



THE CAMDEN COMPANION

Your essential guide to healthy living in Camden



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This booklet provides a directory of support and services you may wish to consider in Camden to help you stay well, get active and connect with your local community.

Looking after our health is important and making sure we make the most of the many opportunities available to us in Camden can help us live healthy, active and independent lives for as long as possible in the borough we all love.

How to use this booklet

You will find there is quite a lot of information in this booklet – some of it will suit your needs and goals, and some of it might be more useful at a different time. If you're unsure, it might be a good idea to read through it with a family member, friend, or healthcare professional to work out the bits that are going to be most helpful for you.

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Staying well



Your GP

You have the right to choose a GP practice that best suits your needs. Your GP surgery will help you stay well and ensure any potential health problems are found early.



If you are not already registered, you can find your nearest GP surgery by visiting [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) or by calling **0300 311 22 33**.

Requesting a medicines use review

If you take regular medicines, you can have a regular medicines use review (MUR) at your local pharmacy. It will ensure your prescription is still right for your condition. It's also a chance for you to raise any concerns you may have about your medicines and ask any questions. The meeting will take place in a private room.



If you would like to find out more, speak to your GP or your pharmacist.

You can get faster and better treatments by choosing the right health services



Contact your GP. Your surgery provides same-day treatments and advice for many urgent health problems.



Visit a pharmacy. They offer expert medical advice and treat most minor injuries and illnesses. Many are open late and can be found close to your home.



Call NHS 111. You will receive immediate health advice from a highly trained advisor. It is open 24 hours a day and is free to call.



Visit Accident and Emergency at hospital. This is only for serious and life threatening emergencies.



Find out more about Camden health services at [camdenccg.nhs.uk/myhealth/stay-well.htm](https://www.camdenccg.nhs.uk/myhealth/stay-well.htm)

Staying well all year

Flu

For some people, flu can lead to complications. We recommend having a flu jab in the autumn.

Even if you've had a flu jab in previous years, you'll need another one this year. You can get a flu jab from your GP or a local pharmacy.

The flu jab is free at your pharmacy or GP surgery if you are aged 65 and over, have certain medical conditions, you are a carer, or you are pregnant.

Hand hygiene

Clean hands help prevent the spread of flu. Regular handwashing is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid illness and stop germs spreading. Wash your hands with soap regularly and every time you cough or sneeze on them.

Staying warm

Keeping warm in winter helps to protect against colds, flu and hypothermia. It also helps prevent serious conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

Aim for a constant 18-21°C in your home. Keep active, wrap up using layers and eat warming, healthy food like porridge for breakfast. Hot water bottles and electric blankets can help keep you warm too.



You can get free advice on how to make your home warmer and reduce your fuel bills. You may also be eligible for a free energy advice visit or an energy grant up to **£7,000**. To find out more, call the **Green Camden helpline** on **0800 801 738** or visit camden.gov.uk/green-camden

Staying cool

It's also important to stay cool in hot weather. Wear light, loose fitting clothing. Keep windows shut and your rooms shaded. Avoid the heat of the sun between 11am and 3pm, and drink plenty of cold fluids like water and fruit juice.

Staying steady

As we get older, we all have an increased risk of falling. The good news is that there are many simple things we can do to reduce our risk and stay independent.

Top tips to prevent slips, trips and falls:

- Ensure your home is safe by removing tripping hazards
- Keep active and do some exercise every day
- Eat well to remain healthy and keep bones strong
- Have your eyesight reviewed regularly
- Have your medicines and tablets checked every twelve months
- Take care of your feet
- Wear well-fitting shoes and slippers
- Maintain your social contacts and spend time with friends
- Seek advice about incontinence



If you are at particular risk of falling you may want to consider whether assistive technology might be right for you – find out more at camden.gov.uk/careline or see page 10.

What to do if you have had a fall

There is a local falls prevention service called **Staying Steady** which provides support and exercise classes that can help you stay steady on your feet. To refer yourself contact the **Camden Integrated Primary Care Falls Service** on **020 3317 3400**.

WISH Plus

WISH Plus helps you access warmth, income, safety and health advice and services. You can apply for yourself or refer someone else. You can also contact the service if you have had a fall or are worried about falling.



The WISH Plus team will put you in touch with services that can help. Use the online form at camden.gov.uk/wish-plus or call the team on **020 7974 3012**.

Dental

Healthy teeth and mouths add to quality of life and wellbeing, so it's important to make regular visits to your dentist.



You can search for your local NHS dentist at nhs.uk. For out-of-hours emergency dental treatment, call **020 3594 0938**.

Sexual health

Terrence Higgins Trust is a national charity promoting good sexual health and they provide information and advice for people living with HIV. Contact THT on **020 7812 1777** or visit tht.org.uk

Vision

Taking care of your eyes through regular visits to an optician is important. As well as helping with any sight problems, an eye test can often detect health problems and prevent falls.



To find your local optician, visit nhs.uk. For urgent eye treatment, there are 24-hour walk-in clinics at the Western Eye Hospital (**020 3312 3241 or 020 3312 6666**) and Moorfields Eye Hospital (**020 7253 3411**).

Hearing

If you are D/deaf or hard of hearing, there is help and support available. Your high street opticians may also offer free hearing checks if you are aged over 60.



A good place to start for help with your hearing is with your GP.



