCD, and suicide is the biggest killer of men under the age of 45 in the UK.

Making small changes such as talking about your feelings, keeping active and eating well will help you feel better. If you are concerned about your mental health always talk to your GP, it can feel daunting but getting help and support will make a big difference. There are also a number of support organisations such as Samaritans, Mind and CALM. If you are in distress and need immediate help please call 999 or go to A&E.

Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is the 5th most common cancer in the UK and has a higher prevalence amongst men than women. It is important to check your moles regularly to be aware of any changes to the size, shape or colour, or if they start bleeding. Most changes are harmless and occur due to an increase in pigmented cells in the skin however if there are significant changes, and where the mole looks unusual or becomes itchy visit your GP. To reduce your risk of skin cancer avoid getting sunburnt, cover-up and use sunscreen with a SPF of at least 15, and avoid the most intense sunlight between 11am – 3pm.

So get on board with protecting your health today.