Maintaining your memory and wellbeing

Things you can do to stay healthy in body and mind
Living well

It can be tough coping with memory difficulties, but life goes on and you can still do many things. Keep busy and keep positive!

Try to continue to do the activities you have always done and enjoyed. If they are now too difficult think about simplifying them. Having a memory problem doesn’t have to affect the quality of your life.

Healthy lifestyle

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is about helping you to remain involved in the things that matter to you. Keeping your mind and body well is really important. For example:

- Eat healthily
- Keep active
- Relax and enjoy life
- Personal safety
Every day living skills

Skills that you have built up over time are retained for a long time, especially if you keep using them. For example:

- Hobbies
- Shopping
- Cooking
- Using transport
- Managing finances
Routines
This is all about carrying on doing what you’ve always done. Having a routine will help you to maintain the roles you have and may help you to feel more secure. For example:

- Use a diary
- Write reminders to yourself and pin them on a notice board
- Put things that you use all the time in an obvious place
- Write on a large calendar showing day, month & year
Leisure interests

Leisure interests are important despite your memory problem. They will help you to feel better, increase your confidence and help you to relax. For example:

- Gardening
- Reading
- Arts & crafts
- Baking
- Dancing & singing
- TV, radio & cinema
- Travel and holidays
Mental stimulation

Try to keep your brain active by doing things you enjoy – don’t worry if they take a little longer. For example:

- Crosswords and puzzles
- Newspapers and magazines
- Courses and groups to learn new skills and meet new friends
- Play computer games or puzzles
- Consider writing your ‘life story’ to record details of your past and present life – using a pen and paper, a dictaphone or a computer
Get organised

Organising your environment can help maintain a healthy memory. Using strategies can help compensate for your memory loss and introduce new ways of learning so you can remain active. For example:

- Concentrate on one thing at a time
- Use an alarm clock or mobile phone to remind you
- Label items, cupboards and drawers – perhaps using pictures rather than just words
- Place useful phone numbers by your phone where you can see them
Useful equipment

Equipment can help you. This technology may be called ‘telecare’ or ‘assistive technology’. For example:

- Have a large clock showing day, month and year
- Use a phone with picture buttons
- A medication dispenser can remind you to take your tablets
Keeping fit

Moderate exercise keeps you fit and often helps you to feel better. Remember, household tasks such as gardening and cleaning can also help keep you fit. For example:

- Swimming
- Cycling
- Walks
- Gym
Social contacts

At times it may be tempting to withdraw from friends and family when you have a memory problem, but isolating yourself can lead to low mood and anxiety problems. Stay in touch with people who support you and who you know and love. For example:

- Visit family
- Seek spiritual support
- Go for tea or coffee
- Talk to friends and neighbours
Support available

As you have read, there is a lot you can do to maintain your memory and wellbeing and there is support out there. You can also contact the organisations below or go to see your GP.

Guideposts Carer Support Service:  
0845 600 9980  
www.guidepoststrust.org.uk

Age UK:  
0800 169 6565  
www.ageuk.org.uk

Alzheimer’s Society:  
0845 300 0366  
www.alzheimers.org.uk

Carers Trust:  
0844 800 4361  
www.carers.org

Social Services:  
0500 834 333 (Coventry)  
01926 410410 (Warwickshire)

Telecare:  
01625 520320  
www.telecare.org.uk
Arden Memory Service

IPU 18-21
Longford Primary Care Centre
Coventry
CV6 6DR

Tel: 024 7670 7968

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With acknowledgement to Occupational Therapists and The Alzheimer’s Society, Coventry.