

# Know your numbers.

To lead a healthy lifestyle, it's important to know what you're aiming for. From physical activity to fruit and vegetables, there are lots of guidelines to follow to help you on the road to full fitness. Knowing where you stand can help to ensure you stay on track, and also highlight any issues you might need to discuss with your GP.



## Numbers for a healthy lifestyle.

See how you stack up to these key health stats, and if it's not favourable, think about making some positive lifestyle changes.

## Physical activity.

The current guidance from the NHS is to accumulate more than 150 minutes of moderate physical exercise per week. Activities that count include brisk walking, aerobics, jogging, cycling, swimming and other sports that get the heart rate going.

## Caffeine.

Too much caffeine can make you restless, anxious and irritable. For some, it can also affect sleep and lead to headaches, abnormal heart rhythms or other problems.

A moderate amount of caffeine is fine, so try to drink less than 300mg of caffeine per day. That's equivalent to three cups of instant coffee, or 4 mugs of tea.

## Sleep.

Sleep is fundamental to a healthy lifestyle, underpinning everything we do. It aids our physical recovery, emotional resilience and memory. Although everybody's different, most people should aim for 6-8 hours sleep a night to be at their healthy best.

## Fruit and vegetables.

Fruit and vegetables are a key source of vitamins and fibre, and form the basis of a healthy diet. It's recommended we have at least five portions of different types of fruit and vegetables a day. They should make up around a third of what you eat.

## Waist size.

Waist circumference can be used to estimate abdominal fat stores. People with larger than normal stores of abdominal fat are thought to be at a greater risk of developing health problems, particularly heart disease.

If your waist circumference is greater than recommended size it places you at a very increased risk.

People who are an apple shape (store fat around their midriff) are far more likely to develop heart disease and diabetes than those who are a pear shape (hips and backside are wider than their shoulders).

## Recommended waist sizes.

The recommended waist size is different for men and women:

- A healthy waist size for men is less than 37 inches
- A healthy waist size for women is less than 31.5 inches

## Alcohol.

It's important to keep an eye on what you drink, to keep the health risks from alcohol low. The allowance is the same for men and women, and the current guidance is not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis.

Drinks should be spread out evenly throughout the week and binge drinking is a definite no-no.

## Cigarettes.

Smoking is the biggest cause of preventable deaths in the UK. Every cigarette you smoke is harmful, so there is no weekly allowance. If you smoke, visit [nhs.uk/smokefree](https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree) for help and guidance on quitting today.



The key to a healthy lifestyle is to eat a balanced diet and exercise regularly.