

SPRING INTO

Summer

The warmer summer months are the time for getting outdoors, enjoying the warm weather and relaxing in the sunshine. The higher temperatures and a stronger sunshine can pose some serious health risks though, particularly to older people.

During the fantastic summer of 2018, many older people struggled to keep cool and it's vital that some precautionary measures are taken to keep safe and well in the warmer months.

Summer is also the time for getting out in the fresh air, socialising and seeing friends and family. It's important for our wellbeing but for many older people we know that's not always easy.

Dudley Council, along with other local organisations have a range of services and schemes that are working to help older or vulnerable people keep safe, well and happy.

We want to make sure that people know where to get help and support, so no one suffers unnecessarily, feels isolated or doesn't know where to get help.

Top tips to stay **summer safe**

- Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm
- Make sure you never burn and cover up with sunscreen, suitable cool, loose fitting cotton clothing, a hat and sunglasses
- Use at least factor 15 sunscreen
- Exercise earlier in the day during warm weather, or later in the evening when it's not so hot

Top tips to stay **summer well**

- Drink plenty of cold drinks, water, squash and juice and cut back on alcohol and caffeine
- Eat cold foods, like salads and fruit which have a high water content
- Have cool baths or showers
- Shade or cover windows in sunny rooms and keep the windows closed during the day. You can open windows when it is cooler
- If you feel unwell, dizzy, weak, anxious or very thirsty in the heat. Move to a cool place, drink and cool down. Get help if you still feel unwell
- If you have painful muscle spasms when it's warm, rest immediately in a cool place, drink cool drinks or rehydration solutions. Seek help if you still feel unwell

For more information on the services listed call us on 0300 555 0055, or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/summerwellbeing

For the self-management programmes listed call 01384 816437 to find out more, or to book yourself a place.

Dudley
Metropolitan Borough Council

SPRING INTO

Summer

**HELPING
OLDER
PEOPLE
STAY SAFE
AND WELL
THIS SUMMER**

Stay cool and hydrated in warm weather

Older people are more susceptible to dehydration. It's really important during warmer weather to keep hydrated. Top up with lots of water to avoid feeling tired and confused.

Healthy older adults should aim for 1.5 to 2 litres (6-8 glasses) of liquid intake per day, frequently through the day, rather than large amounts in one go.



Keep sun safe

Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer, it doesn't just happen on holiday – you can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy. There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan and we all need to use sunscreen.

In warm and sunny weather older people also need to be aware of hyperthermia, which can be life threatening. Look out for body temperatures over 104°F, headaches, nausea, dry skin and no sweating. You can find out more about sun safety and heatwave advice on the NHS's website. Visit www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body and follow the link to seasonal health, summer health.

Get out and about

Daily exercise, even just a walk out in the fresh air helps you stay healthy. It lowers your risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer. It also has real benefits to your mental health.

Let's get active outdoors is a council run programme of free led and self-guided walks, fitness sessions and health classes that take place in local parks.



Find out more at www.lets-get.com and about walking for health at www.walkingforhealth.org.uk.

Lets get Healthy also offers support to get fit and healthy from wellness coaches, healthy cookery classes, help with weight management and support with stopping smoking.

Exercise also helps you to avoid falls. For anyone worried about falling, Dudley Falls Prevention works to help older people avoid falls and with recovery following a fall. Specialist falls exercise programmes are held in the Healthy Hubs based in local parks.



Don't be lonely or isolated

Spending time with other people helps you to avoid feeling lonely. The council's 'Pleased to meet you' scheme offers support to people feeling lonely, or isolated, to get out and about, or a regular telephone call for a chat. You can also find out about social activities in your area in the Dudley Community Information Directory - visit www.dudleyci.co.uk

Manage your long term conditions

It's important that anyone living with a long term health condition, such as COPD, heart problems or diabetes is able to manage the condition. This is especially so during warmer weather where people can struggle in the heat, which can exacerbate health conditions.

The council offers free self-management programmes for anyone living with a long-term health condition, or for those in a caring role. They aim to improve your quality of life by giving you confidence, skills and information to help manage your condition or caring role.



There are two programmes - the expert patient programme (for people living with a long term health problem), and the looking after me programme (for carers).

Keep independent

Whatever the time of year, it's always good to make sure you are keeping safe and independent at home. There's lots of help on offer from Living well feeling safe. The service offers free home safety and security advice and equipment, all provided from a home visit, Here they will also look at any adaptations, or support that will help keep you as independent as possible. A self-serve online option www.lwfonline.org.uk is available. Here you can quickly and easily find equipment and services to make things easier at home.



Carers - look after yourselves

It is important that carers look after themselves and take a break during the pleasant summer months. It can be hard to make time for yourself. Dudley Carers Hub offers practical help, information and advice to anyone caring for a family member or friend. As well as lots of useful information, they offer carers assessments, social groups, relaxation sessions and support with finding respite.

