
















PIGEON POST

Keeping you informed & involved

March / April 2023



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Welcome!

We are very keen on TV doctor Michael Mosely's challenge to change just one thing about our lives. He argues that these small changes can improve your life in ways that you wouldn't expect. I'm already a fan of the early morning walk - and my dog Monty

makes it clear I don't really have a choice about this! According to research, exposure to natural light in the morning regulates your body clock and can make you sleep better at night. Read page 15 for more of Dr Mosely's tips.

We also have a bit of a food theme this month - as well as our usual recipes, we have a piece on eating for stronger bones and the best way to stack your fridge to make your food last longer.

Enjoy the issue and see you next time

Helen Newman
Chief Executive
Age UK Barnet

**MARCH
WINDS AND
APRIL
SHOWERS
BRING FORTH
MAY FLOWERS**

ENGLISH PROVERB



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A HEARTY BEAN FEST

Cookery volunteer Kato is a huge fan of pulses– that’s all types of beans, lentils, dry peas, and peanuts. Staple foods in many countries, they are high in nutrients and energy, filling, cheap, and cause little damage to the environment. Not only do they count as one of your five a day; they are a tasty replacement for animal proteins. In America, government dietary guidelines advise everyone to eat half a cup a day. This is because, when eaten as part of a balanced diet, pulses can help prevent chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. They can also improve digestive health. Best of all, pulses are super tasty and easy and versatile to cook with.



Borlotti bean ratatouille (2-3 portions as a main course)

Gently fry one chopped onion and 2 chopped garlic cloves in 3tbsp olive oil in a heavy pan. Add 2 cans of chopped tomato and 2 cans of borlotti beans. Close the lid and stew on low heat for 30 minutes. Stir mixture every 10 minutes and add water if too dry. Cool for 10 minutes, then season and add 60g of coriander leaves and stalks and fine slivers of parmesan cheese to serve. The recipe can be halved, or leftovers frozen (before adding herbs).

Pea and broad bean salad (2 portions as a main course)

Peel 2 red onions and slice into rings on a baking tray. Mix together 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar, 1 tbsp maple syrup or honey, and 2tbsp olive oil. Stir through the onions, season with pepper and roast for 25 minutes at 180°C. Bash a 25g bag of torn fresh basil, ½ a peeled garlic clove, and 4 tbsp olive oil with a mortar and pestle or a fork, or in a small food blender. Boil 2/3 cup frozen peas and 1 cup fresh or frozen broad beans for 3 minutes, then drain. Slip off the skins of the broad beans (or use endemame beans instead, as they don’t need peeling). Gently fry a small bunch of asparagus (or a zucchini trimmed and cut into thin long strips) in a tsp of rapeseed or olive oil. Mix the vegetables with a handful of fresh basil or mint. Add the juice of ½ lemon. Arrange on a serving plate, and add the roasted onions, basil sauce and the zest of the ½ lemon.



Three-lentil soup (4 portions)

Soak 50g of yellow split peas overnight and drain. Rinse 50g of brown or green lentils, and 50g of red lentils. Put all the lentils in a pot and boil on high heat for 10 minutes in 1.2 litres chicken or vegetable stock. Stir in 1 tbsp tomato puree. Peel and halve an onion and add to the soup. Add 2 bay leaves, a sprig of thyme, 2 cloves, and ¼ tsp allspice. Rub the outer papery layers off an entire garlic bulb and add to the soup. Bring back to the boil, and then simmer for an hour, until the split yellow peas are soft. Discard the onion halves, garlic, and herbs. Mash the flesh of the garlic

and onion and add to the pot. Garnish with 50g of shredded ham, fried until caramelised in 1tsp of olive oil (optional), and drizzle with 1 tbsp of maple syrup and a pinch of chilli powder.

Black eyed beans with halloumi cheese

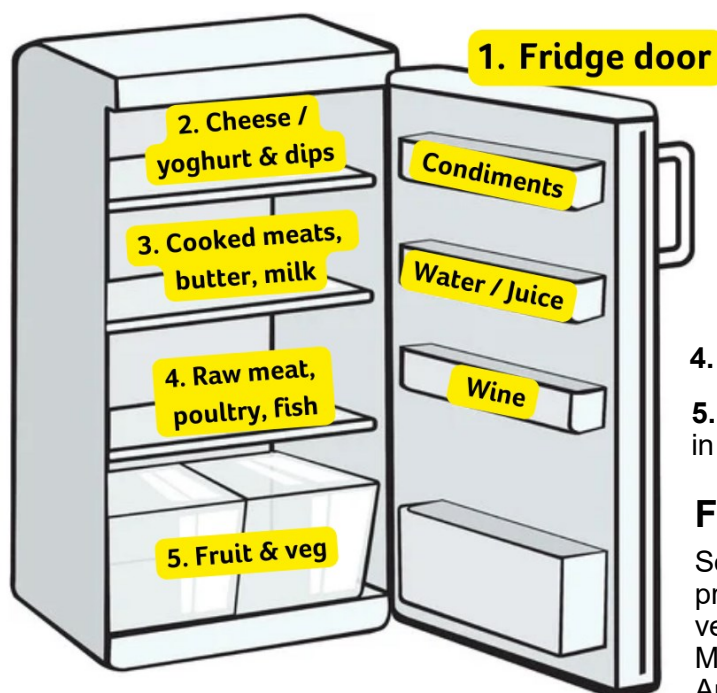
Finely dice 1 red onion (peeled), 1 red pepper and 1 courgette. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a wide pan, and fry the vegetables gently for 10 minutes. Add 3 finely chopped garlic cloves, cook for 2 more minutes, and then add 1tsp dried oregano and the zest of 1 lemon. Drain 2 cans of black- eyed beans, roughly mash about a third, and add with the whole ones to the pan. Add the juice of 1 lemon, 1 tsp red wine vinegar, 1 medium diced tomato and 4 tbsp water. Simmer for 15 minutes. Stir in a small bunch each of finely chopped dill and parsley and season to taste. Cut a block of halloumi into 8 slices, dry fry on high heat on each side until browned. Serve on top of the beans, with a few sprigs of mint and a pinch of chilli flakes.



