



How to talk openly in the workplace about mental health

It all starts with a conversation but for many people, the prospect of talking about their mental health can be scary. Will I be judged? Will I be ridiculed? Will people treat me differently?

Time to Talk Day

This year, is all about bringing together the right ingredients to promote a conversation about mental health. Whether that's a cup of tea, a shared packet of biscuits or an awareness poster, they can all act as a prompt to start a discussion.

There are many ways in which employers can support this important agenda. Think about how and where you could create a safe and supportive environment to engage colleagues to open up and talk. How about some of these ideas:

- ▶ Encourage 'how are you'? The water cooler, kettle or photocopiers are potentially great places to have a chat.
- ▶ Host a healthy office buffet and encourage colleagues to contribute and share their experiences. Perhaps in the format of a quiz to bust some mental health myths.
- ▶ Take part in a 'walk and talk' session. People will also benefit from getting outside doing some gentle exercise which supports great mental health.
- ▶ Make use of social networks. Some people may prefer to participate through internal message boards or reading information on your intranet pages.

95% of workplaces, who took part in Time to Talk Day 2018, said that people in their organisation are now more likely to talk about mental health as a result. For more information and ideas please visit

<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk>

How weight can affect your heart health

Your weight can make a real difference to your risk of having a heart attack. Being overweight increases the likelihood of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and a high cholesterol level.

The good news is if you are overweight you can reduce your heart attack risk by reaching and maintaining a healthy weight.

Your shape makes a difference to your health risk. Fat around your middle can increase your risk of heart disease because the fat cells produce harmful substances that damage the body.

It's really easy to work out your risk by measuring your own waist. For most people, this means wrapping a tape measure around your tummy at the level of your belly button. Remember not to breathe in and keep the tape measure level.

	Increased risk	Severe risk
Men (white European)	over 94cm (37")	over 102cm (40")
Men (African-Caribbean, South Asian and some other minority ethnic groups)		over 90cm (35.5")
Women (white European)	over 80cm (32")	over 88cm (35")
Women (African-Caribbean, South Asian and some other minority ethnic groups)		over 80cm (32")

If your waist measurements indicate you are currently at increased or severe risk, making some basic changes to your lifestyle will help to improve your health and reduce your risk.

- ▶ Eat at least 5 different portions of fruit and vegetable every day.
- ▶ Base meals around starchy, wholegrain carbohydrates such as wholemeal pasta, bread, rice.
- ▶ Too much saturated fat will increase your blood cholesterol levels and the amount you eat should be kept to a minimum (less than 20g per day)

Save the Date 7th February Time to talk day



Food tip

Eating oily fish is a nutritious choice which can form part of the Mediterranean-style diet. Research into this style of eating has shown a reduced risk of developing problems such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and raised cholesterol.

Quote of the Month

“ I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen. ”

Ernest Hemingway