

Look after yourself

Eat well

Make sure you are eating well enough to maintain a healthy diet. If you are unsure how to do this or you think you are losing weight, ask your GP about seeing a dietician.

Keep hydrated

Our bodies are made up of approximately 70% water so it is not surprising that making sure we drink enough is important. When we do not drink enough and become dehydrated it affects our bodies in ways that increase the risk of falling or getting an infection. If you are unsure how much you should be drinking ask your nurse, therapist or doctor.

Keep active

It is good for everyone to keep physically active. You may not be able to do the same exercise as you once did but it is important that you do as much as you can to maintain the strength of your muscles. This may simply include taking a regular short walk or following an exercise programme provided by a physio-therapist or occupational therapist. If you are unsure, then ask your nurse, therapist or doctor about ways to keep active that are right for you.



The information in this leaflet is available in additional languages and alternative formats. Please contact the Trust for further details.

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Frailty



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**Information
for patients,
relatives and carers**

**Excellence
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Introduction to Frailty

You may have been told that you have the condition healthcare professionals refer to as Frailty. Like any diagnosis this can cause all sorts of emotions including feeling upset or worried. This is why we provide detailed information and support to help you understand what this means for you and your loved ones and help you to feel confident in managing this health condition. Although this leaflet is designed to give you some information it is very important that you speak to the healthcare team involved in your care so you can appreciate what living with Frailty means for you.



Know the facts

What is Frailty?

Many people associate the word 'frailty' with being small or weak but when one of your healthcare team talk about Frailty they mean a condition that affects your health in the same way that other health conditions such as asthma or arthritis might affect your health. Frailty is a condition that is characterised by the loss of physical and/or cognitive inbuilt reserves. Inbuilt reserves are our body's natural ability to recover from illness or injury and we tend to take these for granted throughout our life. As we start to lose these reserves with increasing age or due to a long term progressive illness, we can be at risk of dramatic changes in our health after an apparently minor event such as an infection or a fall.

Why is diagnosis important?

Frailty is a changing condition and in the earlier stages can be reversible. This is why we take time to make the diagnosis so that we can target healthcare interventions that can reverse any deterioration. Many of these early interventions can be self-directed and include keeping yourself healthy by eating and drinking well and maintaining some activity or even exercises. As your needs increase, healthcare interventions such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy or making sure you are taking the right amount of medication can be important to prevent further deterioration in your health. Other interventions may also be necessary and healthcare staff will talk to you about these as they occur.

Some of the indicators of Frailty are:

- Unintentional weight loss
- Fatigue without reason
- Muscle bulk loss or weakness
- Slow to stand and walk
- A decline in activity
- A decline in memory

Generally, people showing signs of 3 or more of these symptoms have Frailty.