GIVING YOU THE TOOLS TO STAY SAFE

Make your food last longer

The temperature varies in different parts of a fridge – and to make food last longer, you should store it accordingly. The top shelf is usually the warmest (unless there's a freezer compartment at the top) and is best for ready to eat food.



Where to store your food

- 1. FRIDGE DOOR** Condiments such as ketchup, mayonnaise, salad dressings, jams, pickles and chutneys. They contain preservatives and can cope with the changes in temperature. Store water, juice and wine here.
- 2. TOP SHELF** Cheese, yoghurt and dips such as hummus.
- 3. MIDDLE SHELVES** Cooked meats, butter, milk, leftovers, fruit, ready meals.
- 4. BOTTOM SHELVES** Raw meat, poultry, fish.
- 5. FRUIT AND VEG DRAWERS** Store fruit and veg in separate drawers if possible.

Foods to keep apart

Some foods shouldn't be stored together. Fruit produces a chemical called ethylene, which causes vegetables to over ripen and spoil more quickly. Mushrooms also produce this. Apples, bananas and melons are particularly prone and not only cause other fruit to spoil but also go off more quickly if near other ethylene-producing fruit.



Potatoes & onions and garlic



Mushrooms & veg



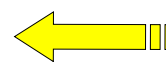
Apples & bananas



Fruit & veg (e.g. apples, bananas and carrots, tomatoes, peppers)



SUPPORT PIGEON POST



The funding that we originally received to produce Pigeon Post has come to an end and we are looking for donations to keep our magazine going. If you can afford to give a small amount, we'd be very grateful. Please contact Teresa on 07502 989 403. We are suggesting £5 a year, which works out less than £1 an issue!



POETRY CORNER

If you have any poetry or funny stories you would like us to include, put pen to paper And send it to us at **Age UK Barnet Letters Page, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT**. Or call Teresa on 07502 989 403 or 0208 432 1421.



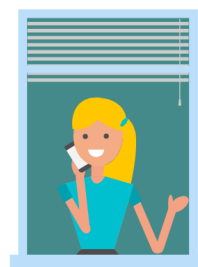
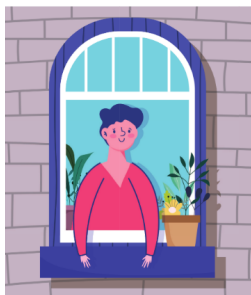
THANKS TO MY NEIGHBOURS IN THESE HARD TIMES BY GEOFF

Our lovely reader Geoff from Barnet was so moved by the kindness he received during covid that he wrote this little poem of thanks for all those who went out of their way for others.

The start of a poem - My wife and I, both pensioners, live in Barnet, and at the beginning of the pandemic our next-door neighbour Annette, a single mother with two small boys, picked up a lot of shopping for us. Later, our daughter Louisa, shopped in south London where she lives with her husband, and drove all the way across London to leave the shopping at our front door. Then - as were the rules at the time - stood back at the end of the path, sometimes in the cold and rain, to chat briefly before waving us goodbye. We couldn't even give our daughter a kiss or a cuddle. We were left feeling bereft. So I was thinking of Annette and Louisa and their kindness as well as the kindness of many of the neighbours in the street where we live - when the first line of the following poem popped into my head. 'There is a polish I'll call kindness which is used to shine the heart.' Here is the poem which is all about kindness.

Thanks to my neighbours in these hard times

There is a polish I'll call kindness which is used to shine the heart
And when my tears have dried for those who died and those they've left behind
I'll say to myself and silently a hundred times a day
Thanks to my neighbour and to my neighbours everywhere
For your kindness and compassion, your thoughtfulness and care.
And when you bring my shopping with love in your heart
You leave behind some polish so I can play my part
And learn that upside-down arithmetic which every neighbour knows
The more you give of kindness, the more that kindness grows.



MEET CAT MOSS!



Move over Kate Moss, our volunteer receptionist Charlotte's tabby cat Suki took part in a photoshoot for Vogue magazine when this wonderful photo was taken.