You can get advice and support from **Action on Hearing Loss**, who also offer Telephone Hearing Checks. Contact them on **0808 808 0123** or **0844 800 3838**. Similarly, the **Royal Association for Deaf People** offer help and advice on **0845 688 2525** or at advice@royaldeaf.org.uk. For more information visit royaldeaf.org.uk.

Staying independent at home

We want everyone to live healthy, active and independent lives for as long as possible. Also, we want to work with people to enable them to have control of their lives. Assistive technology is one of the ways that can help to achieve this.

What is assistive technology?

In Camden, assistive technology is provided by **Careline** who are an experienced and professional team. Assistive technology describes a wide range of equipment or devices that can help people to live independently by supporting or assisting them in daily living tasks. The equipment or device is simple to use and many of them are operated at the press of a button. The equipment is also connected to a call centre which means the person is never far from help when it's needed.

If the equipment triggers an emergency response, Careline will phone you straight away and check if you need help. The team are able to come to your home and help you, or contact a family member nearby to help you. Careline can provide advice and support on the equipment and they are also available by phone 24 hours, 7 days a week to provide reassurance if needed.

On the next page are some examples of assistive technology and how they can support people to live independently in their own homes and when they are out and about.

- **Bogus caller button:** can support vulnerable people to be safe in their own home by sending an alert once the panic button is triggered. Careline staff picks up the alert and they can respond as necessary.
- **Falls detector:** can support a person who is at risk of falling by detecting a potential fall and sending an alert to Careline staff who can contact the person and check they are okay.
- **Epilepsy sensor:** can detect the first signs of a seizure. An alert is triggered and Careline staff can respond to it or the alert can be sent to the person's carer.
- **GPS tracker:** supports people who might be at risk of getting lost, by allowing a carer or family member to trace the person's location. Can also be set up to send an alert if a person moves out of a marked area.

How can I find out more about it?

Assistive technology is for anyone who needs it. If the person is known to Camden's adult social care team, we will visit their home and have a conversation about what is important for them. If we think assistive technology may be helpful we will refer them to Careline. Careline will then find the best solution to suit the person's needs. If you are not known to adult social care, you can contact Careline directly on **020 7974 1491** (select option 4).

There is a means-tested cost associated with using the equipment and two levels of service – Gold, for full emergency call-out, or Silver for alarm monitoring, which Careline can provide you further details of.



Contact **Careline** to find out more about the kinds of assistive technology that may be able to help you or someone you know. They will be happy to discuss your needs and equipment that might suit you. Call **020 7974 1491** (option 4). Alternatively, visit camden.gov.uk/careline.



Care and support

If you need support with managing daily living tasks such as washing, dressing, preparing meals or assistance with mobility, **Camden adult social care** can advise you further.



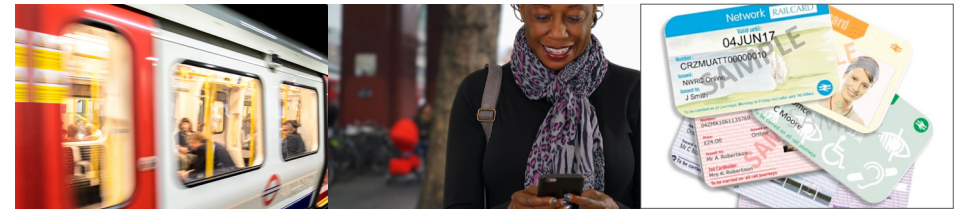
Contact them on **020 7974 4000** (select option 1)

If you are housebound and you are recovering from an illness or other health condition, **Camden Integrated Primary Care Service** (CIPCS) may be able to provide you with home-based nursing and rehabilitation to help you increase your independence and improve your mobility.



Contact CIPCS on **020 3317 3400** or ask your GP for a referral. You can find more information about CIPCS at cnwl.nhs.uk/service/camden-integrated-primary-care-service/.

Getting out and about



Travelling around our local area can help us connect with others and build support networks in our community.

You may be nervous about travelling independently or worried about the cost, but don't worry. There are lots of low-cost travel options and ways to build your confidence.

Free and low cost travel

Here are some of the free or low-cost travel options that may be available to you in London and nationally.

London travel passes

- The Older persons Freedom Pass and Disabled persons Freedom Pass offer free travel across London and free bus journeys nationally, to anyone disabled or of retirement age: londoncouncils.gov.uk/freedompass
- The 60+ London Oyster photocard offers people over 60 free travel on London buses, Underground and some National Rail services. Search '60 plus' on tfl.gov.uk call **Transport for London** (TfL) on **0343 222 1234** or Textphone **0800 112 3456**.



For help with the Freedom pass or 60+ London Oyster photocard, you can contact Camden's accessible travel solutions team on **020 7974 4000** (select option 4), or visit camden.gov.uk/disabled-older-persons-travel

- If you are younger than 60 and claiming certain benefits, you may be able to get 50% off London bus and trams with the Bus & Tram Discount photocard. Find out more at tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel, call **0343 222 1234** or use Textphone **0800 112 3456**.
- The Senior Railcard is for anyone over 60 and offers a 1/3 off train fares throughout Great Britain.
- If you have a disability that makes it difficult to travel, you may be eligible for a Disabled Persons Railcard, which gives a 1/3 off your train fare as well as the fare of the person you travel with.



Apply for a Senior Railcard or a Disabled Persons Railcard at railcard.co.uk or call **0345 3000 250**. You can also speak to a member of staff at any National Rail station.

Coach travel

- The Senior Coachcard offers 1/3 off National Express coach fares all year round for anyone over 60.
- The Disabled Coachcard offers 1/3 of all National Express coach fares to anyone who is registered disabled.



