



Living Well North Tyneside

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

February marks **National Heart Month**, a time dedicated to raising awareness about heart and circulatory diseases—the leading cause of death in the UK. Organised by the **British Heart Foundation (BHF)**, this campaign encourages people to prioritise their heart health, support life-saving research, and take action to reduce the impact of heart disease.

With millions of people affected by heart and circulatory conditions, National Heart Month is an important reminder that prevention, early detection, and lifestyle changes can save lives.

Why National Heart Month Matters

Heart and circulatory diseases, including heart attacks, strokes, and vascular dementia, affect thousands of families every year. Many of these conditions are preventable, and small lifestyle changes can significantly improve heart health.

National Heart Month provides an opportunity to:

- Educate people about heart disease prevention and symptoms
- Encourage individuals to make positive lifestyle changes
- Raise funds to support research and improve treatment options
- Promote better heart health in workplaces, schools, and communities

By getting involved in National Heart Month, people can make a difference to their own well-being and support others in leading healthier lives.

How to Get Involved

1. Prioritise Your Heart Health

Making small, sustainable changes can have a lasting impact. Some key ways to protect heart health include:

- **Eating a balanced diet** – Incorporate more fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins while reducing processed foods, saturated fats, and added sugars.
- **Staying active** – Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week, such as walking, cycling, or swimming.
- **Quitting smoking** – Smoking increases the risk of heart disease. Free NHS resources are available to help those who want to quit.
- **Monitoring key health indicators** – Regularly check blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels.
- **Managing stress** – Practising relaxation techniques such as meditation, yoga, or deep breathing can support overall wellbeing.

2. Support the British Heart Foundation

The British Heart Foundation funds vital research to improve treatments and save lives. There are many ways to contribute:

- **Hosting a Wear Red Day** – Encourage friends, colleagues, or classmates to wear red and donate to BHF.
- **Joining a sponsored walk or run** – Participate in an event to raise awareness and funds.
- **Taking on a personal challenge** – Give up an unhealthy habit for February and encourage sponsorship.
- **Spreading awareness** – Share BHF resources, social media posts, or personal stories to inspire others.

3. Engage Your Community

Heart health is a collective effort, and raising awareness in communities can have a widespread impact. Some ways

to get involved locally include:

- **Workplace initiatives** – Employers can organise heart health talks, free blood pressure checks, or fitness challenges.
- **School engagement** – Schools can teach children about heart health, encourage active play, and run fundraising events.
- **Community events** – Local groups can host walks, healthy cooking classes, or awareness sessions.

Recognising the Signs of Heart Disease

Early detection is crucial in preventing serious heart conditions. Common warning signs include:

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness or fainting
- Swelling in the legs, ankles, or feet
- Irregular heartbeat or palpitations

Anyone experiencing these symptoms should seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Make a Difference This February

This National Heart Month, take time to prioritise heart health, support vital research, and encourage those around you to do the same. Even small changes can lead to significant improvements in long-term wellbeing.

For more information and ways to get involved, visit the [British Heart Foundation](#).

Related Links

- [British Heart Foundation](#)

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