'Suki lives with me in High Barnet and has had at least two other owners. I have no idea how old she is but we have been living very

happily together for at least four years,' says Charlotte. 'She was wonderful company and comfort during lockdown! She is such a character - a bit of a diva, who knows how beautiful she is and how much she is loved.'

OVER TO YOU!



YOUR LIVES, YOUR STORIES!



Each month our reporter Linda Jackson has a lovely chat with one of you readers and shares your stories with the rest of us. This International Women's Month, Linda chats to another inspirational reader June, a regular in our exercise classes who became a spokesperson for the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

I met my next interviewee in her home on a very hot day. She looked cool, smart and fit. She was friendly and articulate and had plenty to say on the ups and downs of her eventful life. She has 2 sons and 6 grandchildren, none of whom live close by.

June was born in Pune, India 77 years ago to a Jewish Indian family. She explained that her Jewish ancestors had originally come from Persia, and were quite fair skinned. The family weren't Orthodox but went to Synagogue, observed feast days and loosely observed dietary laws. Her father worked on the railways as an electrician. She had five siblings, but two of her brothers were tragically drowned in a reservoir during a family picnic.

In 1952 her father decided to move the family to the UK. He went first with two children, and the rest followed the next year by P&O liner to Southampton via Aden, Port Said, the Suez Canal and Marseille, which must have been quite an experience. The family settled in the East End of London helped by various Jewish organisations, and then moved to Hendon. June went to grammar school, left and studied nursing at University College Hospital. During her training she did a placement at Friern Barnet Hospital where she met David, a psychiatric nurse and later they got married. And in 1995, the hospital was sold and turned into flats.

June and her husband decided to move to Northampton as they could not afford London house prices. They were to stay there for 43 years. At first money was tight, and with two young children June took any jobs that were going—at first, because she was good at crafts, making handbags with leather off cuts, and then night shift nursing jobs. Her eventual career of 16 years was in health visiting.

Then tragedy struck. June's husband began having problems with his speech; he couldn't swallow, and chewing was difficult. He was eventually diagnosed with Motor Neurone disease. However he retained mobility in his arms and legs and was able to dress himself and to get about. He survived three years and eight months, and died in a hospice with his family around him.

Coming from a nursing background June understood the progression of her husband's condition and his treatment. She realised how little was known about the causes and treatment of MND, and how underfunded research was into this terrible disease. She joined the MND Association and became involved in fund raising campaigns with organisations such as golf clubs, Rotary, and the Masons organising fund raising events including fashion shows. Quite often June was invited to receive a cheque on behalf of the Association and had to make a little speech on MND. She spoke on local radio and has given talks to organisations such as the WI. She has also written a long article in the north London branch of the Association's magazine. June moved back to London 10 years ago and misses being involved in the proactive fund raising programme that the Northampton MND Association undertook. But she keeps herself busy and fit by attending Age UK Barnet exercise classes, and joining a group that organises visits to exhibitions. She has also joined her local community WhatsApp group. She would like to do volunteer work, but does not have a car to get around.

June is obviously an energetic and proactive person who likes to be involved in what is going on around her. She has certainly suffered setbacks in her life, but there is no sense of being hard done by, but always "I can deal with this". She now admits to being lonely at times. Fortunately she does seem to have plenty of energy, is in good health except for a hearing problem, and a positive look on life.



RECIPE TIME

EASY LENTIL CURRY

Ingredients

2 tbsp sunflower oil
2 medium onions, cut into rough wedges
4 tbsp curry paste
850ml vegetable stock
750g stew pack frozen vegetables

100g red lentils
200g basmati rice
Turmeric
Handful of raisins
Some roughly chopped parsley
Poppadoms and mango chutney to serve



Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the onions and cook over a high heat for about 8 minutes or until they are golden brown. Stir in the curry paste and cook for a minute. Slowly pour in a little of the stock so it sizzles, scraping any bits from the bottom of the pan. Gradually pour in the rest of the stock.
2. Stir in the frozen vegetables and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the lentils and simmer for a further 15-20 minutes or until the vegetables and lentils are cooked.
3. While the curry is simmering, cook the rice according to the packet instructions, adding the turmeric to the cooking water. Drain well.
4. Season the curry with salt, toss in a handful of raisins and chopped parsley, then serve with the rice, poppadoms and chutney.

ONE-POT GOULASH PASTA

Ingredients

2 tbsp rapeseed oil
2 onions (about 340g) chopped
500g 5% fat steak mince
2 peppers, deseeded and finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, chopped
1 tbsp thyme leaves

2 tbsp smoked paprika
400g can chopped tomatoes
2 tbsp tomato puree
800ml hot vegetable stock, made with 2
tbsp bouillon powder
180g wholemeal penne



Method



1. Heat the oil in a large lidded pan over a medium heat and fry the onions for 10 mins, stirring frequently until golden. Add the mince, breaking apart any lumps with a wooden spoon. Stir in the peppers and cook for 5 mins.

2. Add the garlic, thyme and paprika, and stir well. Tip in the tomatoes, tomato puree and stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 10 mins. Tip in the penne, put the lid back on and bring back to the boil. Reduce the heat again and simmer for another 12 mins until the penne is tender. Leave to stand for 5 mins, then serve.

