



Balsam Centre Health Walks October 2018 - March 2019

PLEASE NOTE: you can just turn up on the day for the short walks but it is VITAL for you to book on to the long walks and the Wincanton Buggy Walks - even if it's on the morning of the walk. It enables us to contact you if the walk has to be cancelled, and if we have no bookings walk leaders will postpone their walks. Call 01963 31842 to book.

What is a Health Walk?

Health Walks promote walking as an achievable, non-competitive and enjoyable way to improve health and increase physical activity. There are a variety of walks to accommodate absolute beginners to the more experienced. They are a great way to increase your fitness levels, enjoy local natural spaces and meet new people. The walks are all free of charge, but donations are welcome. Walks are led by Volunteers who are trained Health Walk Leaders.

Which walk is right for me?

There are different types of Health Walks designed to accommodate a range of walking experiences and fitness levels, these are described in more detail below:



Level 1 Health Walks from Wincanton Medical Centre

This is a 30 minute walk for people who are new to walking, or can't walk far or for long. The walks are on pavements and are planned to avoid the hills so they are all on the level. These walks run every Tuesday at 11.30am, starting and ending at the Wincanton Medical Centre on Dyke's Way (or if you would like a coffee afterwards you can stop at Cale Park Kitchen). ***These walks are highlighted in green italics on the list of walks with a green foot.***



Level 2 Health Walks from Wincanton Chiropractic Clinic

These 30 minutes walks will be at a mid-pace. Walks will mainly be on pavements but will have some small inclines. These walks run every Tuesday at 11.00am, starting and ending at the Wincanton Chiropractic Clinic, 75 High Street, ending with a cup of tea or coffee in the clinic. Further enquiries for this walk telephone (01963) 32986. ***These walks are highlighted in green italics on the list of walks with two green feet.***



Level 3 Health Walks from the Balsam Centre

These walks are approximately 50 to 60 minutes long, and average 2.5 to 3 miles, following paths and tracks around Wincanton and the surrounding fields. They are aimed at people who might be less able to take the 2 hour long walks or who have progressed from the Short 30 walks. The walks do include some inclines - because this is Wincanton! These walks run every Tuesday 10am, starting and ending at the Balsam Centre, usually finishing with a cup of tea or coffee in the Centre. ***These walks are highlighted in green italics on the list of walks with three green feet.***



Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walks

Buggy Walks run every other Thursday, starting at 10:30am from the Visitors Centre at Stourhead. This is a lovely walk around the beautiful gardens at Stourhead, with or without pushchairs. Entry is free for every adult with a child - extra adults will have to pay the garden entry fee or be National Trust members, (car parking is now also free).

All buggy walkers will need to register and collect a pass at The Balsam Centre before the first walk, passes will only be issued to people living within a 10 mile radius of The Balsam Centre, so please take a proof of address with you to register. The walks last about 45 minutes, and you can end it in the cafe at Stourhead if you wish. **These walks are highlighted in purple with a blue foot.**



Balsam Walking Group

These are "progression walks" and are aimed at those who have a reasonable level of fitness and are comfortable with walking. The walks start at 10am but the start location varies from week to week. To help you decide which walks are suitable for you a description of each walk is provided with the walk length and number of stiles, etc.. There is no charge but you are welcome to make a donation at the end of the walk. **These walks are highlighted in bold blue print with a signpost.**

How do I join a Walk?

If you would like to participate in any of the Health Walks please drop into the Centre and complete a registration form before attending your first walk. We are not able to accept walkers without registration.

Walks are free of charge and once you have registered you can join any walk in the programme. Please book a place on the walks you wish to attend. If no one has pre-booked on to the walk, it will be cancelled; leaders will not travel to the walk to inform walkers so if you don't want to waste your journey, let us know you want to attend. Likewise, if a walk has to be cancelled due to flooding etc, we will only contact those who have pre-booked.

We advise that you only attend walks that are at a level you feel comfortable with. If you have not participated in much exercise recently or are worried about your health, please make sure you check with your doctor before increasing your physical activity levels.

Please wear practical clothing and comfortable footwear which provides support and is waterproof. For longer walks and in warm weather please bring drinking water.

An adult must supervise any children under the age of 16. If you wish to bring a child please phone and book your place as some walks may not be suitable for very young children.

Dogs are not allowed on the walks - apart from those belonging to walk leaders.

If you provide us with your email, we will send out information about the conditions on the walk a few days beforehand - and we won't email you about anything else other than the walks (nor will we pass your email on to anyone else).

Are you interested in becoming a Health Walk leader?

