DAY 30: Congratulations, stay motivated

Hello Take Fivers,

You've reached Day 30 — a huge achievement. Over the past month, you've taken small, meaningful steps to improve your health and wellbeing. Today is all about recapping all our knowledge, celebrating your progress and keeping the momentum going.

Today we'd like to share one of the things we love the most about our campaign. Team Take Five aims to challenge all of our perceptions of growing older, encouraging our community to take positive action to change the way we age. Did you know research shows that attitudes to ageing can affect health and wellbeing? **Embracing the ageing process positively and seizing opportunities for personal growth can lead to better health in later life**. This is why we know WE CAN thrive in later life and hope this journey has helped you feel the same.

Let's go!

Summary:

- **Healthy eating** underpins strength, energy, brain health and disease prevention. Key messages for healthy eating: plenty of fruit and veg, wholegrains, healthy fats, and good sources of protein, calcium and vitamin D.
- **Hydration** remains essential, make sure regular fluid intake is part of your routine.
- **Strength and balance classes** are key to reducing the risk of falls. These NHS videos focus on building strength to prevent falls. There are also these seated versions. Stay **motivated to move with this advice from NHS Scotland**.
- Social connection is important for wellbeing, and small, meaningful interactions from chatting with neighbours to meeting people at community groups help strengthen brain health, resilience and a sense of belonging.
- Mindfulness offers a gentle way to enjoy the moment, read more in this Open University article exploring how mindfulness can help us.
- Congratulations - give yourself a cheer (out loud!).

For more information...

Eat

Food is our fuel and makes a real difference to our energy levels, muscle health, brain health, risk of many diseases and even our mood. There are some general key principals for healthy eating:

- Protein, vitamin D and calcium are important to maintain muscle and bone health as we age
- Maintaining a healthy weight helps reduce our risk of many long term conditions
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables - these contain fibre and vitamins
- Wholegrains and variety is good for us
- Healthy fats are fun - think oily fish, nuts, seeds and avocados

Like most things in life, moderation is good for us!

Drink

We can't stress the importance of keeping hydrated enough. Hopefully, you'll have picked up some tips this month to help you spot signs of dehydration or to help you build healthy drinking habits.

The Open University recorded this engaging Open Talk to highlight the importance of hydration as we age. Make sure you fill that water bottle before you hit play!

And, as it's the last email we've got one more; Dr Xand does a great job of bringing lots of hydration advice together in this fun and engaging video, we hope you enjoy it as much as we did.

Move

Movement is great for our bodies and minds. The benefits of moving and avoiding being sedentary for long periods are countless both in terms of our health and happiness. We've covered a range of activities from swimming to Tai Chi but we are going to end by reminding ourselves about the importance of strength and balance.

Preventing falls is one of the top ways to stay independent; every year thousands of people fall and many require hospitalisation. Evidence suggests that many of these falls are preventable which is why we've been on a mission to provide you with the information to get strong and stay upright. Alongside foods rich in protein, calcium and vitamin D, movement which uses those foods to **maintain and even build muscle is essential.**

Strength and balance exercises are a great way to stay strong and there are many classes, groups and even NHS videos with exercises and movements that focus specifically on building strength to prevent falls. There are also these seated versions if you have limited mobility. Alongside working on strength, these classes

also practice balancing - a skill that can improve significantly with balance specific training.

If you haven't tried any strength and balance movements, we really recommend you do, however strong you think you are, there may be some muscles your usual routines aren't hitting or your balance might benefit from practice.

Read some extra tips in this interview with Take Five advisor, Dr. Lis Boulton from Age UK.

As much as we'd like to, we'll never be able to prevent all falls, so it's worth thinking about a plan in case you do fall. Would you be able to reach your phone or personal alarm? Are you able to get someone's attention if you can't get up? There may be changes you can make around the home to make it safer.

Lastly, staying motivated can be challenging and as we want you to carry on your movement way beyond Take Five, we recommend the tips on staying motivated from Public Health Scotland.

Connect & Engage

As we've discussed, staying social is key for our brain health and our wellbeing. We can cultivate new friendships as we age, connect with old friends or build our community of neighbours. Today, we wanted to share Dr Michael Moseley's Just One Thing podcast. On a similar note to Take Five To Age Well, they focus on small, manageable actions. You can listen for free on the BBC website or Sounds app and we're recommending the **Reach Out episode** today. It explores different kinds of social interaction and how they can benefit our brain health and wellbeing.

If a podcast isn't your thing, read our interview with our advisor for Connect and Engage, Professor Carol Holland from Lancaster University which highlights the importance of social connections as we age.

Think

Again, over the last 30 days we've explored ways to promote brain health as well as local services to support us if things change. To briefly recap: learning new things, staying socially active, exercising your brain with a variety of puzzles and activities - all these are good for our brains.

As our last tip, we wanted to talk about **mindfulness** as a fantastic way of enjoying the moment and appreciating where we are right now. It's common to worry about the future or fixate on the past, especially as we get older and mindfulness can help us be more here and now. For more information, this brilliant article, from the Open University explains how we can be more mindful in our everyday lives.

For more on this theme, head to Open Learn to find out how mindfulness and nature can help us accept the ageing process and retain our sense of self.

Tip of the Day!

Take a moment to notice how far you've come. Well done - give yourself a cheer (yes, out loud!). Write down one habit you want to keep going, and one new one you'd like to try next. We challenge you to keep going. And going. And going. For your future self.

Signing out,

The Take Five team.

Reminder: This information is general guidance and if you have any concerns over your own health please speak to your medical professional.