Leave the remainder to cool, then keep chilled for up to four days. Reheat in a pan over a low heat with a splash of water until piping hot.

KITCHEN MOVES

While waiting for the kettle to boil, former physiotherapist Gillian Jordan suggests using the time to do a few easy exercises which are particularly good for improving balance and strength in your leg muscles?

1

1. Stand as tall as you can, straighten your back, drop your shoulders and lift your head so you are looking in front of you. Take gentle breaths in and out.

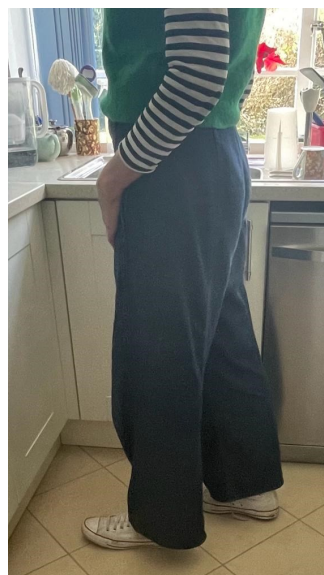
With your feet apart, shift your weight onto one leg and then the other, without lifting your foot from the ground. Get a rhythm going, even hum a little tune.

2



2. Stand facing a firm work surface, ready to hold on if necessary:-
Stand sideways to the work surface with one foot a little in front of the other. This time take your weight onto your front leg, then back to the other one, again get a nice rhythm. When your weight is on your front leg, let the knee of the back leg bend and your heel lift as if you were going to take a step, then rock back. Then repeat with the opposite leg forwards.
As you get better at this exercise, progress to actually taking a step forward and then back to the starting position, again concentrating on the rhythm, back and forth.-

3

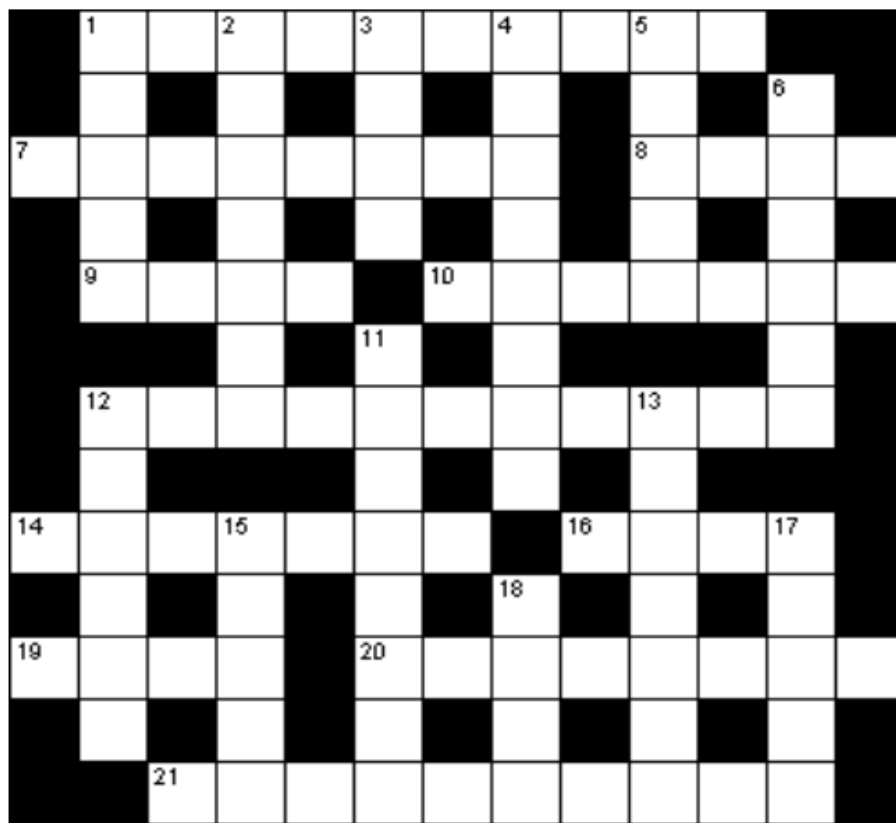


3. Face the work surface and lift each leg in turn behind you, keep stranding as upright as possible. Really feel the stretch in the front of your hip and the work that the muscles at the back of your leg are doing.



Over the past few months, we have looked at simple exercises on the bed, sitting in a chair and standing. I hope you are finding them useful and that you can do some every day - little and often is the most effective way to maintain strength and stability without stress!

PUZZLE TIME....