We need more walk leaders and back stops to ensure we can put on these walks. If you enjoy our walks, perhaps you might like to consider becoming a walk leader. The Walking for Health scheme offer free training, and you can choose which walks and how many walks you would like to assist with. For full details, contact Annette 01963 31842, email annette@balsamcentre.org.uk

Walk Notes

Using the place references

Balsam Walking Group walks have a grid reference and a postcode. The postcode will get you to the meeting point if you have a satnav but be aware that the postcode is often just the nearest and doesn't pinpoint the place exactly. The grid references refer to the Ordnance Survey maps and give the map number as well as the grid reference. If you want to look up the grid reference online beforehand, go to <http://www.gridreferencefinder.com> and put in the grid letters and numbers. You can then see a map with the reference pinpointed.

Week 1

Tuesday 2nd October– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:00am - Level 2 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Chiropractic Clinic. These mid-pace walks are approximately 30 min long. Postcode BA9 9JZ



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 3rd October, 10am. Leaders Wendy & Lu

Tintinhull House (NT) : This is a fairly level walk to Montacute House (NT) and back via Icicle Barn and Stoneshells Farm.

Park at Tintinhull House Car Park.

Nearest Postcode BA22 8PZ, grid ref ST 504 196.



Thursday 4th October, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 2



Monday 8th October, 10am. Leaders Lynda & Pamela

White Sheet Hill : A 5 mile walk past Stourhead House, through parklands and open Chalk Downs.

Park and meet in Stourhead National Trust main Car Park (car park charges apply, free to NT members).

Nearest Postcode BA12 6QF, grid ref ST 779 340.

Tuesday 9th October – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:00am - Level 2 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Chiropractic Clinic. These mid-pace walks are approximately 30 min long. Postcode BA9 9JZ



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ

Week 3

Tuesday 16th October – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 18th Oct, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF



Thursday 18th October, 10am. Leaders Peter & Trevor

Fifehead Magdalen : An interesting walk featuring a disused watermill and four churches. This walk takes us along the riverside, over footbridges, through fields and along tracks and country lanes. There are some stiles. Park along the roadside and meet at Fifehead Magdalen Parish Church. Nearest Postcode SP8 5RT, grid ref ST 783 216.

Week 4

Tuesday 23rd October – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 24th October, 10am. Leaders Owain & June

Lake Shearwater : This 5.3 mile walk should take approximately 2 hours plus time to admire the stunning views at Heaven's Gate. The first part of the walk is along roads but then it will be along forest paths and tracks. There are some gentle inclines but no stiles. Park and meet in Lake Shearwater Car Park (there is a £1 charge for car parking). The Bargate Tea Rooms are just across the road and have toilet facilities.

Nearest Postcode BA12 8AE, grid ref ST 854 421.

Week 5

Tuesday 30th October – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 1st Nov, NO BUGGY WALK THIS WEEK DUE TO HALF TERM - this is Stourhead's busiest week



Friday 2nd November, 10am. Leaders Tony & Lynn

Ham Hill : A generally easy walk around Ham Hill towards Montacute and around the base of St. Michaels Hill.

Park and meet at Prince of Wales Pub.

Nearest Postcode TA14 6RW, grid ref ST 478 168.

Week 6

Tuesday 6th November – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 8th November, 10am. Leaders Richard & Pamela

Stourhead South : A 4.5 mile walk along Stour Valley Way and into Stourhead Estate woods.

Park and meet in the Stourhead NT Car Park (Please note that charges apply).

Nearest Postcode BA12 6QF, grid ref ST 778 339.

Week 7



Monday 12th November, 10am. Leaders Mike & Jean

The Old Road, Milborne Port : A 5 mile walk along roads, across fields and through woodlands.

Park and meet in the the car park on East Street, Milborne Port.

Nearest Postcode DT9 5DR, grid ref ST 678 186.

Tuesday 13th November – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 15th Nov, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 8

Tuesday 20th November – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Friday 23rd November, 10am. Leaders Tony & Lynn

Evercreech : Walking from Evercreech around Milton Cleavedon, skirting by Lamyatt.

Meeting point still to be confirmed.

Week 9

Tuesday 27th November – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 28th November, 10am. Leader Wendy

Motcombe : A lovely 4 mile walk following part of the White Hart Link route on a gradual ascent up to Kingsettle Wood for wonderful views back to Gillingham and Alfred's Tower.

Park at Motcombe Meadows Car Park.

Nearest Postcode SP7 9NN, grid ref ST 845 263.



Thursday 29th Nov, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 10

Tuesday 4th December – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 5th December, 10:30am. Leaders Siobhan & Lu

(Please note that there will be a £5 charge for this walk.)

