

This year, International Men's Day themes for the day are:

Making a positive difference to the wellbeing and lives of men and boys and promoting a positive conversation about men, manhood and masculinity. Wellbeing and health are topics that are often over-looked by men.

It is vital that men start to feel more comfortable talking about their health and wellbeing.

## Physical Health

### The main physical health issues that men face are:

Heart attacks strike men at younger ages than women. On average, a first heart attack strikes men at age 65. For women, the average age of a first heart attack is 72. It's not entirely clear why middle-aged men have more heart attacks than women in the same age group. But historically higher rates of unhealthy habits, including smoking and stress, may be partly to blame.

Men are 14% more likely to get cancer than women and 37% more likely to die from it. This is probably due to a higher risk of exposure to carcinogens, lack of awareness of risks and not going to see a doctor when symptoms develop.



**Testicular cancer** tends to mostly affect men between 15 and 49 years of age. Typical symptoms are a painless swelling or lump in 1 of the testicles, or any change in shape or texture of the testicles. It's important to be aware of what feels normal for you. Get to know your body and see a GP if you notice any changes.

**Prostate cancer** is the most common cancer in men in the UK. It usually develops slowly, so there may be no signs for many years. Symptoms of prostate cancer do not usually appear until the prostate is large enough to affect the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the penis (urethra).

When this happens, you may notice things like:

- an increased need to urinate
- straining while you urinate
- a feeling that your bladder has not fully emptied

These symptoms should not be ignored, but they do not mean you have prostate cancer. It's more likely they're caused by something else, such as prostate enlargement. See a GP if you experience these symptoms.

**Diabetes** is a lifelong condition that causes a person's blood sugar level to become too high. There are 2 main types of diabetes:

Type 1 diabetes – where the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells that produce insulin.

Type 2 diabetes – where the body does not produce enough insulin, or the body's cells do not react to insulin.

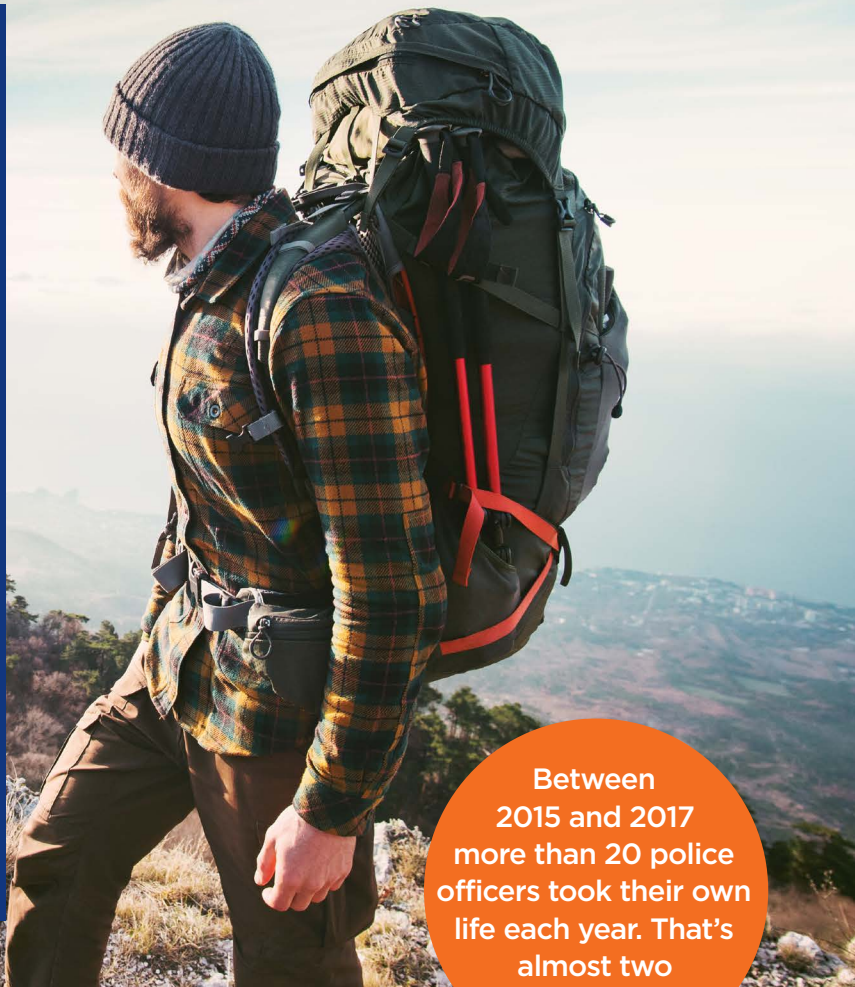
Type 2 diabetes is far more common than type 1. In the UK, around 90% of all adults with diabetes have type 2. Men are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than women.