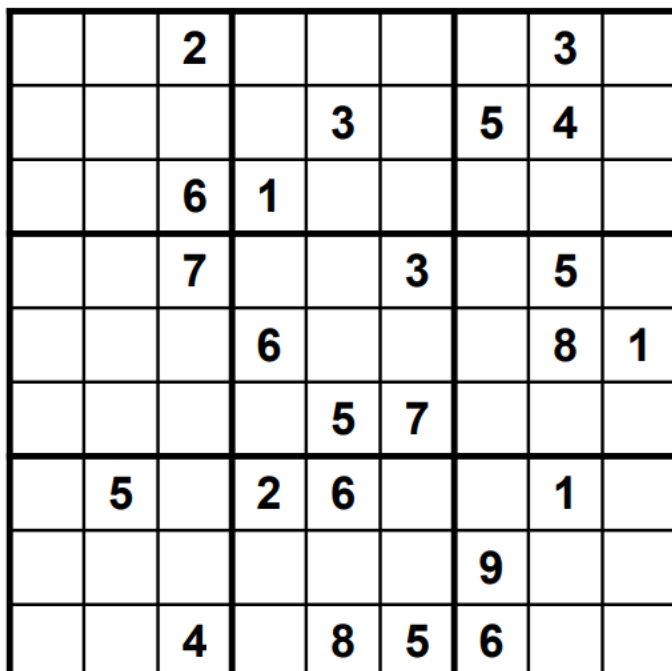


Across

- 1 Unwanted third person (10)
- 7 Pharmacist (8)
- 8 The first man (4)
- 9 Suspend (4)
- 10 Look after children (7)
- 12 Too small to be seen with
- 14 Teach (7)
- 16 Take notice of (4)
- 19 South American country (4)
- 20 Broadcasting (2,3,3)
- 21 Imprisonment (10)

Down

- 1 Circumference (5)
- 2 Naturally grown (7)
- 3 Prepare for publication (4)
- 4 Way in (8)
- 5 Prepared (5)
- 6 Crazy person (6)
- 11 Put off, defer (8)
- 12 Infuriate (6)
- 13 Go before (7)
- 15 Large container for milk (5)
- 17 Move aimlessly from place to
- 18 Daze (4)



All answers on p16

1. What 5-letter word typed in all capital letters can be read the same upside down?

Q: The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?

Q: David's father has three sons: Snap, Crackle, and _____?

Q: What is more useful when it is broken?

Q: I am easy to lift, but hard to throw. What am I?

Q: Where do you take a sick boat?

Q: Which fish costs the most?

EASY CRAFTS - DECORATE A LAMPSHADE

What you will need

A paper or parchment lamp shade, Marbled paper (or other decorative paper), Ribbon, bias tape, or other trim for the edges, Spray adhesive, Glue, Craft paper, Scissors, Craft knife, Clothes pegs

Instructions

1. Create a template by rolling your shade across a piece of craft paper (or other large sheet of paper), tracing the outline as you go. (Tip: Start and end at the lamp shade seam to make sure you've done one a full rotation.)



2. Cut out the template, leaving at least an inch of extra paper on each side. (It's better to have too much than too little!)



3. Check to make sure that the template is large enough by wrapping it around the shade.



4. If the template covers the shade completely, trace it on the back side of your decorative paper and cut out



5. Spray both the back side of the decorative paper and the shade with a light coating of adhesive. You can use more craft paper underneath to protect your work surface



6. Attach the paper to the shade, smoothing it down as you go. Spray adhesive tends to dry quickly, so work fast!



7. Use glue to secure the edge. Trim any overhang with a craft knife.



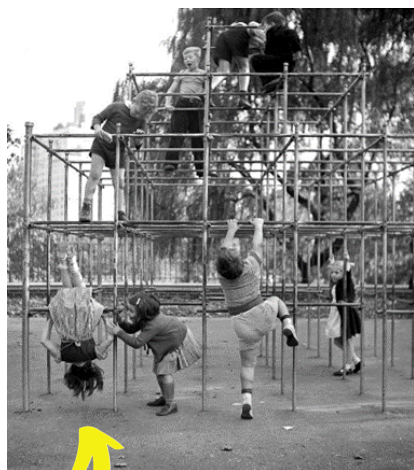
8. Glue a strip of bias trim, hem tape, or other trim around the top and bottom. (Tip: Fold it over the edge for a more finished look.) Use pegs to hold trim in place whilst it dries.

Once everything is dried, your shade is ready to use!



WHEN PLAYGROUNDS WERE NOT SO SAFE!

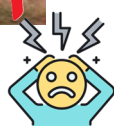
Playground memories maybe best kept that way!



EEK



AND NOT JUST
PLAYGROUNDS!!!



HOW CAN WE HELP



AGE UK BARNET SERVICES?



For advice about benefits, grants, housing and money concerns, phone our **Later Life Planning Service** on **020 8432 1417**.

For scams advice and support, call our **Scams Prevention Service** on **0208 432 2217**.

Would you enjoy a regular chat over the phone with a friendly volunteer? Try our **Befriending Service** on **020 8432 1416**

For essential jobs in the home please phone our **Handyperson Service*** on **020 8150 0963**. Some jobs such as changing a lightbulb are free of charge.

Unable to get out to the shops and cannot shop online? We have a **Shopping Service*** for people who need a light weekly shop. For more info, Tel **020 8150 0963**

Living Well Dementia Hub—dementia adviser service and **day opportunities** for people living with mild to moderate dementia and their carers. Phone 020 8203 5040. Our **Dementia Befriending Service** offers companionship—phone **020 8150 0967**.

Our Stepping Out Service for those who have early stages of dementia or confirmed memory issues, we offer short weekly walks with a volunteer Phone **020 8150 0963**.

