

Dorking Medical Practice, 142a South Street,
Dorking, Surrey
01306 881313
newhouse.surgery@nhs.net

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STRESS AWARENESS MONTH 2026

What is Stress Awareness Month?

Observed every April since 1992, Stress Awareness Month raises awareness of stress, its effects, and how to manage it. Led by the Stress Management Society, this annual initiative empowers individuals and organisations to take practical steps toward healthier, more resilient lives. Each year has a



theme that reflects the challenges of the time and inspires action.

Why It Matters?

- Understanding the causes and impacts of stress
- Accessing practical tools and resources
- Opening conversations to reduce stigma
- Building stronger connections and supportive communities

2026 Theme: #BeTheChange

#BeTheChange is a call to personal agency, action, and transformation. It builds on 2025's #LeadWithLove by asking: "Now that we approach ourselves and others with compassion, what will we actually do?"

The theme emphasises three powerful principles:

Self-Efficacy

Relational Connection

Neuroplasticity

What #BeTheChange Encourages You to Do

- Take one small action today
- Challenge limiting beliefs
- Reconnect with others
- Ask better questions
- Be present
- Build new habit
- Share your journey

How are you really?



How will you
#BeTheChange?



Have questions or want to get involved further?
Reach out to us at info@stress.org.uk or call us at +44 20 31 42 8650

Go-to-Activities

WHEN STRESS SPIKES

BOX BREATHING

Breathe in for 4
Hold for 4
Breathe out for 4
Hold for 4

Repeat for 1-2 minutes



GROUND YOURSELF

Name: 

5 things you can see
4 things you can feel
3 things you can hear
2 things you can smell
1 thing you can taste

WHEN YOUR BODY FEELS TENSE

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)

Gently tense each area for 3-5 seconds, then release

Hands and arms
Shoulders
Face and jaw
Chest and stomach
Legs and feet



Notice the difference as your body softens

CHANGE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Step away from screens for 5 minutes

Take a short walk, make a cup of tea, or get fresh air



WHEN YOUR THOUGHTS ARE RACING

Write everything down to clear your head



Choose one small next step

Do something repetitive like walking or tidying

DAILY HABITS THAT HELP

- Move your body
- Get consistent, good quality sleep
- Eat regular, nourishing meals
- Connect with someone in a meaningful way
- Laugh every day

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Why This Works

Stress activates the body's threat response. When it stays switched on for too long, it affects focus, energy, sleep, and mood.

These simple actions help signal safety to the nervous system and support recovery. Small, repeatable changes are more effective than big changes that are hard to sustain.

Stress Awareness Month reminds us that change starts with us. When we respond to stress with care, we build resilience and make it easier for others to do the same.

A gentle reminder

You do not need to remove stress from your life. You just need enough moments of calm to balance it out.

That is how you #BeTheChange.



Bowel Cancer Awareness Month: Raising awareness

Bowel cancer is the 4th most common cancer in the UK, with over 42,000 people diagnosed each year. With early detection, the survival rate can be as high as 9 in 10.

Although the risk of bowel cancer increases with age, it can affect people of any age. However, making certain lifestyle choices can help reduce this risk:

- Maintaining a healthy diet rich in fruit, vegetables, and fibre while avoiding excessive alcohol and processed meats can lower your risk of developing bowel cancer.
- Staying active and not smoking are also key factors in prevention.
- Screening: When you receive a bowel cancer screening kit in the post, it's important to participate. Screening can help detect early signs of cancer before they develop.

Bowel cancer may not always show clear symptoms in its early stages, which is why it's so important to be aware and vigilant. Common signs and symptoms include:

- Blood in stool or bleeding from the bottom.
- Unexplained weight loss or fatigue.
- Abdominal pain or discomfort, such as cramps and bleeding.
- A feeling of not being able to empty your bowels completely.

If you experience any of these symptoms, particularly if they last three weeks or more, it's important to contact your GP for advice and possible testing.

www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk



Dorking Area Foodbank

Dorking Area Foodbank provides 3 days' worth of food for people struggling to put food on the table in a time of financial hardship.

To Use the foodbank:

- Call or email the foodbank to get a referral to a local agency, 07494 226 743, info@dorkingarea.foodbank.org.uk
- Arrange a visit to your local agency to get a food voucher.
- Bring your voucher to the foodbank.

Time:

Tuesday 4.45pm to 5.45pm and
Thursday 2.30 to 3.30pm

At:

The Christian centre, Church
Street, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1DW

Social Media

- [**Dorking Area Foodbank**](#)
[**on Facebook**](#)



Get ready for Spring 2026 COVID-19 booster if eligible

Who can get the spring booster?



The Covid Booster Eligible Groups.

- **Aged 75 or over** (or if you turn 75 by 30 June 2026)
- **Living in a care home** for older adults
- **Aged 6 months or over with a weakened immune system** (for example, due to a health condition or treatment like chemotherapy).

We can start delivering the vaccine from 1st April, we will be inviting eligible patients to book an appointment through the booking link sent to them.

We will be holding clinics at New House, Hillside, and Riverbank Surgeries, our first clinic will be on 14th March.

If you receive an invite and do not wish to have the vaccine, please let us know, so we can note this on your medical records, so we do not send a further invite.

You will also be able to book by calling or visiting the surgery.

We will be offering to our housebound patients in May.