For more details on men's health click [here](#).



## Tips for staying healthy:

- Drink less than 14 units of alcohol a week (equivalent of 6 pints of average strength beer).
- If you smoke, STOP! On average a cigarette smoker will die 10 years younger than a non-smoker.
- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and veg a day.
- Walk 10,000 steps a day.
- If it comes in brown choose this over white (rice, pasta, bread).
- Drink at least 2 litres of water a day.
- Aim to do at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week.
- Regularly have your cholesterol and blood pressure checked.
- Aim to get 7-9 hours of sleep each night (or day if you are working nights).



Between 2015 and 2017 more than 20 police officers took their own life each year. That's almost two a month\*

## Mental Health

Life has been tough for us all during the pandemic. Our daily lives have changed considerably with the months of lockdown and loss have had a huge impact on our mental health.

It's great that we are starting to get back to normal, however, these changes may lead to you feeling anxious.

If you are concerned about returning to the office after working from home click [here](#) to read our guide.

If you're not feeling great, you're not alone. One in four people will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year. For many of us talking about mental health is difficult and often men find this even more difficult. It's hard to put how you're feeling into words. Remember you can be strong without being silent.

As a police officer your role is to serve and protect, this means that you are less likely to ask for help, as you think it's seen as a sign of weakness. We all need to stop thinking that talking about emotional or mental health is a sign of weakness. Police officers are dying because they aren't asking for or getting help.

Research has shown that emergency services workers are twice as likely as the public to identify problems at work as the main cause of their mental health problems, but they are also significantly less likely to seek help.

With a quarter of emergency service workers admitting to thinking about taking their own lives, the 'Man up' campaign through the Police Federation encourages officers to take each other's mental wellbeing as seriously as they take each other's physical safety, and questions whether we are too dismissive of a colleague who may be showing signs of mental health issues - something that has potentially fatal consequences. When you hear 'Man Up', think 'Man Down' offer help. For more details of this campaign [click here](#).

If you're struggling with your mental health, help is available:

[Police Mutual Care Line](#)

[Samaritans](#)

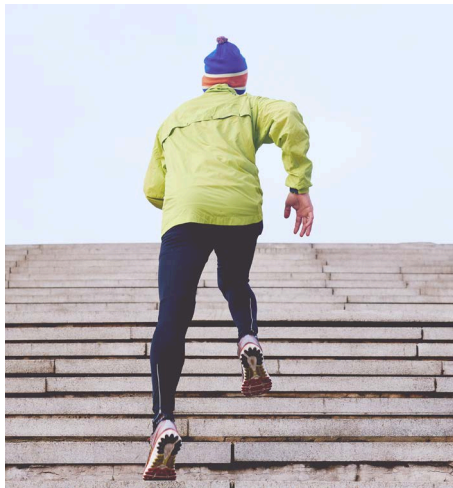
[Mind](#)

[Shout](#)

**Stress and anxiety are normal, especially in these uncertain times. It's what we do about it that matters. There are various steps you can take to cope with being under pressure, remember, different things work for different people.**

**Identify your triggers and take control** – working out what triggers your stress can help you anticipate when you may feel stressed and what you could do about it in advance.

**Organise your time** – making some adjustments to the way you organise your time can help you feel more in control and able to handle the pressure you are feeling.



**Be active** – exercise can help clear your head and then let you deal with your problems more calmly. Go outside to exercise, as fresh air and spending time in nature can really help.

**Talk to other people** – friends, family and colleagues can help support you through the stress you are feeling, you may even have a laugh and start to relax. You may also want to consider talking to a professional counsellor.



**Do something you enjoy** – spending time doing something you enjoy will take your mind off how you are feeling. Everyone needs to take time for themselves, it can be as simple as having a bath or reading a book.

**Avoid unhealthy ways to cope** – many people use alcohol, smoking, chocolate and gambling to try and relieve the stress they are feeling, none of these things will help in the long term, use healthy coping strategies like going for a run, listening to music or walking the dog.

