

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR

# ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

FOR SOMEONE WITH A  
LEARNING DISABILITY



**easyhealth.org.uk**



# What is a Learning Disability Annual Health Check?



If you have a learning disability, and you are over 14 years old, you should get an **Annual Health Check** at your doctors.



This is important to help keep you healthy.



It will happen one time every year.

You will get a letter from your doctor telling you when it is time for your health check.



If you don't get a letter from your doctor, ask them if you can book a Learning Disability Annual Health Check, and make sure you are on the **learning disability register**.

## Want more info?

Mencap has a resource about joining the learning disability register.

[www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/health/dont-miss-out](http://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/health/dont-miss-out)



# Before The Health Check



If you are nervous about waiting for your appointment, you could ask for the first appointment of the day when you book.

## Have you been given a long enough appointment slot?

The Royal College of General Practitioners says that Learning Disability Health Check Appointments should be **one hour long**, so you do not feel rushed.

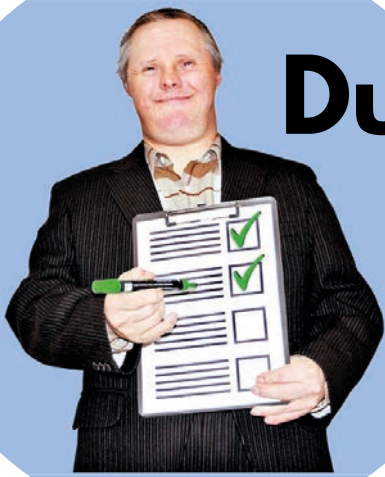


## Blood Test

The doctors surgery should arrange for you to have a blood test at least 1 week before the health check appointment, so that the results are back in time for you to talk about them with your doctor.



# During The Health Check



These are the things that the nurse or doctor should ask you about. You might want to bring this with you and tick them off, to make sure that they don't forget anything!

This first bit of the health check will probably be done by a nurse.



**They will ask you about the support you are getting.**



E.g. Do you have a carer? Are you being helped by the Community Learning Disability Team?

They might ask you whether or not you have a job.

**They will check if you have any “specific syndromes”.**



E.g. Down's Syndrome or Congenital Heart Disease.

They will give you advice if you have any of these.

If you have Down's Syndrome they may ask if you have been forgetting things. This is to check if you have Dementia, because you are more likely to get Dementia if you have Down's Syndrome.





**If you are aged 14 -17 Years they will ask you some extra questions.**

This will be about who looks after you and about your school or college.



**They will talk to you about what vaccinations you have had.**

Vaccinations are injections that stop you from getting diseases.



**They will ask you about what they need to do to support you better.**

These are called Reasonable Adjustments and they will be written down in your records.

**They could be things like...**



I need information in easy read.



I need longer appointments.



**They will ask you some questions about your lifestyle.**



What do you eat?



How much do you exercise?



How much alcohol do you drink?



Do you smoke?

**They will ask some questions about mobility.**



Do you use a walking stick?



Do you use a wheelchair?

**What else do you need help with?**



Eating or drinking?



Washing yourself?



Getting dressed?



Going to the toilet?



## They will ask you about sex and relationships.

They might ask if you have a girlfriend or boyfriend.



Give advice about contraception.



They will ask questions to check that you are safe and not being abused.



Abuse



This next bit might be done by a nurse or it might be done by a doctor.



## They will measure...



How tall you are

and how much you weigh

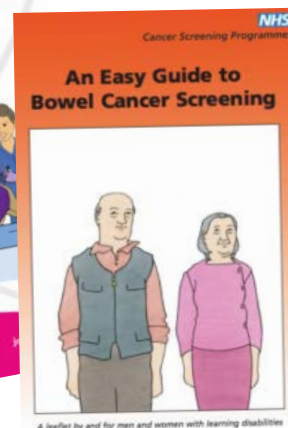
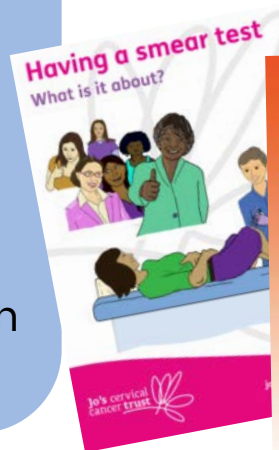
and use this to work out whether or not you are a healthy weight for your height.

This is called your BMI, which stands for **Body Mass Index**.



They will take take your blood pressure.

They will make sure you are having the other checks that you should have.



**They will talk to you about your eyes and vision, ears and hearing, and your teeth.**



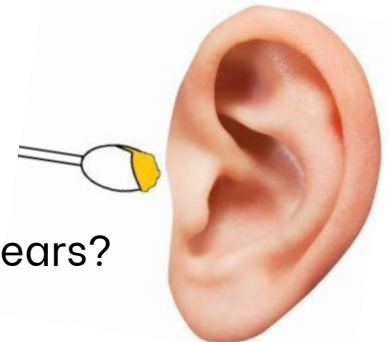
Do you have any problems seeing things?



Have you been to an optometrist to have your eyes checked?



How is your hearing?



Do you have wax in your ears?

Have you been to an audiologist to have your ears looked at?



Have you been to a dentist in the last year?



This next bit will be done by a doctor.

**They will ask you if you are worried about anything to do with your health.**

**Doctor**

They might ask...

