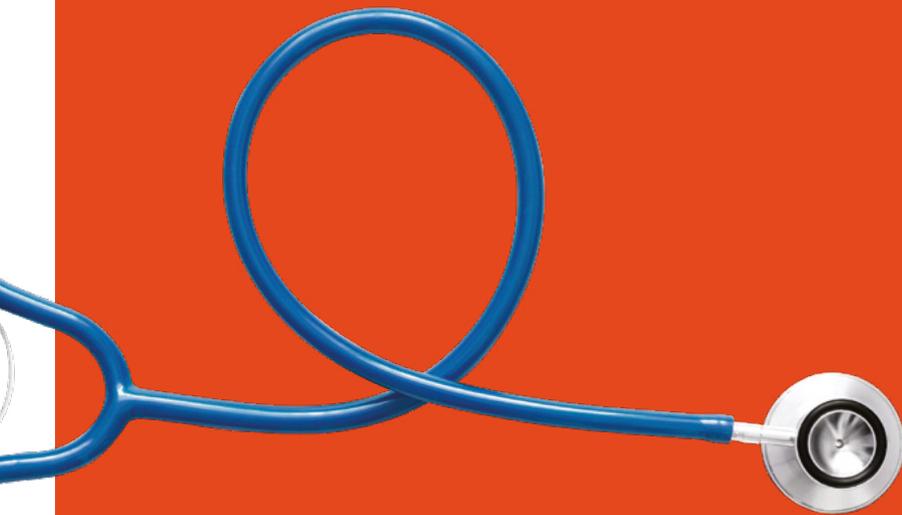

YOUR HEALTH IN MID-LIFE

Update 2019



BCS70

1970 British
Cohort Study

FINDINGS FROM THE 2016-18 SURVEY

PHYSICAL FUNCTIONING

Our ability to carry out the routine physical tasks of everyday life can be a good indication of our overall state of health, and how we will age.

GRIP STRENGTH

You may remember us asking you to grip and squeeze a handle on a small device for a few seconds.

On average, men had stronger grip strength than women, in both their

dominant and non-dominant hands. There was no difference between people in different jobs, or between those who were working and those who weren't.

BALANCE

You will likely remember that we asked you to try to stand on one leg for 30 seconds while your eyes were open and then again with your eyes closed.

Nearly 7 in 8 of you were able to stand on one leg for 30 seconds with your eyes open. However,

The 2016-18 Survey finished in July last year, and we were delighted to visit just over 8,500 of you. Huge thanks to everyone who took part!

Most of you also agreed to let a nurse carry out a range of measurements and assessments about your health.

Later this year, we will anonymise the data and make it available to researchers, who will use it to

answer important questions about life for your generation.

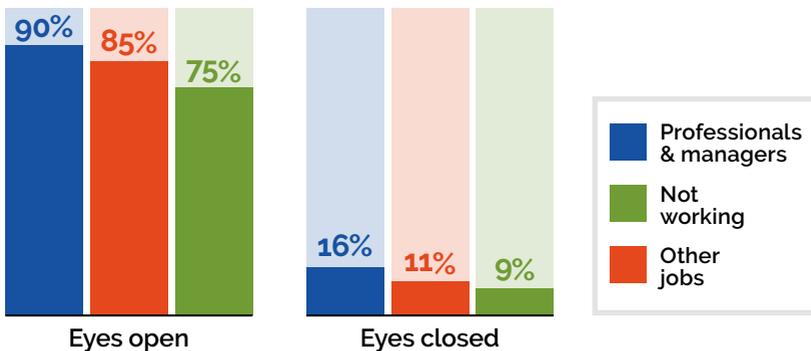
For this year's update, we're giving you a first look at what we found. This is just a snapshot – we'll let you know how the story of the data unfolds in future mailings.

when we asked you to close your eyes, just over 1 in 8 of you managed to stay standing. Slightly more men than women were able to stay balanced, both with their eyes open and closed.

There were also some differences between people doing different types of jobs. Professionals and managers were most likely to be able to remain standing on one leg

for a full 30 seconds, both with their eyes open and closed. Those who weren't working were least likely to be able to stay balanced. One reason for these differences could be that different jobs cause different types of wear and tear on our bodies. It's also the case that people who are out of work are more likely to have health problems.