Apply for a Senior Coachcard or a Disabled Coachcard at nationalexpress.com/en/offers/coachcards or call **0871 781 8181**.

Door-to-door travel

If you are not able to use public transport you may be eligible for one of the following options:

- Taxicard is a scheme for London residents with serious mobility impairments or who are severely sight impaired. You can phone Camden's accessible travel solutions team to ask for an application form. Call **020 7974 6435**, email cats@camden.gov.uk or visit camden.gov.uk/disabled-older-persons-travel
- ScootAbility loans scooters and power chairs to people who have a mobility impairment. You can find out more at: camden.gov.uk/scootability
- Dial-a-Ride offers free door-to-door minibus service for those with permanent or long-term disabilities. To find out more search for 'dial-a-ride' at tfl.gov.uk, call **0343 222 7777** or email dar@tfl.gov.uk.

Planning your journey

You can find lots of tips for planning a journey on the Transport for London (TfL) website, including:

London travel passes

- wheelchair access and step-free journeys
- 'offer me a seat' badges
- a 'travel support card' to show TfL staff you have specific requirements
- getting help from staff, including a staff member to accompany you to the train and help you on board
- advice and support for people with sight and hearing loss
- station closures and planned worked to lifts and escalators.

To find out more or book assistance on the London Underground and TfL rail, call **0343 222 1234**

Travel mentoring



Transport for London (TfL) offers a free **travel mentoring** service to help you start using public transport. They can advise on planning a journey using an accessible route and provide a mentor to go out with you to practise a journey a few times to help you gain confidence and become an independent traveller. Call TfL on **020 3054 4361** or email travelmentor@tfl.gov.uk to find out more.

Using your computer, mobile or tablet

There are lots of websites that can help you plan your travel routes in advance, and print off or write down directions for yourself.

- citymapper.com: type in your destination and see options for getting there on public transport, which bus or train to take, and how much it will cost. If you download the 'app' to your mobile, you can also follow the route as you go, and it will send you an alert when your stop or station is coming up.
- maps.google.com: shows you different possible routes to get to your destination, a choice of travel options and how long it will take. You can also download the Google Maps app on your mobile to follow your route as you go.
- London Live Bus Countdown at bustimes.londonbusapp.com gives you live bus times and nearest bus stops. You can use the 'app' to check the times on the go.

All of these websites are free to download to your mobile device as apps (applications) from the App Store (for iPhones or iPads) or the Google Play Store (for Android phones and tablets). Just search for the name of the app to download.

Finding a toilet

For many of us it's important to know we will have access to a toilet along our route and there are several ways to help you plan this into your journey, if this matters to you.



Long-term conditions

The **Great British Public Toilet Map** has a map of all public toilets in the UK and shows the nearest public toilets to you: toiletmap.org.uk

Many of the toilets marked on the map are shops and buildings in Camden that have joined the **community toilet scheme** – they have agreed for their toilets to be accessible to everyone during normal opening hours. Businesses that are part of the scheme will display a sticker on their door.



Some people cannot use standard accessible toilets. This includes people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, as well as older people. Changing places toilets have essential equipment and more space – you can find a list of them at changingplaces.uktoiletmap.org



Long-term conditions are illnesses that are controllable, but not curable. There are many ways to deal with a long-term condition. These include medicines, therapies, a healthy lifestyle and self-management. It's also important to make regular visits to your GP so they can review your condition.

The sooner you start controlling your condition the better, so don't put off getting a diagnosis.

Diabetes

Diabetes doesn't have to stop you living the life you want to live. You will, however, need to pay close attention to certain aspects of your life:

- **Eat well** – follow a balanced diet, low in fat, sugar and salt and high in fruit and vegetables. There is lots of advice on eating well at nhs.uk/livewell
- **Stay active** – get at least half an hour of exercise that's right for you, every day. Visit camden.gov.uk/keep-active-healthy to find out more
- **Don't smoke** – for help to stop smoking, phone 020 3633 2609 or visit breathestopsmoking.org

- **Maintain good mental health** – recognise when you're stressed or feeling down. Talk to others and use healthy ways to cope. Visit mindincamden.org for more information or phone them on **020 7911 0822**
- **Attend your appointments** – this is important so medical staff can check your diabetes is being managed.

The signs of Type 2 diabetes may not be obvious, or there may be no signs at all, so it is important to know your risk.

Your risk increases:

- with age
- if you have a first-degree relative with Type 2 diabetes (parent, sibling or child)
- for certain ethnicities, including South Asian descent and African-Caribbean or Black African descent
- if you have ever had high blood pressure
- if you are overweight, especially around the middle.



If you have been told by your GP that you are at high risk for developing Type 2 diabetes you may be eligible for the Diabetes Prevention Programme.

Ask your GP or nurse to refer you to the **Healthier You** programme in Camden. For more information, visit preventing-diabetes.co.uk

Shortness of breath and coughs

If you are struggling to breathe well, tell your GP as it might be a sign of a long-term illness.

Tell your GP immediately if you have breathing difficulties, chest pain or you cough up blood.

Call 999 immediately if you have sudden severe shortness of breath, as there may be a problem with your lungs or heart.

Camden Musculoskeletal (MSK) team

A musculoskeletal (MSK) problem may relate to a variety of symptoms or conditions arising from muscles, bones, joints, nerves, tendons or ligaments. Many MSK conditions can be treated by you at home.



