



# Keeping your independence

---



As we age it is common to have a growing number of health issues. This can happen gradually and we may notice it takes us longer to do household chores, walk to the shops or we may start feeling a bit unsteady on our feet. Over time, this can affect our ability to bounce back after an illness or other stressful event as well as our ability to live independently or keep in touch with family and friends.

This is not the same as ageing but is sometimes called 'frailty'. The good news is there are things we can do together to help prevent or manage some of these challenges. We have produced this leaflet to explain more about this. By being aware of these changes and working together, we hope to support people to keep healthy and independent for longer.

# A new way of helping you to keep independent

---

To help do this, general practices are identifying people who may be living with frailty. This means a nurse, GP or other member of your general practice could ask to talk with you about the choices available. This could involve discussing:

- Whether you may be living with frailty, what matters to you, for example, continuing to manage at home, and any health worries you may have.
- Your role in caring for family and friends and / or who helps care for you.
- The best medicines to help your condition(s) and whether there are any medicines that you may no longer need.
- Whether you have concerns about your balance or feel unsteady or if you have fallen, talk about how to stay active and reduce the risk of further falls.
- Any other local support that may be available to you
- Whether you consent to activate your enriched Summary Care Record. This is a record that, with your permission, allows care professionals treating you outside your general practice to read important details about your health such as information on health conditions, healthcare needs and personal choices.

## How can I find out more?

---

- Talk to your general practice about options to stay healthy and independent for longer.
- Read the NHS and Age UK free guides:
  - **A practical guide to healthy ageing** and
  - **A practical guide to healthy caring** if you are looking after a loved one (both available here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/healthy-aging/>)
- Read more about additional information in your Summary Care Record (available here: <https://digital.nhs.uk/summary-care-records/patients>)
- Talk to your general practice if you feel in low spirits or look at the advice on NHS Choices here: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/low-mood-and-depression.aspx>
- Talk to your local Age UK for advice and support to maintain independence and stay healthy. Call **0800 169 65 65** or visit **[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)** to find an Age UK near you.