Have you had any chest infections or trouble breathing?



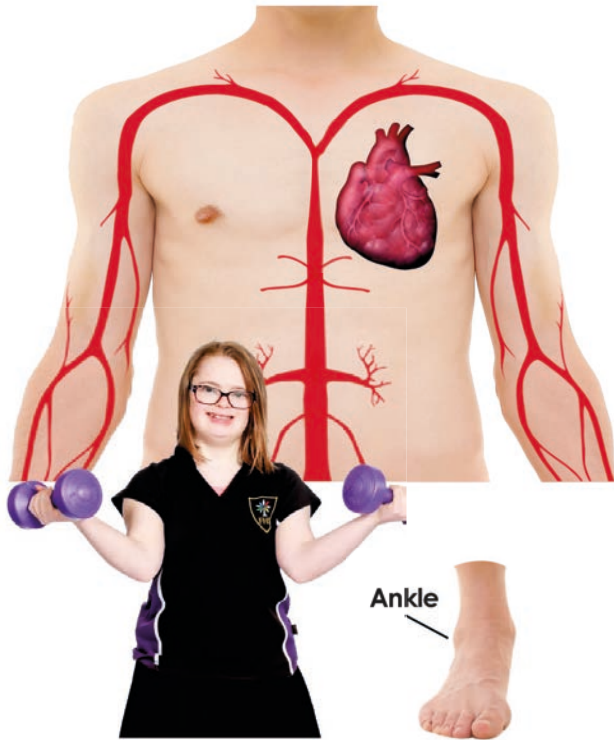
Has there been any change in how you see, hear or communicate?





## If you have Epilepsy, they will ask....

- Do you have any worries about it?
- Have you had any recent seizures?
- When was your last specialist review?



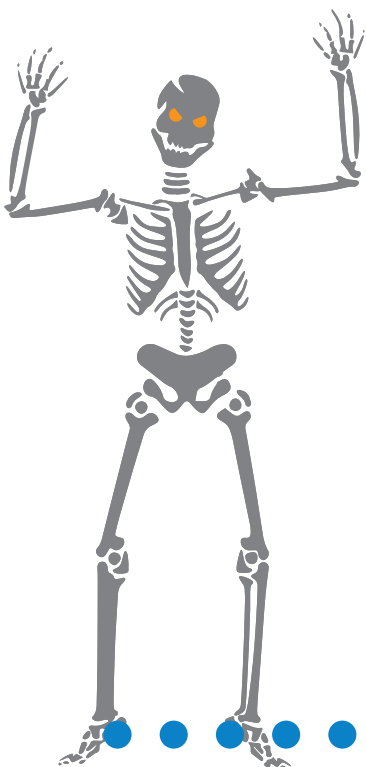
### They will check your Cardiovascular System

(This means your heart, blood vessels and blood)

They might ask whether you get swollen ankle or chest pain when you exercise.



## If you have diabetes they will check how you are managing it.



### They will check “Musculoskeletal” health.

This means your muscles, bones, ligaments, tendons, and nerves.

They will check your posture.

They will check for symptoms of Osteoporosis.



**They will look at your feet.**

They might give you advice about foot care.



**They will ask about your behaviour and mental health.**



**They will talk to you about test results.**

Including your blood test.

**They will review the medication you are taking.**



They should look at reducing any medication you are taking for your behaviour.

**Find out more about STOMP**

Stopping over medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both with psychotropic medicines.

[www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/improving-health/stomp/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/improving-health/stomp/)





They might do some different tests depending whether you are male or female.

E.g. check your testicles, breasts, or do a pelvic exam.

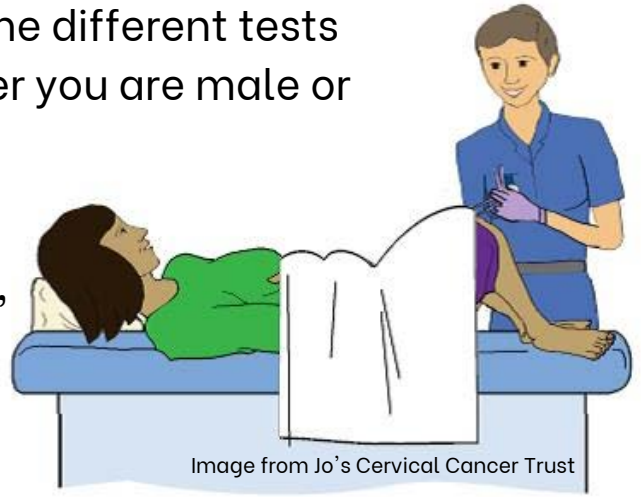


Image from Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust



### **They might ask you about End of Life Care**

This is about the care and support you will need if you are going to die soon.



### **Your doctor should complete the Health Check Action Plan and give a copy to you.**

This is important to make sure you know how to stay healthy, and that people know how to help you.

They can also give a copy to your carer, support worker, or the the Community Learning Disability Team if you want them to.



**The doctor should follow up any problems** by referring you to the right service- ask them to explain what they are going to do and what will happen.



# After The Health Check



Follow the advice in your **Health Action Plan**.



If the health check found any problems, you might need to go to some follow up appointments to get you well.



Make an appointment with your doctor if you feel ill.

If you liked the doctor who did your health check, you can ask to see them again.

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