As a first step to managing your pain at home, visit camdenmsk.nhs.uk. The website also provides information about support to get treatment where required. You can also self-refer into community physiotherapy services by calling **020 7871 0545** to make an appointment.

If you'd like to speak to your GP first, just make an appointment with your doctor and they can refer you to **Camden MSK**. You will be given a named care co-ordinator (NCC) who you will be able to contact with any questions about your care.



Heart health and stroke

To help reduce your risk of heart attacks and stroke:

- **eat well** – follow a balanced diet low in fat, sugar and salt and high in fruit and vegetables
- **stay active** – get at least half an hour of exercise that's right for you, every day
- **don't smoke**
- **cut back on alcohol**

Heart attack

The signs of a heart attack are chest pain, weakness and shortness of breath, as well as pain in other parts of your body such as your arms, jaw, neck, back and abdomen. These symptoms may be accompanied by coughing or sweating. You may also feel sick, lightheaded, dizzy or anxious.



A heart attack is a medical emergency.
Call 999 immediately if you suspect a heart attack.

Stroke

Stroke requires immediate medical attention.

Watch out for any of these signs in yourself or others and act **F.A.S.T**

- **Face** – has their face fallen on one side?
Can they smile?
- **Arms** – can they raise both arms and keep them there?
- **Speech** – is their speech slurred?
- **Time** – time to call 999 if you see any one of these signs.



A stroke can be life changing. If you have had a stroke, you may need support from a range of people, including other stroke survivors. Contact the **Stroke Association** on **0303 3033 100** to seek advice.

Cancer screening

Early detection of cancer is important. Screening detects early signs of cancer in people without symptoms. If you find any unusual lumps on your body or blood in your stools over a period of time, you should visit your doctor.

Bowel cancer

The symptoms of bowel cancer include noticing blood in your faeces, bleeding from the anus, fatigue and/or lumps on your stomach.

All Camden residents over the age of 55 can receive free bowel cancer screening by contacting their GP.

Breast cancer

Women receive their first appointment invitation before their 53rd birthday, and then continue to receive them every three years until they are 70 years old. Women can contact the service if they need to change their appointment.

Women over 70 can still have free breast screening, but will need to request it. They can contact the screening service once every three years to book an appointment.



You can contact **London Breast Screening Service** on **020 3758 2024** for queries about screening appointments.
Email rf-tr.londonbreastscreeninghub@nhs.net. For more information, visit london-breastscreening.org.uk

Cervical cancer

Women aged 25 to 64 are invited by their GP surgery for cervical cancer screening (smear test) every five years. You can book an appointment as soon as you get a letter. If you missed your last cervical screening, you do not need to wait for a letter to book an appointment.

If you are aged 65 and older you will be invited for cervical screening only if one of your last three tests was abnormal.

Regardless of your age, see your GP if you're worried about bleeding between periods - during or after sex, or after you have been through the menopause, or unusual vaginal discharge. Do not wait for your next cervical screening appointment.

Dementia

If you think your memory is getting worse or you find it hard to carry out everyday tasks, talk to your GP. Many of us forget things every day and mild forgetfulness is common in normal ageing. It's not usually a cause for concern. However, if you think your memory is getting worse or you find it hard to carry out everyday tasks, talk to your GP.

If you have been diagnosed with dementia, there are many local services and support groups that can help you to continue to live well. This can include general information, advice and support as well as helping you and your family to access local services.



To find out about the dementia support and services available in Camden, visit camden.gov.uk/dementia-and-memory

Finding a support group

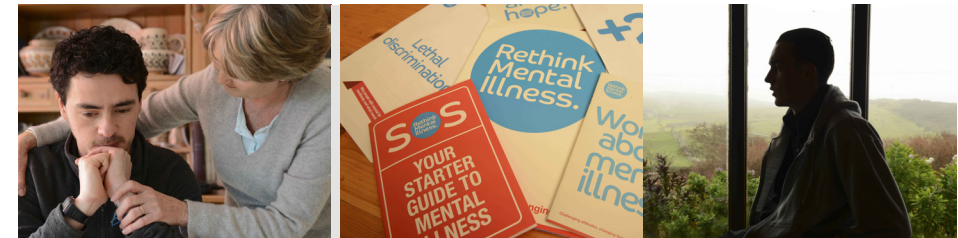
Talking to other people with similar conditions is another way to stay in control of your condition. It's also a great way to learn how to deal with day-to-day problems and can also help you make new friends.

If you are caring for someone with dementia, contact **Camden Carers Centre** on **020 7428 8950** for how you can be supported. Also, you can visit camdens.org.uk for more information.

People with dementia and their carers can drop in to a **Dementia Wellness Cafe** at Highgate Newtown Community Centre on Tuesdays from 10am to 3pm. Call **020 7272 7201** or visit highgatenevntown.org.uk/dementia-wellness-cafe for more information.



Mental wellbeing



Keep your mind healthy

Keeping your mind healthy is important. Here are some steps you can take to improve your wellbeing:

- **Connect** – feeling close to and valued by other people helps us to feel good. Talk to the people around you such as friends, family or neighbours, or maybe visit a community centre near you - they can be great places to meet new people (have a look at 'Getting involved in Camden' on [Page 38](#)).
- **Be active** – regular exercise makes you feel good and improves your mood. Go out for a walk, alone or with a friend, use the stairs not the lift, go for a swim or to an exercise class – any exercise is good for you! Look at 'Getting active and healthy' on [Page 33](#).
- **Take notice** – taking an interest in what is happening around you can improve the way you feel about life and put things in perspective. Make some time to enjoy the here and now: plant a seed and watch it grow, visit a friend or a new place.

