

Different tests and surveys can be used to check that you are healthy and catch any problems before they become too harmful.

## How to Use the Consumer Diary

- You don't need to read all of the information at once. Take your time.
- Only read the information that is relevant to you in the medication section.
- The diary has room for you to record your results and make notes so that you can keep track of your own health.
- Take your diary with you to your appointments and discussions with your carer(s), doctors, and mental health support team.
- This diary is yours to keep and record your personal information in, so it is your choice whether you share this information with others.



## Taking Care of Your Physical Health

### Introduction to the Consumer Diary

A component of the Clinical Guidelines for the Physical Care of Mental Health Consumers Assessment and Monitoring Package

Susanne Stanley &  
Jonathan Laugharne



Community, Culture and Mental Health Unit  
School of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences

The University of Western Australia  
Fremantle Hospital  
L6, W Block, Alma Street  
Fremantle, WA 6160

Tel +61 8 9431 3467

Fax +61 8 9431 3407

Web [www.psychiatry.uwa.edu.au/research/community-culture](http://www.psychiatry.uwa.edu.au/research/community-culture)

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**The 'Taking Care of Your Physical Health – Consumer Diary' has been developed to assist in checking and monitoring your physical health.**

Your physical health is just as important as your mental health and both can affect each other. So it is vital that you keep yourself healthy. The Consumer Diary has been designed to help you achieve this.

There are five areas that can affect your physical health:

- Lifestyle factors
- Physical disorders and allergies
- Alcohol and illicit drug use
- Social factors
- Medication effects

## Lifestyle

Your lifestyle is the way that you live. Regular exercise and a balanced diet can help to prevent many physical health problems that might otherwise get you down and have you feeling bad about yourself. Having a healthy lifestyle will help you to manage your mental health and well-being. The following are important:

- Exercise
- Weight & Diet
- Cholesterol
- Smoking
- Dental Health
- Sexual Health

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## Physical Disorders

People who live with mental illness can also experience poor levels of physical health, including conditions which are preventable. It is important to maintain your overall health and well-being by having your doctor regularly check for the more common conditions such as:

- Cardiovascular Disease
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Respiratory Disease
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome & Gastrointestinal dysfunction
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS & STI's
- Hepatitis B & C

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## Alcohol & Illicit Drugs

Alcohol and illicit (illegal) drugs can interfere or react badly with mental health medications.

Excessive amounts of alcohol can cause many physical health problems, along with addiction. Being aware of how much you actually drink will help you to stay within healthy levels.

Illicit drugs can change the way your body functions and how you feel. The effects vary from person to person, and no drug is completely safe.

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## Social Support

Strong supportive relationships provide us with a kind of safety net so that we can cope with and manage the ups and downs of day to day life.

They lower the risk of disease and death, improve our mental health, and provide us with better coping skills for stressful events and situations. Social support is created through areas like:

- Language
- Culture, religion and spirituality
- Social relationships
- Employment

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## Medication

Your doctor may prescribe medication to help improve your emotional well-being. There can be unwanted side-effects, so regular check-ups and tests need to be performed to keep you healthy. This may include checking the following:

- Blood pressure
- Fasting blood sugar levels
- Liver function tests
- Fasting lipids
- Urea & electrolytes
- ECG

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