

## LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

We know that certain things can reduce the risk of developing frailty and that in early stages some of the aspects of frailty can be reversed or prevented from getting worse.

### Examples of things that are known to make a difference:

1. Keeping active and maintaining muscle strength
2. Making sure that eyesight and hearing are as good as they can be
3. Keeping involved and active in social activities
4. Keeping the brain active by learning a new skill or taking up a new hobby
5. Eating a sensible diet
6. Stopping smoking
7. Drinking alcohol in moderation or not at all



Across Worcestershire healthcare professionals are currently identifying and developing a register of those living with frailty. This will help to ensure that the particular needs of these patients can be highlighted and addressed more easily. If you feel you might be living with frailty you should discuss this with your GP or other healthcare professional who you know well.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Find out more at:

[www.worcestershire.nhs.uk/integrated-care/](http://www.worcestershire.nhs.uk/integrated-care/)

 [fb.com/ICOPEW](https://www.facebook.com/ICOPEW)

 [twitter.com/ICOPEWorcs](https://twitter.com/ICOPEWorcs)

Or Email us via:

[icope.worcs@outlook.com](mailto:icope.worcs@outlook.com)

# ICOPE

Integrated Care for Older  
People in Worcestershire

What is  
Frailty?



## WHAT IS FRAILTY?

People often think the term frailty relates to someone who is weak and delicate. When health and social care services talk about people living with frailty, they are talking about a health condition which affects a person's body and ability to cope with minor changes.

Frailty affects a person's health much in the same way as asthma and arthritis might. It is an underlying condition that affects day to day living and can get suddenly worse.

Frailty is characterised by the gradual loss of a person's natural ability to recover from illness or injury. People living with frailty are vulnerable to dramatic, sudden changes in their health triggered by seemingly small events such as a minor infection or a change in medication or in their surroundings.

**Frailty is related to age but not all older people become frail and much younger people can also develop frailty.**



## WHY IS RECOGNISING FRAILTY IMPORTANT?

Frailty is a changing condition that in the early stages can be reversed or prevented from getting worse.

By diagnosing frailty, we can help people and their supporters to recognise and understand what is happening and to take action to prevent or reduce its impact or to make plans if things get worse.

## WHAT DOES FRAILTY LOOK LIKE?

Underlying frailty usually appears gradually over time but can also happen quite suddenly if there has been an event in someone's life such as an operation or a long stay in hospital.

People living with frailty find that they may slow down and begin to find they can no longer do some of the things they used to take for granted. They may tire more quickly, lose strength in their muscles and lose weight.

**They may require equipment or help from other people to do certain things such as shopping, laundry or help with washing themselves.**