- **Keep learning** – learning throughout life can give you a real sense of achievement and boost your confidence: it might also be social and active. Sign up for an adult learning class or set up a book club with friends. Do a puzzle like Sudoku or a crossword.
- **Give to others** – people who help others are more likely to describe themselves as happy. Whether it's helping someone or volunteering, giving to others can improve your wellbeing. It can also help you make new friends. Have a look at the 'Getting involved in Camden' section for more ideas.

Everyone feels a bit anxious or low every now and then, but sometimes it can affect your general wellbeing and everyday life. Mental health problems are common, but they're also usually treatable. If you're feeling down, there is something you can do about it.



Talk to your GP or visit **iCope** (Camden and Islington NHS Psychological Therapies Service) dedicated mental health website at icope.nhs.uk. You can also call **iCope** on **020 3317 6670**.

Talking can really help and there are services on your doorstep, so don't be afraid to ask for advice. The **Likewise hub** (previously known as Camden Hub) provides free prevention services and mental health support for people from all backgrounds and circumstances.



Visit likewise.org.uk or call **020 7278 4437** to find out more about free mental health support and prevention services.

Mind in Camden provides a range of services for residents with mental health needs including people who hear voices and are struggling to cope. Support is also available for families and young people. Their Healthy Minds project supports adults who are feeling isolated and helps them to reconnect with their interests or community. Visit mindincamden.org.uk or call them on **020 7911 0822**.



Mind also run **Outcome**, an LGBT+ mental health support service for people in London. It provides a therapeutic space and opportunities to socialise. The service runs every Tuesday from 10.30am to 4pm at The Mind Spa, 35 Ashley Road, Crouch Hill, N19 3AG. Call **020 7272 6936** for more information.

Carers



You are a carer if you look after or support a family member, close friend or neighbour who could not manage without your help.

As a carer, you play a really important role but it's equally important that you look after yourself. Carers are entitled to a carers assessment, under the Care Act 2014. There is a range of support and opportunities available for you, including advice, emotional support, breaks from caring, access to training, as well as volunteering opportunities.



As a first point of contact, **Camden Carers Service** can help. Visit camdens.org.uk or call **020 7428 8950** for more information. You can also find out about support available for carers by visiting camden.gov.uk/carers



Smoking and alcohol



Smoking and passive smoke

Even after many years of smoking, it's still worth giving up.

Every cigarette causes damage to your body, and your passive smoke also harms the health of those around you.

Stopping smoking isn't easy, but greatly improves your health and finances. You can expect a range of benefits, such as breathing more easily and feeling better. You are less likely to have cancer, a stroke, heart or lung problems. Any existing problems with your heart or lungs are less likely to become more serious. You are likely to add years to your life.

There is no one way to stop smoking, so there is a range of options to help you stop. This includes free face-to-face or telephone advice and support and stop smoking medicines.



If you smoke and would like help to stop, visit breastopsmoking.org, call **020 3633 2609** or text QUIT to **66777**.

Alcohol

The most important effects of alcohol are not just the immediate hangovers, but the effects on your long term health. Drinking increases your risk of stroke, high blood pressure, some cancers, heart attacks and liver disease. Older people are particularly at risk from the health effects of alcohol compared to younger people.

For men and women, it is safest to drink no more than 14 units of alcohol per week. If you drink, it is better to spread your drinking evenly over the week rather than drinking heavily on one or two occasions. You should also be aware of the potential side-effects if you are taking medications. Speak to your doctor if you are unsure.



If you're unsure whether you are drinking too much, you can take a free, confidential online test at drinkcoach.org.uk. If you think you may be drinking too much and would like some support, speak with your GP or get in touch with the **Integrated Camden Alcohol Service** at icascamden.org.uk or call **020 3227 4950**.

14 units of alcohol per week

= 6 pints of beer (4%) or 7 glasses of wine - 175ml (11.5%)



Getting active and healthy



Discover your local area

Walking is healthy, free and enjoyable. We have over 69 parks and open spaces to explore. These include fantastic places like Russell Square, Regents Park and Hampstead Heath. Some of these have route maps you can follow.

Walking to places rather than getting the bus is also a good way to stay active. You can build walking into your life by getting off the bus or tube a stop early and finishing your journey on foot. If you'd prefer to walk in a group and meet other people, there are free guided walks you can join.

For information on how to get active in your area visit wecanmove.co.uk and click on 'activities' at the top of the page.



For more information on walking and getting active, visit camden.gov.uk/parks-in-Camden, or oneyoucamden.org and click on the 'Moving' page. You can also find out more about activities for older people by visiting camden.gov.uk/activities-older-people

If you're over 60, you can swim free of charge on weekdays from 7am to midday at the Oasis sports centre, Kentish Town sports centre, Pancras Square Leisure Centre and Swiss Cottage leisure centre. Bring your centre membership card to get free admission. Concessionary Pay and Play Memberships are £5.50 per year. You could also volunteer with The Conservation Volunteers who run **Camden Green Gym**. This involves outdoor activities like planting trees and establishing wildlife ponds. You'll warm up and warm down safely and there are activities to suit all abilities.

Find out more about swimming in Camden at better.org.uk/getswimming

For club activities for over 55s, visit better.org.uk/



To find a Green Gym near you, visit tcv.org.uk/camden, or call **07768 710 359**.