WHO COULD STAY STANDING ON ONE LEG FOR 30 SECONDS?



METABOLIC HEALTH

Here we look at three indicators of metabolic health - our bodies' ability to build up and breakdown substances, such as food.



Many of you provided a blood sample and let us measure your blood pressure. Your blood pressure and the measurements taken from your blood will tell us a great deal about your health.

BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure (also known as hypertension) is one of the biggest risk factors for health conditions such as heart disease and stroke. More than 8 in 10 of you had normal blood pressure. Men were more likely to have raised blood pressure – 2 in 10, compared to 1 in 10 women.

Once again, there were small differences between people doing different jobs. Around 1 in 7 professionals and managers had raised blood pressure, compared to just less than 1 in 6 people in other jobs or not working.

CHOLESTEROL

We used your blood sample to measure cholesterol. Cholesterol is a fatty substance known as a lipid and is vital for the normal functioning of the body. It is mainly made by the liver, but can also be found in some foods. However, having too many lipids in our blood (called hyperlipidaemia) increases our risk of having a serious health condition.

Nearly two thirds of you had raised cholesterol levels, with men more likely to have high cholesterol than women.

Cholesterol levels didn't vary widely depending on the jobs you did. Those who were unemployed were most likely to have high cholesterol. Among those in work, professionals and managers had a slightly higher risk than those in other jobs.

BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS

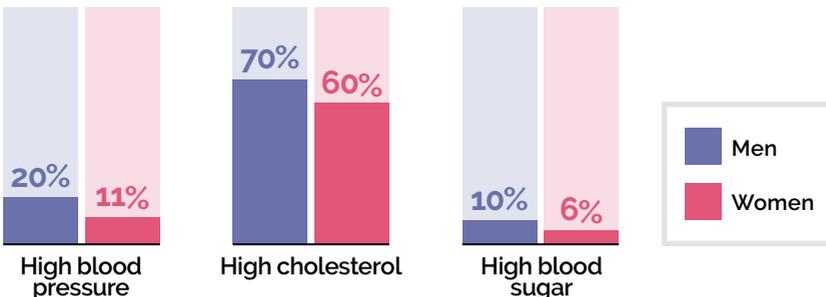
We also used your blood samples to measure glycated haemoglobin,

which is an indicator of long-term blood sugar levels. People with high blood sugar are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. The disease is usually caused by problems with a chemical in the body called insulin, and is often linked to being overweight or inactive, or having a family history of type 2 diabetes.

Just under 1 in 10 of you had high blood sugar levels. This was more common among men than women. Ten per cent of men and 6 per cent of women had blood sugar levels which indicated that they had diabetes or were at risk of developing diabetes in the future.

There were also striking differences among people with different jobs. According to blood sugar levels, 12 per cent of those not in work had or were at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, compared to just 6 per cent of professionals and managers, and 9 per cent of people in other types of jobs.

METABOLIC RISKS AMONG MEN AND WOMEN



COGNITIVE FUNCTION



You were asked to do some word and memory exercises as part of the survey that measured your cognition.

Cognitive function refers to the mental skills we use day-to-day, for example when we need to recall information or stay focused on a task.

As the British population gets older, policymakers have become more interested in healthy ageing, and the relationship between our cognitive function and the risks of developing dementia or other disabilities in later life.

WORD RECALL

In the first assessment, you were read a list of 10 common words, and asked to recall them immediately, and then around five minutes later. On average, women did better than men on this task.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORDS RECALLED





ANIMAL NAMING

We measured your 'verbal fluency' by asking you to name as many animals as you could in one minute. On average, you managed to name 24 animals. Men and women performed equally well on this exercise.

We have been measuring your cognition and cognitive development since you were 5 years old.

Impressively, one study member managed to name a whopping 70 animals in one minute!

MIND YOUR Ps AND Ws!

The final task measured your attention and mental speed. You were given a grid of random letters and asked to cross out as many Ps and Ws as possible within one minute. Women were quicker than men at this task, but they made more mistakes.



KEEP IN TOUCH

If you change your address, phone number or email address, please let us know so that we can contact you in the future.

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