Foot care* We offer basic nail-cutting (£15) at the Ann Owens Centre in East Finchley and, for people with diabetes, taking steroids or warfarin, we have nail-cutting with a podiatrist (£20). For an appointment, phone **020 8203 5040**.

Household Support Fund - one-off grants for Barnet residents of pensionable age who are struggling to make ends meet during this cost of living crisis. Phone **020 8203 5040** or email support@ageukbarnet.org.uk

**There may be a charge for this service*



WARM SPACES - Helping you through cold winter days

Monday afternoons 2-4pm Ann Owens Centre in East Finchley N2 8LT. As well as tea and coffee and a chance to chat, read or relax, there'll be Scrabble and other games. Our friendly digital inclusion volunteers will be on hand to help you get to grips with your phones and laptops.

Tuesday mornings 10.30 – 12.30pm. St Margaret's UR Church, Victoria Avenue, Finchley Central N3 1BD. An uplifting, warm space to play Scrabble and other games. There'll be refreshments and you can get help with technology. Free of charge.

Wednesday afternoons 1pm. The Mount International School, Milesplit Hill, Mill Hill NW7 2RX. One to one support with technology offered by school students and delicious home cooked lunch afterwards at 1.50pm. Free of charge. Parking on Milesplit Hill and the 240 bus passes along the Ridgeway nearby

Thursday afternoons - 2-3.30pm. St Margaret's Church, 1 Station Road, Edgware HA8 7JE. Lively and popular social group with refreshments and some support with your phones. Costs £2 a session.

For all the above phone Howard on 020 8432 1415 or 07798 622832.

New Social Drop-In Group for over 55s in Barnet – from 11.00am – 12.30pm. Gadsbury Close, Goldsmith Avenue, West Hendon NW9 7EU. Come along for a chat, games, talks and refreshments. Contact Helen Nicolaou on 0738 446 6840 or email helen.nicolaou@ageukbarnet.org.uk for more information.





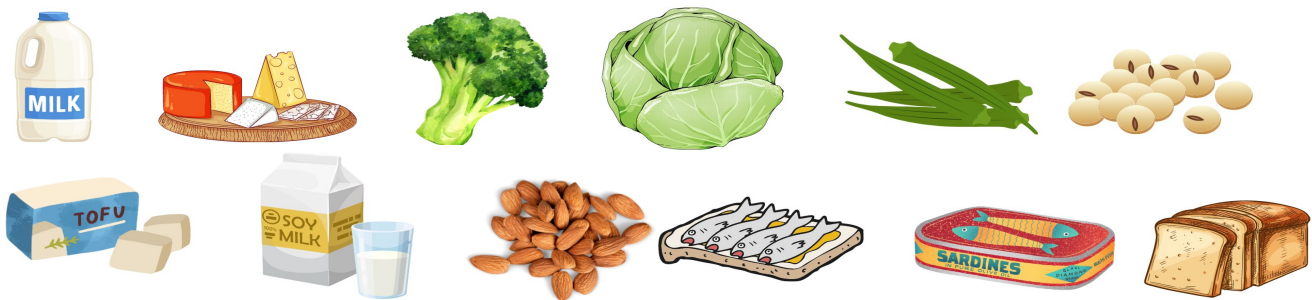
BOOST YOUR BONE HEALTH

‘Our bones tend to lose strength as we get older which increases your risk of osteoporosis, falls and fractures,’ says dietitian Caroline Morrison. ‘But even in your later years, there is plenty that you can still do to reduce this risk—our bones are living tissue and are constantly being renewed and replaced by new deposits of bone.’

As well as staying hydrated and avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol, eat a well-balanced diet with emphasis on calcium and vitamin D and exercise regularly. It’s also important to be a healthy weight – being underweight is linked to a higher risk of fractures.

Eating for healthy bones - For healthy muscles and bones, you need calcium, Vitamin D and protein. Protein is important to maintain muscle and prevent bone loss – good sources include meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy foods and plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, and seeds also contain protein.

We need 700mg of calcium a day and calcium-rich foods include: milk, cheese and other dairy foods; green leafy vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, okra; soya beans; tofu; plant based drinks such as soya drinks with added calcium; nuts; bread and anything made with fortified flour; edible small-boned fish such as pilchards, sardines and whitebait.



How much calcium does it contain?

Food type	Portion size (grams or ml)	Calcium content (mg)
1 glass of milk (full fat, semi or skimmed)	200ml	230
1 standard pot of yoghurt	150g	240
Cheddar cheese	30g	216
Horlicks powder	25g	108
1 average tin sardines in tomato sauce	100g	460
1 small tin Baked beans	150g	75
Almonds	30g	70

Vitamin D - Vitamin D helps our bodies absorb calcium. Our bodies make Vitamin D from the action of summer sunlight from late March to the end of September on our skin – at least 15 minutes’ exposure a day on your arms, legs or face ideally. All adults are advised to take a daily vitamin D supplement during the winter months. People who are not exposed to the sun should take a daily Vitamin D supplement throughout the year.