Leading an active life

With excellent facilities and a dedicated active health team, Camden is a great place to lead an active life. Keeping active keeps your bones and muscles strong, which can reduce your risk of having a fall. You can join Camden's Later Life Community Exercise classes, where your first session is free. You can also use the borough's many sports centres and outdoor gyms.

Recommend Me is a directory of social activities and exercises in Camden that adults can get involved. Find out more at recommendme.london. Also visit camden.gov.uk/activities-older-people to find out about other activities or call **020 7974 4444** (choose option six) to find out more.



Eating well



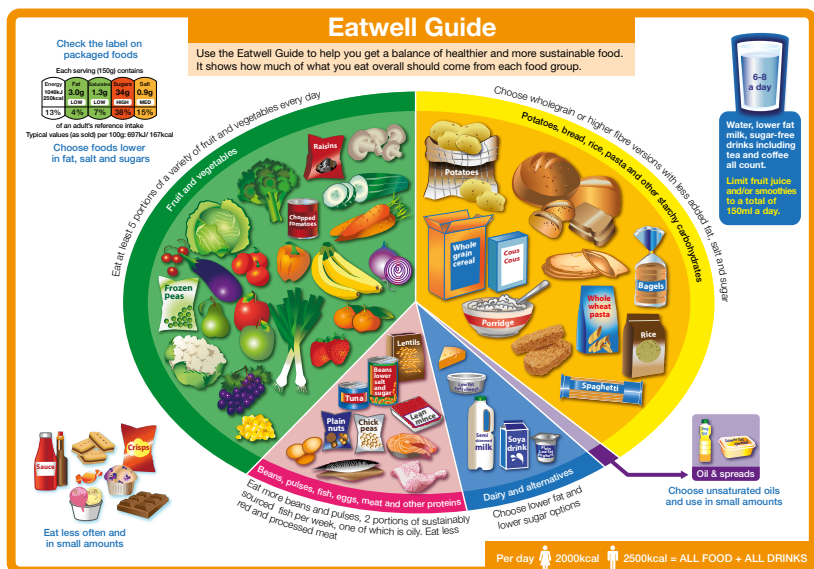
A healthy, balanced diet is important for good health, an active life and protection against illness. Eating well means enjoying your food, eating the right amount for your energy needs and having variety in your diet. It doesn't have to be boring or expensive.

Food variety

Aim to eat foods of various colours and include fruit and vegetables with every meal. If you can, keep salt, saturated fat and sugar in your diet low. There is lots of advice on eating well at nhs.uk/livewell

Know what's in your food

Looking at the traffic light food labels on the front of pre-packaged foods can help you make healthier choices. The traffic light colours, red, amber and green, show the levels of sugar, fat and salt in food. The more green lights, the healthier the choice.



The NHS Choices website, [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) explains how food labelling works.

Eating well on a budget

The secrets to eating on a budget are to plan your meals and stick to a shopping list so you only buy the items you need. Supermarkets often have free healthy recipe cards which can give you some inspiration. It's important for your health to eat lots of fruit and veg as well as starchy foods like rice and pasta, many of which store well. Your local supermarket may have promotional deals on fruit and veg, particularly those that are in season. Your local market may also be a good place to shop for cheaper offers on healthy food.



For more tips, type 'budget eating' into the search box at [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk). As an alternative to cooking, you may want to join one of Camden's lunch clubs. To find a lunch club near you, visit [recommendme.london](https://www.recommendme.london) and search for 'lunch'.

The **Trussell Trust** offer help to those who need emergency food parcels. A referral from your GP, health visitor, social worker or Citizens Advice staff member is required.



To find out more call **01722 580 180** or email enquiries@trusselltrust.org

Staying hydrated

Water is vital for our bodies to work: drink about six to eight cups of liquid a day, more in hot weather. Vary your drinks: water, tea, coffee, fruit juice or sugar-free squash are all fine. Avoid sugary or fizzy drinks where possible.

Maintaining a healthy weight

Keeping to a healthy weight is important for our mental and physical health. The **Rebalance** and **Exercise on Referral** schemes offer a choice of 25 different sessions at Better Leisure Centres, six days a week.

The free 12-week programme has shown it can lead to weight loss as well as increased activity levels, especially for those who are over 55. It's open to all over 18s.



To find out about Camden's weight management service you speak to your GP or email rebalance@camden.gov.uk, or call **020 7974 1741**.

Getting involved in Camden



Volunteering

If you have some spare time and would like to contribute to life in Camden, volunteering activities such as befriending, gardening or organising local events could be the solution.

Volunteering is a great opportunity to meet new people and develop new skills, and it can have surprising benefits for body and mind. Whether you're ready to make a formal commitment or just fancy lending a helping hand from time to time, lots of groups would love to hear from you.

The **Volunteer Centre Camden** holds regular events where you can get a feel for what's involved and find out how it all works, or you can search for an opportunity on their website.



Visit volunteercentrecamden.org.uk or call **020 7424 9990** to find out more.

Employment and training

Camden Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are now open to anyone of employment age. They can be a great way for adults to get back into working, or support with a change in career.



Find out more at camden.gov.uk/apprenticeships

Kings Cross Construction Skills Centre (KXCSC)

KXCSC offer training, apprenticeships and employment advice and opportunities to people looking to start a new career within construction or those who are interested in furthering their career within the industry.



