



# Managing your health and wellbeing as a carer

## Almost three quarters (72%) of carers in the UK suffer from mental ill health as a result of caring

The types of complaints that carers are likely to report are sub-standard sleep quality, poor physical health and an increased worry about their finances. If not addressed, over time these issues will drain a carer's energy, leave them tense, irritable and put a strain on their relationships.

One of the most important steps that carers can take is to acknowledge that their health is suffering, and that some support is required. This can be difficult as carers can feel overwhelmed and out of control. The sooner the issues are recognised and dealt with the better.

- ▶ There are local carers groups which encourage carers to talk openly with others who are in the same position.
- ▶ There are online forums such as Carers UK. Here people anonymously share experiences and find support.
- ▶ Local councils may be able to provide some respite care to provide breathing space.
- ▶ Tell friends, family members or the local GP how you feel. Just talking about it can help.

### When carers are feeling low, angry or overwhelmed, there are a few things that can be tried to manage their health and wellbeing.

- ▶ Find a quiet place and just breathe deeply for five minutes.
- ▶ Practice relaxation techniques. Training can be found online or at the local library.
- ▶ Avoid smoking and too much alcohol.
- ▶ Caffeine can have similar effects on the body to stress, so watch the coffee intake.
- ▶ Getting active is a simple way to relieve tension. Even a walk to the shops can help.
- ▶ Be realistic. Learn to say "no" to other people, some of the time at least.

## Quote of the month

“ Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live. ”

Jim Rohn, author and motivational speaker

# Get Sun Smart this Summer

Everyone is affected by damage to the skin from the sun. In 2018, 35% of people in the UK were burnt at least once, and 28% of those said they were burnt on 3 or more occasions.

Too much exposure to the sun can cause serious damage to the body and increase the risk of developing skin cancer. The risk also depends on the natural shade of the skin. Those with fairer skin tend to burn more quickly than those with naturally darker skin. However, everybody will cause damage to their skin the longer they spend in the sun

	TYPE 01	Pale skin burns very easily and rarely tans. Generally will have light coloured or red hair and freckles.
	TYPE 02	Fair skin that usually burns, but may gradually tan. Some may have dark hair but still have fair skin.
	TYPE 03	Skin that burns with long and intense exposure to the sun but generally tans quite easily.
	TYPE 04	Olive coloured skin that tans easily but could possibly burn with lengthy exposures to intense sunshine. Will usually have brown eyes and dark hair.
	TYPE 05	Naturally brown skin with brown eyes and dark hair. Skin darkens easily with sun exposure and only burns with excessive exposure to the sun.
	TYPE 06	Black skin with dark brown eyes and black hair. Skin very easily darkens on exposure to sun and would very rarely if ever burn.

## There is a wide amount of support available:

- ▶ Slip on a shirt - Protect as much of your skin with clothing as you can. Don't forget about protecting your face, neck, ears and feet. Cover them up with hats, sunglasses and socks.
- ▶ Seek out some shade - Don't wait until your skin starts to burn. The sun is usually at its strongest between 11am-3pm and you are more likely to burn during this time. Don't wait until your skin starts to burn before finding shade as the damage has already been done.

- ▶ Slap on the sun cream - Always choose a product with a high sun protection factor (SPF), at least SPF 30, to protect against UVB rays which burn the skin. Look for a product that also has a 4-5 star UVA protection rating. Apply liberally, covering all exposed skin 30 minutes before heading out into the sun. Reapply every couple of hours and after swimming and towelling off.

Remember these rules don't just apply to holidays. If you work outside as part of your job, ensure you are supplied with the minimum appropriate level of sun protection and remember to keep well-hydrated.

If you are concerned about any changes to your skin that may have been caused by the sun e.g. a change in shape, size or colour of a mole, or itching or bleeding, then please contact your GP.

## Short on time – 15 minute recipe



### Method:

1. Cook the pasta, meanwhile, put the peppers, parsley, nuts, garlic and olive oil in a small food processor, and whizz to a pesto consistency. Season and mix in the parmesan.
2. Drain the pasta and return to the pan with the pesto. Stir and gently heat for 1 min, then sprinkle with a little more chopped parsley and serve.

### Ingredients:

- 290g jar roasted red peppers, drained.
- Large handful flat-leaved parsley, plus a few chopped leaves to garnish.
- 75g unsalted cashews.
- 1 large garlic clove, roughly chopped.
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 50g parmesan, grated.