Stay active - Moderate activity will raise your heart rate and make you breathe faster and feel warmer. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intense weight-bearing exercise every week such as walking, water aerobics, ballroom and line dancing, tennis, mowing the lawn and cycling. Activities such as yoga and Tai Chi help to improve balance and flexibility to reduce your risk of falling and also ease stiffness and unsteadiness associated with painful joints. You should also try to avoid sitting for long periods. If you find you have been sitting for more than about 20-30 minutes, get up and go for a stroll.

WELLBEING - NOISE POLLUTION

Neuropsychologist Professor Catherine Loveday on how noise pollution such as traffic, planes and building work impacts our wellbeing and what we can do about it.

'There is a concrete connection between noise and how we feel and think. This includes our mental health, our ability to learn, and also physical health such as heart function,' says Catherine. 'A study conducted in Germany found that the closer someone lived to the airport, the higher their risk of depression. And this was shown to relate specifically to the noise of the aircraft overhead.' Studies have also shown that people over the age of 45 are more likely to experience memory problems if they're in noisy environments.

Why does noise have such a negative impact? 'It's partly due to the stress of not being in control or being able to turn the noise down or off,' says Catherine. 'Our body is on alert and ready to deal with this potential danger.' Noise also disrupts our sleep, our circadian rhythms and our ability to think. Noise can occupy so much of our brain space that we can't think straight. 'When I'm reversing the car, for example, I need to turn off music so that I can concentrate completely,' says Catherine.

For older adults, there can be particular difficulties with being in a place with lots of noisy chatter, for example a party of restaurant. There is something called the "Lombard Effect" which is where people automatically start to speak more loudly in a noisy environment and then of course it gets worse. This can be particularly difficult in a big room with hard walls, and is especially hard for people with hearing aids.

How to deal with noise

- Reduce your exposure to loud noise. Consider wearing earplugs in noisy environments, except where it may not be safe (for example when walking or driving).
- Make sure you have enough sound absorbing materials at home – carpets, curtains and acoustic tiles absorb sound and reduce the amount of noise. And look out for restaurants and social venues that have these features too.
- White noise such as ambient music can mask noise and make it easier to concentrate or sleep. When we are focusing on a task, a secondary attention system continually scans our environment for any new, interesting or unpredictable sounds. Low levels of noise may help mask these sounds.

Plan quiet times and in a quiet space – and listen to natural sounds rather than be in silence which studies have shown to more quickly reduce stress. In nature, silence is actually a rare thing and can be a sign of a threat to animals.



EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday Knit, Natter, Crochet & Social Drop in Group – 10.00am – 12 noon at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane N2 8LT. Join us for refreshments and chat. £2 per class. For more information contact Helen Nicolaou on 0738 446 6840 or email helen.nicolaou@ageukbarnet.org.uk

Living Well in Barnet – 30 March 2023 from 11am – 1.00pm. St Agnes Church Hall, 35 Cricklewood Lane NW2 1HR. A morning of stimulating talks and activities. Talk by Professor Catherine Loveday on the benefits of connecting with others and joining groups. There'll also be advice on building strength and balance to reduce the risk of falls, a talk on hearing health and memory plus an exercise taster and useful information stalls. Parking available from 11am on roads or in church car park. Free entry. To book a space contact Fiona Cronin on 07799 519 314 or email fiona.cronin@ageukbarnet.org.uk

Talk: Let the music play! - Wednesday 19 April from 7.00pm – 8.00pm Talk by our regular columnist Professor Catherine Loveday. How the sounds we listen to boost our body and mind and how the type of music we listen to can affect everything from how we drive and carry out tasks to the way we exercise and socialise. Takes place at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT. Just contact Teresa on 07502 989 403 to book your place. Suggested optional donation on the door is £5. Refreshments provided.

Coronation Carnival - Saturday 20 May (11am-3pm) Join us at the Ann Owens Centre in East Finchley for a musical celebration of the Coronation of the King - there'll be live music all day including jazz, classical and popular show tunes plus food, drinks, cakes, cream tea, tombola, raffle, a plant stall and more. Just £2 entry. To register, contact Teresa on 07502 989 403



FOCUS ON FINANCIAL ABUSE

Financial abuse is often difficult to spot from the outside and even victims are often unaware that this is what they are going through. There are no physical effects — but the fact that there are no bruises doesn't make it any less damaging. Financial abuse can leave you in debt, wreck your credit rating and destroy your confidence.

How to spot if someone is being financially abused.

Sometimes it can take a long time to realise you are being financially abused or for you to label what is happening as 'abuse'. But if you feel uncomfortable about the way that someone you know is behaving with your money, they may be financially abusing you. Our list can help you identify if that is what's happening.

- ♦ forces you to take out money or get credit in your name
- ♦ makes you hand over control of your accounts - this could include changing your login details
- ♦ cashes in your pension or other cheques without your permission
- ♦ adds their name to your account
- ♦ pressures you to change your will in a way you're not comfortable with
- ♦ has offered to buy shopping or pay bills with your money, but takes it, and doesn't use the money
- ♦ how you agreed
- ♦ asks you prove what you've spent your money on
- ♦ stops you accessing your bank, loan or credit card accounts
- ♦ controls what you can and can't spend your money on
- ♦ sets up Direct Debits from your account to pay bills which aren't yours or pay for goods and services which you haven't bought
- ♦ pressures you to arrange for your benefits to be paid into a bank account you don't have access to
- ♦ pressures you to draw down, transfer or stop making pension payments
- ♦ makes you take out new insurance policies or stops you paying your existing ones.

