

LONELINESS CAMPAIGN



Young people often experience stigma associated with loneliness, partly because most people associate loneliness only with older, isolated people. Our recent research shows that 16-24 year olds are at higher risk of feeling lonely compared to other age groups, but less likely to seek advice and support. Key findings with Ipsos MORI and YouGov show:

- 81% of young people say that they would worry about being embarrassed, mocked, judged or treated differently if they if they said they were lonely
- Among students, nearly half admit they have hidden their feelings of loneliness for fear of being judged.
- 16-24s are also among the least likely to take action to help themselves feel less lonely (47% v adult average 51%).
- 62% of 16-24s are still the least likely group to feel comfortable helping family/friends who may be feeling lonely

● Feeling lonely is completely normal. Many of us can feel lonely while checking our social media, on our own or with others. It is nothing to be embarrassed or ashamed of.

● Sometimes admitting we feel lonely can be hard but it's important to remember that many others experience similar feelings of loneliness too, and that this feeling can pass.

● If you are feeling lonely, or know someone else who is, there are plenty of simple, affordable actions you can take, such as

- going for a walk with someone;
- inviting someone out for a coffee and a chat;
- finding out about affordable events nearby;
- going along to a gym class or playing in a sports team;
- joining a society or local community group to meet like-minded people;
- reaching out to those around you so you can both feel the benefits of in-person social connection.

● Find more support and advice on the [Better Health - Every Mind Matters Loneliness](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/lifes-challenges/loneliness/) web page to help yourself or others who might be feeling lonely, or search 'Loneliness Every Mind Matters' for more support and advice.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING CORNER

This month, I will be discussing aerobic exercise, why it is important and the recommended guidelines.

Aerobic exercise, or cardiovascular exercise, or cardio as most of us call it, is so important of our overall health and wellbeing. The NHS states that exercise just once or twice a week can reduce the risk of heart disease or stroke. Exercise can also reduce your risk of major illnesses, such as coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer and lower your risk of early death by up to 30%. People who exercise regularly have a lower risk of developing many additional long-term (chronic) conditions, stroke, and some cancers. Additionally, research shows that physical activity can also boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy, as well as reducing your risk of stress, clinical depression, dementia and Alzheimer's disease, as well as reducing our risk of falls, fall-related fractures and osteoarthritis as we age.

The UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, on GOV.UK, state that we should try to be active every day and aim to do at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity over a week (or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week), through a variety of activities.

To reach moderate intensity, you need to be raising your heart rate, breathing a little faster and feeling warmer. You should still be able to talk, but you won't be able to sing. Most people choose to make moderate intensity activity part of their everyday life i.e. walking or cycling instead of driving or taking a bus. Any extra activity is great. More is better and taking part in activities such as sports and exercise will make you even healthier.

According to the NHS, examples of moderate intensity activities include:

- Brisk walking
- Water aerobics
- Riding a bike
- Dancing
- Doubles tennis
- Pushing a lawn mower
 - Hiking
- Rollerblading

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING CORNER

Vigorous intensity activity is where you are working even harder. Your heart rate and breathing rate will have increased, and you will not be able to speak more than few words at a time at this level of intensity.

According to the NHS, examples of vigorous intensity activities include:

- Running
- Swimming
- Riding a bike fast or on hills
- Walking up the stairs
- Sports, like football, rugby, netball and hockey
 - Skipping
 - Aerobics
 - Gymnastics
 - Martial arts

If you have not exercised for a while, or you have a medical condition or concern, please speak to your GP or a qualified medical professional before partaking in physical activity. It is also important for you to make the activity and intensity appropriate for your level of fitness.

Remember to start small and start SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound goals). It is also never too late to make a change. We are all stronger than we think, so don't give up. I wish you luck.

All the information, and more, featured in this month's article can be found on <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>

Sophie (Health and Wellbeing Coach for PCN1W, Certified Personal Trainer and Nutritional Advisor)

Make sure you check back every month for all your health and wellbeing titbits.

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HAPPENING THIS MONTH

APRIL is Stress Awareness Month



Stress Management Society
from distress to de-stress

Increasing public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic.

Visit: [The Stress Management Society](#) for more information



APRIL 10th - End of Ramadan

APRIL 26th - Lesbian Visibility Day

Recognises and celebrates the contributions of lesbians.

