



Health & Wellbeing Newsletter

Long Term Health Conditions service

Covid: Keeping Well This Winter!

WITH the world still in the grip of the deadly Coronavirus pandemic, it's never been more important that we all look after our health.

Especially for those facing long-term conditions, the threat posed by Covid-19 makes it essential to take care.

Luckily, we've got lots of ideas and information to help you look after yourselves over the next few months – including the importance of getting the flu jab.

We also look at how to avoid trips and falls and the best way to eat well and keep warm as those long nights draw in. Please check inside for the best advice on winter wellness.



The **Bromley Well Long Term Health Conditions Team** has lots of information and advice to help you. Please just get in touch with us to find out more about the variety of different ways in which we can support you to keep well and healthy this winter.

You can contact us on **020 8315 2530** or email enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk

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NEWSFLASH: Flu – What’s False and What’s True

WITH both Covid-19 and the flu virus likely to be circulating this winter, it has never been more important to get the flu vaccine, especially if you are unfortunate enough to have underlying health conditions. Some people dismiss the flu as simply a heavy cold, but here we dispel that myth – and a few others too - to highlight the importance of the jab.

MYTH 1...“The flu is just a bad cold”

A bad bout of flu is much worse than a heavy cold. If you get complications, you could become seriously ill and have to go to hospital and may get pneumonia or organ failure.

MYTH 2...“You can catch the flu from the flu vaccine”

The flu vaccine given to adults contains inactivated flu viruses that cannot transmit infection. Your arm may feel a bit sore where you were injected, and some people get a slight temperature and aching muscles for a couple of days. Other reactions are rare.

MYTH 3...“Flu can be treated with antibiotics”

Viruses cause flu. Antibiotics only work against bacteria. A bacterial infection may occur because of having the flu, in which case you may be given antibiotics to treat that infection - this will not protect against the flu.

MYTH 4...“You do not need to get the flu jab every year”

The viruses that cause flu mutate, so you need an annual jab that matches them

MYTH 5...“I’ve had the flu, so it’s too late to be vaccinated”

As flu is caused by several viruses, the immunity you naturally developed will only protect you against one of them. You could go on to catch another strain.

MYTH 6...“Healthy people do not need to be vaccinated”

While it is especially important for people who have a long-term condition or chronic illness to get the flu jab, *everyone* benefits. In addition, it is free if you are 65 and over.

Source: www.ageuk.org.uk/london Visit www.nhs.uk for more information on Flu Vaccinations and which health conditions are eligible for a free flu vaccination
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/>

Stay on Your Feet!

It can be harder to walk about once winter arrives, bringing the additional challenges of wet weather, fallen leaves, ice and snow. Taking a tumble can be scary, so here Dean Baldwin, Lifestyle Coordinator for the Bromley Well Long Term Health Conditions Service, offers some useful advice on falls prevention.



Q. Why do we fall?

Sometimes it is as simple as just not looking where we are going or bad posture, which can cause us to shuffle while we walk and increases the chances of catching our toes on loose paving slabs. Improving our posture can really help. Better posture means we are able to stride more and are more likely to step over a loose paving slab or low kerb.

Q. Is there any particular time of day we are most likely to fall?

We are more likely to fall during the night, as it would not take much to bump into something in the dark or to step incorrectly or lose your balance.

Make sure that you have adequate light to see where you are going if you have to get up in the night. Maybe leave a light on which will assist you on your travels.

Q. Do we lose our balance and coordination as we get older?

When we trip or stumble, our body should throw out a leg or arm to stop us falling over. This is known as proprioception and is our subconscious awareness of our limbs in space. As we age, this system doesn't work

quite as well, meaning we are less likely to stop a fall once it starts. Fortunately, we can maintain and improve our balance and coordination with exercise & by maintaining an active lifestyle.

Q. Why do I sometimes see stars when I stand up?

Have you ever stood up too fast and seen stars in front of your eyes? The act of standing allows gravity to affect our blood pressure, causing it to drop. To avoid feeling dizzy, take your time to move from sitting to standing, particularly if you wake up in the night.

Falling as we get older can be common and although it may not cause serious injury, can leave us feeling distressed. But there are lots of things we can do to stay steady on our feet. See page 4 for some top tips!

For further Information on preventing falls, have a look at the following websites;

NHS UK, www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls/
Age UK, www.ageuk.org.uk

Falls Prevention: <https://youtu.be/hx1-UisCOBI>

Top Tips for Avoiding Falls!

