**Give yourself an MOT**

Giving your body a once-over doesn’t require any spanners and needn’t cost a penny. If you’re worried about the results of any of the following tests, see your GP.

**Test 1: Is your engine tuned?**

First, check your pulse. Place the finger of one hand on the thumb side of the tendons running through the opposite wrist. You should be able to feel the radial artery pumping. Count the beats over four 15 second periods and add them up. This is your resting pulse – a good guide to the heart’s efficiency.

Then, check your recovery rate. Step on and off a step for three minutes (average a step every three seconds) and rest for 30 seconds before taking your pulse again. This is your pulse after exercise.

The table below shows you what sort of results you should be getting for your age:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|   | **Very Fit** |
| **Age** | Resting | After exercise |
| Teens/20s | 59 or less | 75 or less |
| 30s | 63 or less | 79 or less |
| 40s | 65 or less | 81 or less |
| 50s+ | 67 or less | 83 or less |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|   | **Average** |
| **Age** | Resting | After exercise |
| Teens/20s | 60-85 | 76-101 |
| 30s | 64-85 | 80-103 |
| 40s | 66-89 | 82-105 |
| 50s+ | 68-89 | 84-107 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|   | **Unfit** |
| **Age** | Resting | After exercise |
| Teens/20s | 86+ | 102+ |
| 30s | 86+ | 104+ |
| 40s | 90+ | 106+ |
| 50s+ | 90+ | 108+ |

If you’re in or close to the unfit range, you need to think about whether you’re taking enough exercise. You may find [**Get Fit**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/getfit) section from Men’s Health Forum helpful. (If you’re older, very overweight or have an existing health problem, check with your GP before starting an exercise programme.)

* The NHS also offers a more detailed [**What's Your Heart Age?**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check/check-your-heart-age-tool/) tool.

**Test 2: Are you overloaded?**

The simplest guide to whether you’re carrying too much weight is your waist measurement. This gives you a fair idea of your risk regardless of height. Measure around your belly at the widest point - usually around your belly button:

* over 37 inches, you’re probably overweight and at increased risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer - check out the [**Get Fit**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/getfit) section from Men’s Health Forum
* over 40 inches, you could be obese and at serious risk of the conditions mentioned - talk to a GP or health professional.

If you’re putting on weight, see the [**Get Fit**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/getfit) section. But if you have been losing weight for no apparent reason, it may be a sign of something serious, see your GP.

**Test 3: Look out for dashboard 'warning lights'**

Check yourself all over for:

* moles changing shape ([**more detail here**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/skin-cancer-faqs)),
* unexplained lumps,
* unexplained shortness of breath/breathing difficulties
* unexplained pain (especially in the chest)
* swelling or itching,
* a cough that won’t go away,
* blood where it shouldn’t be (in saliva when you spit or stools when you crap)
* changes in bowel habits (such as blood in stools, diarrhoea or constipation for no reason, a feeling of bloating or of not having fully emptied your bowels or pain in your stomach or back passage - [**more detail here**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/bowel-cancer-faqs))

If you have any of these talk to your GP.

**Test 4: Wobbly gear stick?**

Erection problems are common. We can't always get an erection when we want one. What we’re talking about here are regular problems getting an erection or keeping one.

It’s not only your sex life that may be threatened. Erection problems can be an early warning sign of a number of serious health problems including heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and depression. They could also be sign of high cholesterol or low testosterone. Again, talk to your GP.  (For a full penis health MOT download Men’s Health Forum free manual [**Size Isn't Everything**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/news/new-penis-health-manual-size-isnt-everything).)

**Test 5: Check the water**

Is there any change in how often you pee or how easy it is? Do you get up more often at night?

Peeing more often, especially at night, and less easily with a weaker flow can be signs of prostate enlargement ([**more detail on prostate symptoms here**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/prostate-faqs)). Prostate enlargement is not necessarily a sign of cancer but it needs to be checked (Prostate Cancer UK have a simple cancer [**risk checker**](https://prostatecanceruk.org/risk-checker) tool.)

Peeing more often, especially at night, along with being overweight, tiredness and sores healing more slowly may all be signs of [**diabetes**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/diabetes-faqs). Get your blood sugar tested.

**Test 6: Day-to-day performance**

How are you feeling? Are you motoring along smoothly? Try this [**How Are You Really**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/how-are-you-really) quiz. And check out from Men’s Health Forum [**How Are You**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/howru) hub.

**Test 7: Check your pressure**

You can take your blood pressure at the GP - there’s probably a machine in the surgery waiting room - or you can buy a home-tester.

BP - The first is when the heart is contracting (systolic), the second when it is resting (diastolic). 120/70 would be fine for a young man. Once the systolic starts getting up towards 140 and/or the diastolic to 90, you need to monitor your BP more often. Of course, any stress can raise your BP temporarily but if you’re getting regular readings of 140/90 or more, see your GP.

**Anything else**

You might want to monitor your balls for any changes. Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men aged 20-35 but if caught in time it can be effectively treated and deaths are rare. ([**More details here**](https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/testicles-faqs).)