Find out more at kingscrossconstruction.co.uk

Kings Cross Recruit

KX Recruit is a friendly and professional recruitment service that aims to help Camden and Islington residents find jobs in King's Cross. There is a range of roles available for older people who wish to utilise existing skills or learn new ones.



Find out more at kxrecruit.co.uk

Somers Town Job Hub

Somers Town Job Hub is located within St Pancras and Somers Town Living Centre. The Job Hub provides one-to-one employment guidance, CV support and access to training courses. The Hub also provides a place for you to meet and share experiences with people in similar circumstances.



Find out more at thelivingcentre.org/services

West Euston Partnership

West Euston Partnership (WEP) is located in the One Stop Shop at 29 Hampstead Road. The WEP offers free information, advice and guidance on employment, training, education and careers.

WEP also provide IT courses for adults to help people improve their confidence as they look for work.



Find out more at westeustonpartnership.co.uk

For more about employment opportunities and help with applying for jobs, visit camden.gov.uk/employment-support or email jobsandskills@camden.gov.uk

Activities

There is a wealth of activities and lots of groups ready to welcome you. These include healthy living, history groups, lunch clubs, dance groups, music classes and much more. Community centres offer a variety of activities from art and bingo, through to yoga and music. They are also a great place to meet new people. Visit your local community centre to find out more.



The Camden Town Shed offers a workspace and equipment for practical projects or artistic work with wood or clay. Visit camdentownshed.org or call Mike on **07757 024 749**.



Age UK Camden provides a **Community Connectors** service to help you connect to activities you would like to try in Camden. It is a free and friendly service for Camden residents aged 60 and over. Contact Community Connectors on Freephone **0800 161 5716** or text **07506 025 375**.



North London Cares brings together younger and older neighbours to offer companionship and better connection in the community through free social clubs. Visit northlondoncares.org.uk or call **020 7118 3838**.



Opening Doors London (ODL) is a charity that provides information and support services, befriending, and social activities for LGBT+ older people. Visit openingdoorslondon.org.uk or call **020 7239 0400** to find out more.



To find out more about local groups and activities, visit [recommendme.london](https://www.recommendme.london) You can also visit your local Camden library or call through to Camden libraries on **020 7974 4444**. You can find out about other social activities at [ageingbetterincamden.org.uk](https://www.ageingbetterincamden.org.uk)

Social prescribing

Social prescribing can help you to connect with your community by signposting you to local activities and organisations that might be of interest or benefit to you.

The social prescribing services in Camden are provided by Age UK Camden, Voluntary Action Camden, and Camden Council.

Care Navigation

This is personalised support to help identify your needs and navigate local care systems and community services. Call **0800 193 6067** or email socialprescribingreferral@nhs.net to find out more.

Community Links

This is referrals to community-based activities and services, including outreach and signposting from the GP, libraries and other community settings. Call **0800 193 6067** or email communitylinks@vac.org.uk for more information.

Safeguarding adults from abuse and neglect

Safeguarding adults means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Every person has the right to live in a safe environment free from the fear of abuse and neglect, to be treated with dignity and have their choices respected.

Abuse is when a person is treated in a way that harms, hurts or exploits them. Abuse can present in many forms, and it can include:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- domestic abuse
- psychological abuse
- financial abuse
- sexual exploitation
- neglect
- self-neglect, eg. hoarding
- discriminatory abuse
- organisation abuse
- modern slavery
- honour-based violence
- human trafficking
- hate crime
- mate crime

It can happen in any relationship, and can take place anywhere.

Signs of abuse in others to look out for include:

- unexplained change in behaviour
- emotional lack of control
- isolation from friends and family
- exhibiting anxious behaviour
- worsening health or weight loss

- untreated or unexplained injuries, especially repeated injuries
- a sudden shortage of money for no apparent reason.



If you are worried that you are being abused or are at risk of harm, or that someone you know is, tell someone you trust. You can call **Camden Council** on **020 7974 4000** (choose option one). If there is an immediate risk of safety, call **999**.



Camden Safety Net provides services to survivors of domestic abuse, and their families who live, work or study in the London Borough of Camden. Contact Camden Safety Net on **020 7974 2526**, or visit [camden.gov.uk/contact-camden-safety-net](https://www.camden.gov.uk/contact-camden-safety-net) for more information.



GALOP is an LGBT+ anti-violence charity offering support for lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer people who have experienced hate crime, sexual violence or domestic abuse, or who have had problems with the police or have questions about the criminal justice system. Call the London LGBT+ Advice Line on **020 7704 2040** or visit [galop.org.uk](https://www.galop.org.uk)



Forum+ works to improve the lives of LGBT+ people in Camden and Islington. If you are experiencing hate crime or discrimination, contact Forum+ on **020 7388 5720** or email info@forumplus.org.uk. You can visit [forumplus.org.uk](https://www.forumplus.org.uk) for more information.



Housing

A safe and stable home environment can help you stay healthy and independent.

Housing advice

If you have a housing problem, or just need some advice, the Homelessness Prevention Team can help.



Visit [camden.gov.uk/at-risk-of-being-homeless](https://www.camden.gov.uk/at-risk-of-being-homeless) or call **020 7974 4444** (select option 3 for Housing).



The **Outside Project** is a homeless/crisis shelter and community centre that supports LGBT+ people who are homeless or in crisis. Visit [lgbtiqoutside.org](https://www.lgbtiqoutside.org)



Stonewall Housing provides safe spaces for LGBT+ people. They work to ensure lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people live in homes that are safe and free from fear. Contact them at [stonewallhousing.org](https://www.stonewallhousing.org)



If you're a private tenant and have any concerns, visit [camden.gov.uk/advice-private-tenants](https://www.camden.gov.uk/advice-private-tenants) or call **020 7974 4444** (selection option 3 for Housing).