- **Make your home fall-proof** - Clear clutter, loose wires and rugs from around the house. Keep paths free of moss and leaves and ensure main thoroughfares are gritted or salted to avoid slips on ice. Also make sure your house is well lit.
- **Make sure your footwear fits properly** - Wear shoes or boots that have flat, low heels and a slip-resistant sole.
- **Get your eyesight and hearing checked** – A combination of sight and hearing problems can make it harder to maintain balance.
- **Support your bone health** - Eat calcium-rich foods and top up your Vitamin D levels.
- **Keep Active** - Exercises designed to improve muscle strength can reduce your risk of a fall by improving your posture, coordination and balance.



Source: Age UK,
Get Up and Go, Saga

Bromley Well: Supporting Self Care

Bromley Well support local residents to keep well and healthy using self care techniques with our Health and Wellbeing programme.

This series of **FREE** weekly workshops is **for Bromley residents** with health conditions and promotes self care in areas such as:

Adopting healthy habits Healthy eating Keeping active

Sleep and relaxation Pain Management Coping with Stress

Ensuring Good Medical Care Planning for the Future

Each week, we'll explain the latest research and recommendations on a different self care topic. You'll have a chance to meet other people and share your experiences. Our virtual workshops are fun and interactive and getting support from other people can really motivate you to manage your condition well.

Get in touch for further information and to reserve your place. You can attend as many or as few workshops during the programme as you wish. For details of our new 2021 programme see page 8.

Looking for online support with self care?

Visit www.bromleywell.org.uk for our long term health conditions factsheets.

Contact the Long Term Health Conditions Team for more information on
0208 315 2530 Email enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk www.bromleywell.org.uk

Some cool tips for Winter Wellness

THE Winter months can have a chilling effect on our health, particularly once we reach our mid-sixties. The cold weather weakens the immune system, increases blood pressure and lowers body temperature, raising the risk of heart attacks, strokes and chest infections. Here are some timely tips for staying well.

Eat a healthy diet

Cold weather and long, dark evenings can leave us craving unhealthy comfort food. Make sure you eat a healthy diet, including five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. Citrus fruits such as clementines and satsumas are a good source of Vitamin C and fibre and Brussels sprouts contain Vitamins A, B, K and C.

For help with your diet have a look at our Healthy Eating factsheet
www.bromleywell.org.uk



Maintain your immune system

We are more likely to catch a cold during the winter months - so look after your immune system. Milk and other dairy products are a good source of;

- Protein
- Vitamins A and B12
- Calcium to keep your bones strong

Vegan alternatives to dairy often have vitamins added to them. For information on a healthy vegan diet look at the NHS Live Well pages.

Oat Cuisine

On a cold winter morning what could be more delicious than a bowl of warm porridge. Oats are a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals and will help keep you feeling fuller for longer.

Use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk or water to make your porridge and try adding a banana or a handful of berries as one of your five a day.

Stop winter tiredness

Lack of sunlight can disrupt our body's sleep and waking cycles and leave us feeling tired and lacking in energy during the course of the chilly winter months.

Try to:

- Get outside and into natural daylight as much as possible.
- Get a good night's sleep – for helpful tips on sleeping well, have a look at our Sleep factsheet.

Keep on moving!

Don't use the cold weather as an excuse to stay glued to your sofa - as tempting as that can seem. Wrap up warm and try a brisk walk instead.

Regular exercise can help you;

- Boost your mood
- Boost your immune system
- Get a good night's sleep
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Lower your blood pressure

For more information see our factsheet
www.bromleywell.org.uk

Source – [NHS Live Well](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk) pages

Support for Health & Wellbeing in Bromley

COVID-19

Signposting and advice

We have created this poster to help you find the support and help that you need.

THE LONDON BOROUGH

COVID-19 advice and support

Bromley COVID-19 hub
www.bromley.gov.uk/covid-19

Bromley Assistance Helpline
For volunteer support with tasks such as shopping, prescriptions, befriending or dog walking
www.bromley.gov.uk/covid19assistanceform
or call 020 8313 4484 (weekday office hours)

Test and Trace Self-Isolation Support Payment
www.bromley.gov.uk/covid-19
or call 0300 303 8670 (weekday office hours)

Bromley volunteering hub
www.bromley.gov.uk/volunteering

Government clinically extremely vulnerable
www.gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support
NHS
www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

Recycling, waste and street cleaning
www.bromley.gov.uk/wasteneeds
or call 0300 303 8658 (weekday office hours)

Parks and open spaces
www.bromley.gov.uk/parks
or call 0300 303 8658 (weekday office hours)

Housing
If you are homeless or are threatened with homelessness - call 020 8461 7721
Bromley Children Project parenting helpline
Call 020 8461 7259

Council tax and benefits
www.bromley.gov.uk/benefits
Or call 0300 303 8670 (weekday office hours)

Children and young adults with disabilities and learning needs
www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer

Domestic abuse
www.bromley.gov.uk/domesticabuse
Email info@bwa.org.uk or call 020 8313 9303

