



Health

Looking after your health is a vital part of life. You may not feel its importance all the time, but without it, you cannot function to your full ability.

Whilst we cannot list every health risk on this site, below are some key facts, tips and areas of concern that you may find useful. If you would like any further information, please see the links provided or contact us at info@sharan.org.uk where we can assist you further.

Healthy Diet

We all know a healthy diet is a good thing; however, it is not always easy to maintain such a lifestyle when you have more pressing issues to deal with. One way to ensure you remain healthy is to exercise as often as you can, be it walking, going to the gym or other fun activity.

We will not tell you what you can and can't eat, that's up to you, but please bare in mind that fresh fruit and vegetables are not only easy to obtain but relatively cheap and this will help you in the long run. Why not visit [NHS website](#) for more information?

Smoking

We all know smoking is bad for us, yet many people continue to smoke regardless of the consequences. If you are a smoker and would like to stop, you can go see your local GP who can provide you with advice and free replacement therapy products.

Alternatively visit the [UK national charity](#) to help you quit. With the smoking ban in place, maybe now is a good time to kick the habit. It will save you money and keep you healthy for longer.

Breast Cancer

We are all aware of the existence of breast cancer, but by better understanding the risks factors, what we can do and how-to self-diagnose we can help alter the chances of getting this deadly disease.

You may find it easier to go see a female nurse or doctor or pop into a well women clinic for further advice, alternatively, click [here](#) for more details.

Cervical Smears

This is not a test for cancer but a precautionary check to ensure any abnormalities within the cervix, which could lead to the detection of cancerous cells, are caught early enough for treatment. Generally, women are invited by the NHS to have their first smear by the age of 25 although in some cases this is once a woman becomes sexually active.

The test does not last very long and in most cases, you can request a female nurse or doctor to undertake this procedure which involves placing an instrument called a speculum into the vagina in order to scrape a sample of your cells for analysis.

It can be slightly uncomfortable, and it is suggested that you take some deep breathes and remain as relaxed as you can. It is then recommended that you continue to get screened every 3 – 5 years thereafter.

Please see visit [here](#) for more detailed information.

Diabetes

Diabetes affects around 1.4 million people in the UK. It is a chronic disease that has devastating long term health affects such as blindness, heart and vascular damage and kidney and nerve damage. There are two kinds, Type 1 and Type 2, both are quite different but can be easily managed.

Diabetes is quite common in South Asian communities due to diet and lifestyles. There are measures that can be taken to ensure you reduce the risk of having diabetes although you may want to check if family members, particularly immediate family have a history of diabetes.

For more details and how to check if you are affected, please go to visit [here](#).

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a physical condition that disrupts the brains usual workings to allow for seizures or fits. It can affect anyone and is usually caused by a severe blow to the head; a stroke which starves the brain of oxygen; or an infection of the brain such as meningitis although in most cases the cause remains unknown.

There are treatments available to help manage Epilepsy and, in most cases, just knowing about it and what to do if you suffer an attack or see someone else having a seizure can go a long way towards ensuring further damage. Please see this [link](#) for more details.

STDs

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are serious and can sometimes be painful or cause bodily damage. Some STD infect your sexual and reproductive organs, others like HIV, hepatitis B and syphilis cause general body infections.

Sometimes you can have an STD with no signs or symptoms and other times, the symptoms go away on their own. Either way, you still have the STD until you get treated. If you feel you may have contracted an STD, you can contact your local G.U.M clinic (Genito-Urinary Medicine), which is an NHS run clinic for all aspects of sexual health.

The law guarantees your confidentiality and you will receive free advice and treatment. You can choose where you wish to go (not local) and your GP does not need to refer you or be informed of your visit. You can also request to see a female only doctor. For more details please see follow this [link](#).

Mental health

Mental health is often misunderstood and still very much a taboo subject, particularly in the South Asian community. It can come in many forms from anxiety and depression to schizophrenia and self-harm to name but a few.

Many of us feel we can manage our mental health problems and are afraid to ask for help for fear of being labelled or viewed in a negative way. Without support or treatment, these issues continue to build and can cause you further problems later in life. Counselling or Psychotherapy may sound daunting at first but can make a real difference to your long term well being.

Visit www.sharan.org.uk for more information

1 in 4 people in the UK suffer from mental health problems at some point in their lives and this can affect your physical health, relationships and daily life. It can happen to anyone at any time regardless of age, gender, race or social background.

Every year more than 250,000 people are admitted to psychiatric hospitals and over 4,000 people commit suicide.

But there is a big support network of services available that can help and support you through any issues you may have. If you feel you may be affected by mental health issues, please see the NHS Direct [link](#) or visit your local GP for more information.

Further support on services available in your area can be provided by emailing info@sharan.org.uk, where one of our advisors will be able to put you in touch with one of our core Health partners.