What is financial abuse

The official definition of financial abuse is the use or misuse of finances to exert control over a victim, restricting their freedom and dignity. It is often part of a pattern of coercive control characterised by belittling, threatening, intimidating and domineering behaviour.

It can include restricting access to money, putting debt such as credit cards in the victim's name, or controlling how and what you spend your money on.

Part of what makes it so difficult to recognise, however, is that there is such a grey scale. Is not contributing to bills financial abuse? If you're in a trusting relationship, should you mind if your partner goes through your expenses, or puts a lid on your spending? Everyone will have a different view. What you are comfortable with may not be the same as the next person.

And remember, it doesn't start with a big bang: it creeps up on you. It could be something seemingly innocent, like checking your receipt after you've done the food shop.

If you need help

Call the Age UK Advice Line on [0800 678 1602](tel:08006781602) - lines are open 8am-7pm, 365 days a year. Get in touch with our Later Life Planning team on 020 8203 5040.

For Refuge's 24-hour [National Domestic Abuse helpline](https://www.refuge.org.uk/national-domestic-abuse-helpline) call 0808 2000 247.



FREE ENERGY ADVICE

You will have seen that Ofgem have announced that the Energy Price Cap is rising in April. The Mayor has set up **Energy Advice London** with the Energy Savings Trust to support Londoners with free advice on saving energy and water, reducing energy bills, accessing financial support, installing renewables and more. Londoners can contact **Energy Advice London free on 0808 196 8260, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm.**

SHARING TIPS AND STORIES



JUST ONE THING



TV doctor Michael Mosely is currently challenging people to change just one thing which will improve their lives in ways that they wouldn't expect. Here we explore a few of his suggestions. Maybe you could try just one thing before the next issue of Pigeon Post.

Have an early morning walk. Getting out and about first thing – within an hour or two of getting up – can improve your sleep, boost your mood, increase your fitness and cut your risk of heart disease and diabetes. Heading out early means that you get the health benefits not only of the exercise but also of the exposure to natural light, which regulates your body clock, leading to better sleep. If you go for a walk in green space, like a wood or park, all the better. A brisk walk is around 100 paces a minute. Turn it into a social event by trying one of the five walks we run around the borough?



In the afternoon, stand up Spending more time standing is good for your blood sugars and for your bones. It could even improve your psychological health. Medical research studies show that standing as little as 30 minutes a day can lower your risk of death from cardiovascular disease. Standing for 90 minutes can lower that risk by more than 33%. The more you stand, the more the benefits add up.



Swap sugary snacks for fruit Cutting back on sugar is not only good for your waistline, research shows that it could also improve your memory and help your brain. Eating sugary foods have been shown to increase sugar cravings, but if you trade in your sweet treats for fruit, the fibre it contains may even reduce sugar cravings, according to research! This is because it slows down the speed at

which sugar is processed. You also get all the other nutritional benefits of fruit.

An Australian study found that those who drank less than one sugary drink a day had a bigger total brain volume and scored higher on memory tests compared to those who consumed more.



SECRETS OF A LONG LIFE

The Guardian newspaper interviewed 100 centenarians for their tips on a long life – and here are a few of our favourites!



1. Dance a lot, avoid stress and remember that all problems have a solution
2. Never stay stuck in the past
3. Keep a diary
4. Know how to laugh at yourself
5. Keep your mind active - watch quiz shows, read murder-mysteries and play Scrabble

6 Mix with younger people

7 Always be pleasant and don't judge people on just a first meeting



'I woke up in complete darkness'

Alison from Barnet sent us her sorry tale.... 'Paul, my husband, bought me some matching pyjamas and a sleep mask - a cute teddy bear one. I wore the mask to bed one night, but forgot I had it on when I woke up. I opened my eyes, but couldn't see a thing! I lay there for ages fearing that I had gone blind. I kept blinking, but nothing - still total darkness. I didn't want to disturb Paul because I knew he would have called an ambulance. Because I had gone blind!

I tried to lay there not panicking and not wanting to disturb Paul. I then decided to try to get out of bed, so I felt my way to the edge of the bed and sat there – I started to rub my eyes hoping it might help, only to feel that my eyes were all furry! Oh my gosh, what had happened to me! Panic rising even more, imagining I had contacted some terrible disease....until I realised that it was the teddy sleep mask that I had put on the night before – that was the reason everything was still in darkness. I was so relieved that I hadn't gone blind after all! Needless to say, that sleep mask went straight in the bin!



A cartoon illustration of four vultures in a desert. One vulture is lying on its back on the ground, wearing green polka-dot pants and red shoes. The other three vultures are standing around it, looking at it. One vulture has a speech bubble that says "Tastes funny."

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- ## RIDDLE ANSWERS P8

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5	3	6	1	2	4	8	9	7
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2	6	8	3	4	1	9	7	5
9	1	4	7	8	5	6	2	3