General enquiries and questions
Call 020 8464 3333

Schools and education
www.bromley.gov.uk/schools
or call 020 8313 4044

Free school meals
www.bromley.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals
or call 0300 303 8644 (weekday office hours)

Care and support
www.bromleywell.org.uk
Call 0300 330 9039 or email spa@bromleywell.org.uk

Social care
For adults call 020 8461 7777
or for children call 020 8461 7373.
Out of weekday office hours, call 0300 303 8671

Mental health
For adults - www.bromleywell.org.uk
Call 0300 330 9039 or email spa@bromleywell.org.uk
For children - www.bromley-y.org
Call 0203 770 8848 or email info@bromley-y.org

www.bromley.gov.uk/covid-19

NOVEMBER 2020

BROMLEY Council have created a poster to help you find the support and help you need during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We've pictured it here, but for full details go to www.bromley.gov.uk/covid-19

Their site includes information on NHS Test and Trace, keeping in touch and the very latest guidelines.

For general enquiries and questions, please call 020 8464 3333.

Bromley healthy homes

Do you struggle to pay your energy bills?

We can offer free help to anyone living in South London who is over 65, on a low income, or has long term health conditions or disability.

Our friendly team can make your home warmer, saving you money and improving your health. They will:

- Offer energy efficiency advice
- Install energy saving devices
- Support home improvement grant applications
- Offer you impartial advice that will help you heat your home for less
- Connect you to other sources of help.

To book your free advice session, or for information, contact:

☎ 0808 169 1779
🌐 www.cact.org.uk/swtw

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

If you're concerned about keeping warm as the seasonal temperatures plummet, don't worry, help is at hand.

Bromley Healthy Homes is an initiative offering free assistance to those with long-term health issues or disabilities who are struggling to pay their energy bills.

It assists people who are over 65 and/or on low incomes.

To contact Bromley Healthy Homes, and book a free advice session, call 0808 169 1779. Their website is www.cact.org.uk/swtw

Health & Wellbeing Support in Bromley

We're here to help you help yourself!

Bromley Well Long Term Health Conditions Team has supported over 1600 Bromley residents living with health conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, asthma, fibromyalgia, irritable bowel - and many more - to stay well and remain independent.

We help people develop self-care skills in areas including nutrition, physical activity, sleep, pain management, emotional wellbeing, mindfulness, and talking to healthcare professionals. We also offer people opportunities to meet others and share experiences, and we're helping them access other local support services.

Please see **Page 8 for our New Year programme** of virtual events. The team looks forward to seeing you face-to-face at our friendly and informative workshops once it becomes safe to do so in 2021.

To find out more about Bromley Well Services
Go to www.bromleywell.org.uk
Email: spa@bromleywell.org.uk
Contact Single Point of Access: 0300 3309 039

In addition to Christmas Day and New Year's Day, our Single Point of Access (SPA) Information, Legal Advice and Guidance service, based at Citizens Advice Bromley, will be **closed** on **Thursday, December 24th, Monday 28th and Thursday 31st**.

Bromley Well



Bromley Well

Delivered by:

BTSE
BROMLEY THIRD SECTOR ENTERPRISE

Funded by:

Bromley
THE LONDON BOROUGH
www.bromley.gov.uk

Forthcoming Events

Bromley Well Health and Wellbeing Workshops

Is your New Year resolution for a healthier 2021?

Why not come along to one of our new workshops starting this January! Our Lifestyle Support Workers, Sylvia and Kristine and our Coordinator Dean, are looking forward to supporting you.

Week commencing 4th January: YouTube Health & Wellbeing support

Friday 8th January: 11 -12.30 **Fibromyalgia Peer Support Group**. (Then fortnightly).

Tuesday 5th January: 11 -12.30 **Good Health & Self-Care**

Tuesday 12th January: 11 -12.30 **Eating Well**

Tuesday 19th January: 11 -12.30 **Physical Activity**

Tuesday 26th January: 11 -12.30 **Sleep & Mindfulness**

Tuesday 2nd February: 11 -12.30 **Stress Busting**

Tuesday 9th February: 11 -12.30 **Pain Management**

Tuesday 16th February: 11 -12.30 **Ensuring Good Medical Care**

Tuesday 23rd February: 11 -12.30 **Planning for the Future**



Get in touch for further information or to reserve your place:
Call on 0208 315 2530 or email enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



Caring for our Bromley Cancer Community

A free, expert-led **Zoom Conference** for healthcare professionals and organisations.

Date: Wednesday 20th January 2021

Time: 10 -12 noon

A follow-up event for the Public is planned to be held in the early summer.

To book your place/register your interest please email:

nicola.fishman@bromleywell.org.uk

In partnership with
MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Contact the Long Term Health Conditions Team for more information on

0208 315 2530 Email enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk www.bromleywell.org.uk