

Looking After Your Health Starts with Understanding Your Body

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During Mental Health Awareness Week, we often focus on looking after our mental wellbeing.

But, one of the most important things to understand is this: our mental and physical health are closely connected.

When things feel harder than they should

MANY PEOPLE I SEE FEEL FRUSTRATED.



They often say:

- “I know what I should be doing, I just can’t stick to it”
- “My gut symptoms flare up for no clear reason”
- “I feel tired all the time”
- “My weight keeps creeping up”

It’s easy to assume this comes down to motivation or willpower, but often there’s more going on.



How stress affects the body...



DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows that stress can affect:

- Appetite and food choices
- Digestion and gut sensitivity
- Sleep quality
- Energy levels
- Concentration and decision-making.

THIS IS WHY ...

When the body is under ongoing stress or pressure - even low-level, day-to-day stress - it can shift into a more stress-responsive state.

In this state, the body is focused on getting through the day, rather than supporting longer-term health changes.

This can make it feel harder to:

- Plan meals
- Stay consistent with habits
- Manage cravings
- Maintain energy levels .

This isn't a personal failure, it's a normal biological response.

WHY STRESS MATTERS TO YOUR HEALTH



The connection between stress and the body helps explain why:

- IBS and digestive symptoms can flare during stressful periods
- Weight can be harder to manage during times of pressure
- Fatigue and low motivation often come alongside busy or overwhelming periods.

Understanding this can help shift the focus away from blame, and towards support.

Small things that can help you...

Supporting your health doesn't always mean doing more. Often, it starts with small, steady foundations:

- *Eating regularly, even if meals aren't perfect.*
- *Getting outside for light and fresh air.*
- *Prioritising sleep where possible.*
- *Building in short periods of rest.*
- *Being realistic, rather than aiming for perfection.*

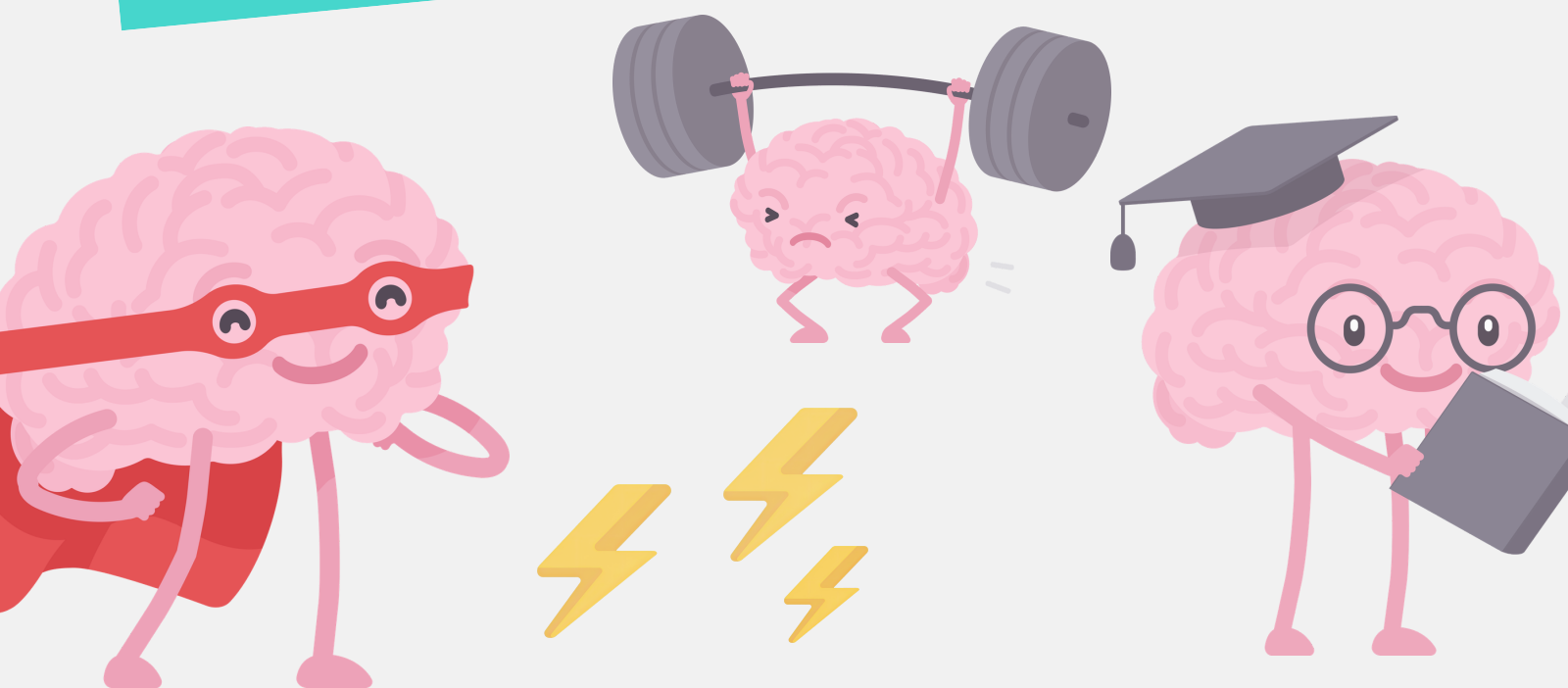


These simple steps can help regulate the body and make change feel more manageable.



A different way to approach health...

HEALTH ISN'T JUST ABOUT KNOWING WHAT TO DO. IT'S ALSO ABOUT RECOGNISING WHAT YOUR BODY IS MANAGING IN THE BACKGROUND



So if things have felt difficult recently, try not to see it as failure. It may be a sign your body is under pressure and needs support, not more pressure.

If you would like support with your nutrition, weight or gut health, you can speak to your GP practice about referral to the dietitian or local services available.