Wells Guided Walking Tour : Learn about the history of Wells, the smallest city in England, and behold its wealth of medieval buildings on this 2 hours walk. The walk will end at the markets. There is a cost of £5 per person and we will need a minimum of 14 people to attend, for this walk to take place, so please ensure you book before 23rd Nov.

Park in the long stay (top level) Whiting Way Car Park (parking charges apply) and meet in front of the Waitrose entrance.

Nearest Postcode BA5 2PJ, grid ref ST 546 458.

Week 11

Tuesday 11th December– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 13th Dec, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF



Thursday 13th December, 10am. Leaders Peter & Trevor

Kingsdon : A scenic walk from Kingsdon through the woods to Charlton Mackrell, passing over training gallops. There are some stiles and slight inclines.

Park along roadside and meet outside the Kingsdon Inn.

Nearest Postcode TA11 7LG, grid ref ST 518 261.

Week 12

Tuesday 18th December – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 20th December, 10am. Leaders Owain & June

Wincanton Christmas Walk : A shorter Christmas walk starting and finishing at the Balsam Centre, followed by hot drinks and mince pies.

Park in the Memorial Car Park and meet in the Balsam Centre.

Nearest Postcode BA9 9JF, grid ref ST 715 286.

Week 13



There will be no walks this week

Week 14



There will be no short health walks this week



Friday 4th January, 10am. Leader Mark

A Mere fort to fort walk : A 5.5 mile circular walk from Mere Fort, past Zeals Knoll, Search Farm and up to White Sheet Hill Fort and back via the Mid Wilts Way.

Park and meet at Castle Street Car Park.

Nearest Postcode BA12 6JF, grid ref ST 810 323.

Week 15

Tuesday 8th January– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 10th January, 10am. Leaders Richard & Pamela

Charlton Horethorne West : This 5 mile walk is generally steady walking on footpaths, but does have a steep incline, it will take us towards Whitcome, around the Beacon and along Corton Hill.

Park along the road and meet in the centre of Charlton Horethorne.

Nearest Postcode DT9 4NL, grid ref ST 664 232.



Thursday 10th Jan, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 16



Monday 14th January, 10am. Leader Mike

Batcombe (DORSET) : 4.75 mile walk with one hill to climb. Wonderful views from Gore Hill and passing through the lovely hamlet of Up Cerne.

Park and meet in the Hilfield car park by Hendover Nature Reserve.

Nearest Postcode DT2 7AY, grid ref ST 636 039.

Tuesday 15th January– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ

Week 17

Tuesday 22nd January– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 23rd January, 10am. Leaders Tony & Lynn

Kingsbury Episcopi. Details still to be confirmed.



Thursday 24th Jan, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 18

Tuesday 29th January– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 30th January, 10am. Leaders Annette & Lu

North Cadbury : Details to be confirmed.

Park along the road and meet outside the Catash Inn.

Nearest Postcode BA22 7DH, grid ref ST 634 273.

Week 19



Monday 4th February, 10am. Leaders Peter & Trevor

Charlton Horethorne : A two hour walk over Sigwells to Compton Castle near Compton Pauncefoot and returning via Compton Hill. There are some stiles, undulations and possibly livestock.

Park and meet near the King's Arms Pub and village shop.

Nearest Postcode DT9 4NL, grid ref ST 664 232.

Tuesday 5th February– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 7th Feb, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 20

Tuesday 12th February– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 14th February, 10am. Leaders Richard & Pamela

White Sheet Down : A 4.5 mile walk climbs up onto the hill top and across the downs into the valley, then back up via White Sheet Hill.

Parking can be found by following the B3092 to the Red Lion Pub, then turning east along White Sheet lane to find the car park at the end.

Nearest Postcode BA12 6RP (Red Lion Pub), grid ref ST 797 350.

Week 21

Tuesday 19th February– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 20th February, 10am. Leaders Owain & Wendy

Details still to be confirmed.



Thursday 21st Feb, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 22

Tuesday 26th February– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 27th February, 10am. Leader Wendy

Ditcheat : A level 4.5 mile walk from Ditcheat Church to the River Alham and back through Alhampton, passing the Tin Tabernacle. Parts of the walk will be on the ancient Church walkways, which are being reinstated. Park along the roadside by Ditcheat Church.

Nearest Postcode BA4 6RB, grid ref ST 626 363.

Week 23



Monday 4th March, 10am. Leaders Peter & Trevor

Odcombe : Undulating and varied 5 mile walk over fields and through woods to the south west of Yeovil. This walk has some stiles.

Park along the roadside and meet at the Parish Church.

