

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

NATIONAL MALE HEALTH POLICY

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

ACTIONS MALES CAN TAKE NOW

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Action Males Can Take Now

Maintaining your own health is important, but it is not always easy to know how to do this or where to go if something goes wrong. This supporting document has information on a range of male health services and useful websites. You and your friends are encouraged to make use of them.

What's in this document?

Action Males Can Take Now gives advice on male health and gives links to further information on:

- Healthy minds (mental health)
- Healthy routines
- Healthy reproductive behaviours, and
- Healthy limits.

For background information on each of these topics please see other supporting documents to the Policy.

Healthy minds

- Talk to family, friends, a doctor or mental health professional if you feel stressed or have mental health problems. It is a sign of strength to take action to fix a problem.
- Call a confidential, anonymous helpline:
 - MensLine – 1300 78 99 78
 - Lifeline – 13 11 14
 - *beyondblue* Info line – 1300 22 4636
 - SANE Helpline (wide range of information on mental illness and suicide prevention) – 1800 18 SANE (7763) or www.sane.org
 - Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800
 - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service – 1800 011 046
- Get information on mental health problems, how to build your coping skills and resilience, and where to get help:
 - *beyondblue* – www.beyondblue.org.au

- *youthbeyondblue* – www.youthbeyondblue.com
- Black Dog Institute – www.blackdoginstitute.org.au
- Mental Health in Australia (Australian Government) – www.mentalhealth.gov.au
- HealthInsite (Australian Government) – www.healthinsite.gov.au
- The MoodGYM (an interactive online course for overcoming problem emotions and developing good coping skills) – <http://moodgym.anu.edu.au>
- Reach Out (for young people) – <http://au.reachout.com>
- SANE Australia – www.sane.org
- Get connected – join a social group or activity you are interested in:
 - Australian Men’s Shed Association – www.mensshed.org
 - Mensheds Australia Ltd – www.mensheds.com.au
 - Volunteering Australia (information on volunteering) – www.volunteeringaustralia.org
- If you are caring for someone:
 - Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (for respite and other community services) – 1800 052 222. Emergency (after hours) respite – 1800 059 059
 - Carers Australia (puts you in touch with other carers, and the National Carer Counselling Program) – 1800 242 636, www.carersaustralia.com.au

Alzheimer’s Australia (if you are caring for someone with dementia) – National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500, www.alzheimers.org.au
- For more information see the *HealthyMinds* supporting document.

Healthy routines

Get information on preventable diseases, risk factors and simple steps to start and keep a healthy routine:

- HealthInsite (Australian Government health information website) – www.healthinsite.gov.au
- M5 Project: Men’s Preventive Health (Royal Australian College of General Practitioners) – www.m5project.com.au
- Foundation 49 – www.49.com.au (see also the Access to Health Services supporting document for more details)

- Freemasons Foundation for Men's Health (tips on losing weight and assessing your own health risks) – www.adelaide.edu.au/menshealth
- Cancer Council Australia – www.cancer.org.au – Helpline 13 11 20
- Diabetes Australia – www.diabetesaustralia.com.au – Infoline 1300 136 588
- Heart Foundation – www.heartfoundation.org.au – 1300 36 27 87
 - Have your risk of cardiovascular disease assessed by a GP
 - Recognise the warning signs of heart attack – www.heartattackfacts.org.au/home.aspx
- Measure Up – www.measureup.gov.au
 - Measure your waist (men have an increased risk of chronic disease if their waist measures more than 94 cm and a greatly increased risk if their waist measures more than 102 cm)
- National Stroke Foundation – www.strokefoundation.com.au – StrokeLine 1800 787 653
- QUIT Now: the National Tobacco Campaign – www.quitnow.info.au – Quitline 131 848 or 13 7848.
- Participate if you receive an invitation to participate in the National Bowel Screening Program.
- Talk to your doctor about having a health check or if you are experiencing symptoms.
- Get your blood pressure and your blood cholesterol checked.
- For more information see the *Healthy Routines* supporting document.