**Challenge yourself** – learning new skills and setting yourself new goals will help build your confidence and make you feel good about yourself.

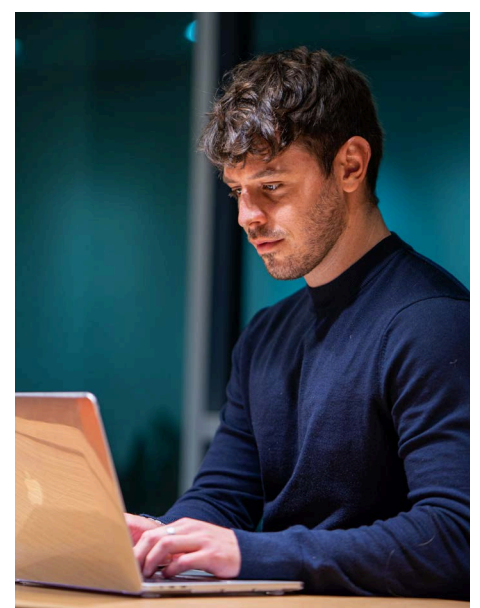
**Help others** – people who volunteer in the community or for a worthwhile cause tend to be more resilient.

**Try to be positive** – think of all the things you are grateful for, write down or say out loud 3 things that went well each day.



**Address some of the causes** – where possible improve some of the issues that are putting pressure on you.

**Accept the things you can't change** – it's not easy, but accepting that there are some things happening to you that you can't do anything about will help you focus your time and energy elsewhere.



**For more details on looking after your mental health, read our guide [here](#).  
To read our stress awareness guide click [here](#).**



## Financial wellbeing

Worrying about money can be extremely stressful and may lead to mental and physical health conditions.

If you're struggling with debt or finding it hard to manage your finances then we're here to help.

Read our debt awareness guide [here](#).

If you are struggling with gambling, call the National Gambling Helpline (24 hours) 0808 80 20 133 or read our guide [here](#).



## Police Mutual Services

Our Care Line Service provided by Health Assured can offer advice and information, helping with a range of concerns including emotional support. Take a look at the e-portal or download the APP.

## Health & Wellbeing e-portal

<https://healthassuredapp.co.uk>

Username: policemutual Password: careline

We've teamed up with **PayPlan\*\***, one of the UK's leading free debt advice providers, who offer free and confidential advice to anyone in serious financial difficulties.

They're able to advise you on a range of debt solutions suited to your individual circumstances, helping to protect you and your family with a sustainable way to manage your debt.

Get free and confidential help to combat your debt, call **PayPlan\*\*** on 0800 197 8433.

To read more of our wellbeing guides take a look at our Wellbeing Hub [here](#).

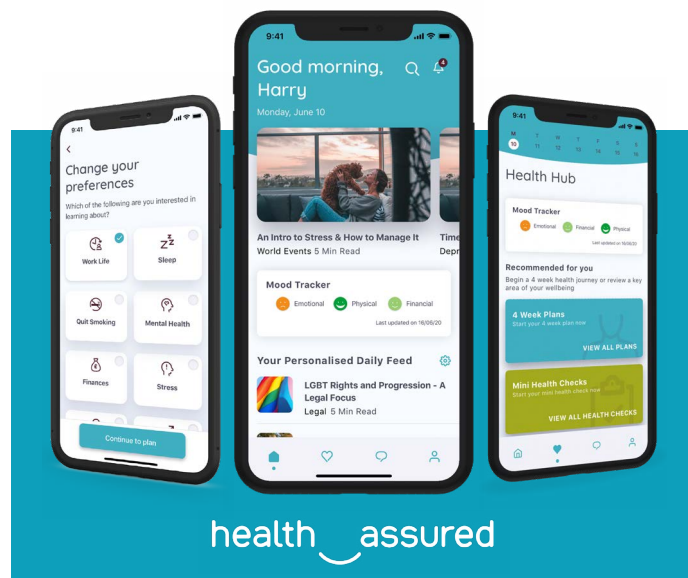
Call us 01543 441630  
Visit [policemutual.co.uk](https://policemutual.co.uk)

We're open from  
9am - 5pm Mon - Fri

\*According to the Police Federation of England and Wales

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Download the **Health Assured App** and register today - your code is **MHA107477**

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We look after our own