Nearest Postcode BA22 8UH, grid ref ST 506 155.



Tuesday 5th March– Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 7th March, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF

Week 24



Tuesday 12th March– Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Friday 15th March, 10am. Leaders Tony & Lynn

Mells. Details still to be confirmed.

Week 25



Tuesday 19th March– Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Thursday 21st March, 10:30am. Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walk.

Meet at Stourhead Visitors Centre at 10:15am. Postcode BA12 6QF



Thursday 21st March, 10am. Leaders Richard & Jean

Details still to be confirmed.

Week 26

Tuesday 26th March– Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending at the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2.5 to 3 miles and 50-60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending at Wincanton Medical Centre, Dykes Way. A short 30 min level walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9FQ



Wednesday 27th March, 10am. Leaders Lu & Annette

Details still to be confirmed.

A new brochure will be coming out at the end of March!



What are the Benefits of Using Walking Poles?

There are several reasons to use walking poles when out walking or trekking. Walking poles help you move across terrain quicker, provide additional support and reduce the amount of effort required thus allowing you to achieve more during your walks.

When used correctly walking poles can significantly increase your pace which has additional health benefits. You will increase your heart rate and oxygen uptake without feeling like you are expending vast amounts more energy. The workload will be spread across different muscle groups, not just your legs!

Walking poles also offer increased support and stability on unfamiliar ground and uneven surfaces. The extra two points of contact with the ground will increase your confidence, especially if you are feeling fatigued towards the end of your walk.

Another great benefit of using walking poles is that they improve posture, especially important if you are carrying a load. Walking poles will make you more conscious of being upright whilst walking. There is a tendency to slump forward whilst going uphill which shifts your centre of gravity and actually increases the chances of slipping or stumbling on uneven terrain. The poles will help you keep your body position more upright so you can use your arms and shoulders to propel yourself up the trail easier.

For more tips about walking poles go to <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/news/walk-magazine/reviews/2012/september/walking-poles-buyers-guide.aspx>

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON LYME DISEASE.



Carried by ticks, Lyme Disease has become more prevalent in the UK, and we may be walking in areas where these ticks are found. There can be nasty consequences if you are bitten and don't realise it, so read the following information so you know what to look for and what to do if you are bitten.

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection spread to humans by infected ticks. They feed on the blood of birds and mammals, including humans. Lyme disease can often be treated effectively if it's detected early on. But if it's not treated or treatment is delayed, there's a risk you could develop severe and long-lasting symptoms.



The classic bite looks like a bulls-eye rash. If you suspect you have been bitten, visit your doctor. Diagnosing Lyme disease is often difficult as many of the symptoms are similar to other conditions.

A spreading rash some days after a known tick bite should be treated with appropriate antibiotics without waiting for the results of a blood test.

However, around one in three people with Lyme disease won't develop this rash. Flu-like symptoms, extreme tiredness and headaches may occur and if left untreated the disease may spread throughout the body to the nervous system, joints, skin, heart and eyes, causing a range of symptoms eg. Facial palsy and nerve root pain.

Prevention

The best way to prevent the condition is to take sensible precautions.

- **wear appropriate clothing** (a long-sleeved shirt and trousers tucked into your socks)
- **wear light-coloured fabrics** that may help you spot a tick on your clothes
- **use insect repellent** on exposed skin
- **inspect your skin for ticks**, particularly at the end of the day, including your head, neck and skin folds (armpits, groin, and waistband) – remove any ticks you find promptly
- **make sure ticks are not brought home** on your clothes



If you find a tick on your skin, remove it by gently gripping it as close to the skin as possible, preferably using fine-toothed tweezers. Pull steadily away from the skin without twisting or crushing the tick. Wash your skin with water and soap afterwards, and apply an antiseptic cream to the skin around the bite. Don't use a lit cigarette end, a match head or substances such as alcohol or petroleum jelly to force the tick out. Some veterinary surgeries and pet shops sell inexpensive tick removal devices.

Awareness is key - do not stop enjoying outdoor activities!



A BIG thanks to.....

.... all the volunteer walk leaders; Ali, Annette, Dave, Erica, Izzy, June, Kelly, Lu, Lynda, Lynn, Mark, Michelle, Mike, Owain, Pamela, Paul, Peter, Poppy, Russel, Sian, Simon, Tony, Trevor and Wendy, and Robert our walking buddy. We would also like to welcome Jan, Jean and Richard to our team.

They have all planned the many varied walks in our programme and continue to come up with new and interesting walks each year.

This list of walks can also be found on our website www.balsamcentre.org.uk/adult-activities.html#walking and further updates are posted on our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/balsamcentre>



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