Fire safety at home

Wish Plus provides a single referral route to multiple and usually interlinked services, including fire safety and safety in the home.



Call **020 7974 3012**, email wishplus@camden.gov.uk or visit camden.gov.uk/wish-plus to find out more.

Private Sector Housing Team

The Private Sector Housing Team works with landlords and private tenants to ensure privately rented homes are safe, adequately heated and free from damp.

The team licences all properties occupied by three or more sharers, and older converted properties which are mainly tenanted. They will take enforcement action against landlords where properties are not licensed and where properties are badly managed.

Sheltered housing

If you want to stay independent, yet enjoy a safe, supportive environment, sheltered housing may be the solution. Support includes an on-site manager and a 24-hour community alarm service.

Housing adaptations

A minor adaptation to your home could help you stay safe and independent. If you need adaptations made to your home, such as fitting a handrail, you may be eligible for a means-tested disabled facilities grant.



Visit camden.gov.uk/housing to find out more or call **020 7974 4444** (choose option three).

Courses and learning



There are lots of fantastic learning opportunities in Camden. Going on courses is a great way to gain new skills and meet new people. Some courses may charge a fee.

You can learn basic computer and internet skills, how to use mobile phones and tablet computers like iPads, discover social media or take up digital photography.

You can also develop your English language skills. As well as courses where you can practise English, there are free drop-in conversation and reading groups across the borough.



The courses are informal and let you learn at your own pace at a range of locations across Camden. Visit camden.gov.uk/adult-community-learning for details or call **Camden Adult Community Learning** on **020 7974 2148**.

Lots of local organisations also have many learning opportunities. Ask at your local library to find out more.



The **University of the Third Age** offers a variety of courses for older people. Call **020 8466 6139** or visit u3alondon.org.uk to find out more.

Benefits and managing your money



Money issues can cause anxiety and can be an underlying cause for other health problems. If you are having problems with money, it's important you seek help. From making the most of your money, better banking and dealing with debt, to managing benefits, there are organisations who can advise and support you. The advice is free, confidential and impartial and can be face to face, over the telephone or online.



If you need advice and support on **Universal Credit**, contact the **Universal Credit Help to Claim Service** on Freephone **0800 144 8 444**, Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm. The service is funded by the government to provide support with making your application through to when you receive your first correct payment.



Citizens Advice Camden are also able to help with making **Universal Credit** claims and support you through to when payment is made. Citizens Advice Camden provide advice on other benefits too and managing your money. The advice line is open Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm, on **0300 330 1157**. Visit camdencabservice.org.uk for advice services at Citizens Advice Camden and opening times.



WISH Plus can help you access the right money or benefit advice. You can complete the online referral form at camden.gov.uk/wishform or call **020 7974 3012**.

If you are a council tenant, and have concerns about benefits and managing your money, speak to your Neighbourhood Housing Officer and they may be able to help you or direct you to the council's in-house specialist welfare rights team.



For advice and enquiries about housing benefit or the council tax reduction scheme and discounts, you can contact the **Camden Council Benefits** team by visiting camden.gov.uk/benefits or calling **020 7974 4444** (choose option 3).



Advice Local is a website that provides advice on benefits, work, money, housing problems and more. You just need to enter a postcode and select an advice topic. Visit advice.local.uk

Bereavement and coping with loss



What to do after someone dies

Losing a loved one can be extremely distressing. It is still important to know about the necessary administrative duties. By law, you have to register a death within five working days, providing the information to the register office for the area in which the person died.



The **Registrars service** at Camden Council can help. Visit camden.gov.uk/registrars or call **020 7974 4444** (select option 6 and say 'registrars' or 'operator'). Find out more about registering a death in Camden at camden.gov.uk/register-a-death

Coping with loss

Coping with a loss, whether sudden or expected, is difficult. We all grieve in different ways and talking to someone, whether they are a friend, family member or a counsellor, can help.



For confidential bereavement counselling, call the **Camden Bereavement Service** on **020 7284 0090**. Or visit bereavement-counselling.org

Useful phone numbers

Council switchboard 020 7974 4444 and options

Select 1 for payments

Select 2 for all social care needs

Select 3 for benefits, housing, rents, repairs, estate parking

Select 4 for council tax, environmental services, recycling, domestic waster, all business services

Select 5 for parking services

Select 6 for other, including registrars (births, deaths and marriages) and library

Council Social Care Line - 020 7974 4000

Select 1 for adult social care

Select 2 for children's social care

Select 3 for family information and school services

Select 4 for accessible transport solutions, Freedom Pass, Blue Badges

Green Camden Helpline 0800 801 738

Camden Safety Net 020 7974 2526

Adult community learning 020 7974 2148

Complaints 020 7974 5644

How useful have you found this booklet?

We welcome any feedback you may have. You can email us at camdencarechoices@camden.gov.uk

Write to us at

Camden Companion feedback
7th floor
Prevention and Wellbeing Service
Camden Council
5 Pancras Square
London N1C 4AG

Looking for information and advice about care and support?

Whatever your support needs, **Camden Care Choices** puts you in control and is a quick and easy way to get help and advice on everything from staying well to employment and training.

Find out more at camdencarechoices.camden.gov.uk