Follow the Heart Foundation's top five tips for sticking with healthy living resolutions

- Small changes to your eating habits can make a big difference. Try switching to reduced fat milk instead of full fat milk, ditching the cakes or biscuits for morning tea, and choosing a piece of fruit or opting for wholegrain bread instead of white.
- Look for ways to build physical activity into your day. Walk or ride a bike instead of driving. If you must drive, park further away and walk the extra distance rather than driving around for the perfect park, or take a break during the day and go for a 15-minute walk.
- Review the changes you've made and note how you are feeling. Changes should be long term, so it's important to be enjoying your life and feeling good about yourself.
- Reward yourself – when a change becomes a habit, buy yourself some new clothes, or visit a place you enjoy.
- Keep going with your changes – it's normal to have days when it all becomes too hard, but don't worry about it. Just keep going with your changes the next day.

Healthy reproductive behaviours

- Get evidence-based information on reproductive health issues from reputable organisations, such as:
 - Andrology Australia – www.andrologyaustralia.org – 1300 303 878
 - Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia – www.prostate.org.au – 1800 220 099
 - Cancer Council Australia – www.cancer.org.au – Helpline 13 11 20
 - *beyondblue* (information on depression, anxiety and prostate cancer www.beyondblue.org.au – Info line 1300 22 4636
 - Impotence Australia – www.impotenceaustralia.com.au – 1800 800 614
 - Continence Foundation of Australia (for help with bladder or bowel incontinence) – www.continence.org.au – 1800 33 00 66
- Talk to your doctor about reproductive issues, including prostate cancer, particularly if you have a family history of it or if you have erectile dysfunction. There are successful, safe treatments available.
- If you experiences erectile dysfunction it is important to see your doctor, whether or not you would like to have sex. Erectile dysfunction may be a symptom of underlying medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease. It is important to talk openly to your doctor about any problems with sexual functioning.

- Try to follow the simple steps outlined in *Healthy Routines* supporting document, and have regular preventive health visits to your doctor to check for conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure, particularly if you are experiencing erectile dysfunction.
- For more information see *Healthy Reproductive Behaviours* supporting document.

Healthy limits

Alcohol and drug use

- Get information about safe alcohol use and its short- and long-term impacts – <http://au.reachout.com>
- Get information about drugs and drug use – www.drugs.health.gov.au
- Download a copy of *What You Need to Know: A Guide to Hepatitis C* (Hepatitis C Council of NSW) – www.hepc.org.au/documents/WYNTKweb-2MB.pdf
- Never share needles, syringes or other drug equipment

Safe sex

- Get information about STIs (sexually transmitted infections) – www.sti.health.gov.au or www.shfpa.org.au
- Always wear a condom for any sexual contact with casual partners
- See your doctor, family planning clinic or sexual health clinic about STI testing if you have had unsafe sex or have symptoms such as pain, discharge or itching in your genital area
- Find your closest (sometimes free) sexual health clinic at:
 - ACT – www.health.act.gov.au/sexualhealth
 - NSW – www.health.nsw.gov.au/PublicHealth/sexualhealth/sexual_phus.asp
 - NT – <http://safesexnoregrets.nt.gov.au/freetesting.html>
 - QLD – www.health.qld.gov.au/sexhealth/help/default.asp
 - SA – www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/sexual-health.htm
 - TAS – www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/sexualhealth/sexual_health_service_tasmania
 - VIC – www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas/diseases/gr_sti/sti_furtherinfo
 - WA – www.public.health.wa.gov.au/2/421/2/where_can_i_go_for_help.pm

Safe driving

- Get youth-friendly driving information – www.ryda.org.au

For more information see the *Healthy Limits* supporting document.

Note: This document provides links to external websites and contact information for various organisations. The external websites and contact information listed are provided as a guide only and should not be considered an exhaustive list. All contact details were correct at the time of publication, but may be subject to change. The Commonwealth of Australia does not control and accepts no liability for the content of the external websites or contact information or for any loss arising from use or reliance on the external websites or contact information. The Commonwealth of Australia does not endorse the content of any external website and does not warrant that the content of any external website is accurate, authentic or complete. Your use of any external website is governed by the terms of that website.